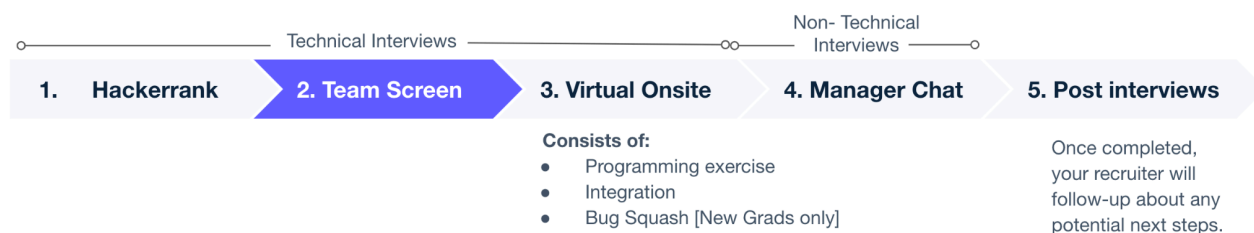# What to Expect: Software Engineering Interns and New Grads

We're excited you'll be interviewing at Stripe! Your video calls will give you an opportunity to meet more team members and get a feel for what it's like to work here. We've put together this guide to give you an idea of what your interviews will involve.

Like many things at a fast-growing company, we're constantly improving and iterating on how we interview, so if you have any comments, concerns, or questions, please let us know. We look forward to meeting you soon.

If you have any urgent questions during the day of your interview, please reach out to **university-interview-support@stripe.com** to get the most immediate response.

Overview of interview process

Technical Interviews

Non- Technical Interviews

1. **Hackerrank** 2. **Team Screen** 3. **Virtual Onsite** 4. **Manager Chat** 5. **Post interviews**

Consists of:
- Programming exercise
- Integration
- Bug Squash [New Grads only]

Once completed, your recruiter will follow-up about any potential next steps.

Our University Recruiting team supports candidates on a rolling basis, as quickly as we can. The process typically takes ~six to eight weeks from the time of completing your Hackerrank to the post-interview stage. We do our best to share updates within ~two to three weeks after each stage, however, given the volume, we may experience delays. If there are factors that might affect your post-interview timeline, such as an offer deadline from another company, please let your Stripe recruiter know as soon as possible. We appreciate your patience and flexibility throughout the process.

Some general tips

Our technical interviews simulate the engineering work we do everyday. In these interviews, you'll consider technical problems and then write working programs that solve them.

The interviews you'll complete are designed to help us understand how you might approach common scenarios encountered at Stripe. Be thorough, yet concise. Most of the exercises you'll do in these interviews will be directly related to Stripe. However, you are not being tested on your knowledge of Stripe and you'll always have the opportunity to ask us questions about anything you don't understand.

Our interviewers are engineers across all of Stripe. Some of them may not be as involved in Stripe's University Recruiting program and may not be able to answer all details about the new grad or internship experience. If you have any questions about the program that your interviewer cannot answer, your coordinator or recruiter can answer these for you.

We encourage you to use online resources (docs, Stack Overflow, etc.) as needed during the interview.
Please note that the use of any AI tools (e.g., Copilot, Gemini, TabNine, ChatGPT, LLMs, or any other AI assistants) in solving interview problems is strictly prohibited. This includes the use of AI results in search tools, such as Gemini for Google Search.

How to prepare

- Take a look at our [Blog](), [Twitter]() and [Stripe Culture Guide](). Do some background reading about our products and documentation.This will provide some context for the questions we'll ask.
- Be well-rested and ready to think on your feet. Some of the interviews will require you to problem-solve in real time.
- Effectively set up your interviewing space. We know that interviewing virtually can come with background noise and distractions. To best prepare, try to find a quiet space where you are comfortable and able to focus on the interview. We recommend having some water or a snack nearby.

What we evaluate

Stripe's interview process is designed for you to showcase your functional skills and subject matter expertise, but we also want to learn about you – how you collaborate cross-functionally, how you learn new things, how you solve problems, and so on. These capabilities align with [Stripe's operating principles](), which are written to reflect the values of Stripes everywhere and the global organization as a whole.

Team Screen Interview

| 1. Hackerrank | 2. Team Screen | 3. Virtual Onsite | 4. Manager Chat | 5. Post Interviews |

What to expect

This technical interview with one of our engineers will be conducted virtually and will be scheduled for 60 minutes, 45 of which will be spent on the technical exercise, plus 15 minutes of buffer time. Every part of our interview process is designed to give you streamlined examples of the kinds of real-world problems we solve day-to-day.

The team screen is meant to be practical and will test your problem-solving skills. You won't be building an application from scratch; it will be a regular coding problem, like one you might find on leetcode. We will ask you to implement a solution and then test it, using a language with which you're most comfortable.

Throughout the interview, we suggest you have a methodical and holistic testing strategy and consider edge cases. What we care about the most is that you can write clean, maintainable, testable code, the speed at which you implement your code, and your ability to clearly explain your thought process throughout.

How to prepare

- You should be ready to write, run, and debug code in your language of choice.
- For the sake of time during the interview, please make sure you have your preferred environment for writing and executing code set up beforehand.
- Be prepared to run a standalone program in your environment, print output, include common libraries, use debugging tools, and use built-in data structures.
- Come prepared to do comprehensive, programmatic checking of your code. You can write your own tests manually. You don't have to use a testing library.
- It can be useful to set up a common project boilerplate before the interview if appropriate for your language. Be ready to run a simple Hello, World! Program.
- If you are using an unfamiliar IDE or runtime environment, take some time prior to the interview to acquaint yourself with how to run and debug code.
- One of the interview questions may be structured around HTTP requests. We're not looking for detailed knowledge, just a basic understanding of what a request and response looks like.
- Come with questions for your interviewer. These can be technical in nature or general questions about Stripe. Think about what's important to you, and ask us how well Stripe does on those things. Don't be afraid to ask hard questions.

Practice

- **Our interviews focus less on data structures and algorithms, and more on practical problems, like what you'd encounter in your daily life at Stripe.** That said, we know that turning ideas into code in real time can be uniquely challenging! We find that candidates who practice before their interview feel more prepared.
- We recommend practicing timed coding problems. Focus on writing code quickly, ensuring correctness, and explaining your thought process out loud as you work.
- While our interview problems are different from exercises on LeetCode, Interview Cake, and Interviewing.io, some Stripes have found these sites helpful for practicing timed coding challenges.

During the interview

- At the start of the interview, your interviewer will share a technical problem using a link from HackerRank, an interactive IDE. You can try out using the HackerRank IDE in their sandbox. If you decide to use your own IDE setup, we'll ask that you use Zoom to share your screen with your interviewer. If for any reason you'd prefer not to share your screen, or if your preferred tools aren't available on the computer you'll be calling from, we've found that HackerRank can be a great substitute for screen-sharing. If you run into issues using either Zoom or HackerRank, CodeBunk will work as well.
- You should use whatever programming language, environment, and editor you're most comfortable with. Please do not just choose a language that is good for algorithm demonstration; you will actually be working with real large software.
- Use your language's standard library or 3rd party code as much as you want, if you think it would be helpful.
- We encourage you to use online resources (docs, Stack Overflow, etc.), or any other resources, just as you would at work or for a school assignment.
- Please note that the use of any AI tools (e.g. Copilot, TabNine, ChatGPT, LLMs, or any other AI assistants) in solving interview problems is strictly prohibited.
- Consider your interviewer a collaborator on the problem. We suggest "working out loud" with your interviewer and asking any questions that you have as they come up - for example, asking about constraints on the system.

Keep the following questions in mind:

- Do you understand the problem? Some of our questions are longer and more detailed. Read the instructions carefully and ask clarifying questions. We encourage asking clarifying questions and have found that this confirms mutual understanding and sets the stage for the remainder of the interview. We'd rather you ask questions than dive straight into the problem.

- Did you come up with a good design to answer the question? Don't forget to communicate your design decisions to your interviewer. This is not a system design interview, but we still like to hear the design decisions you're making!
- Did you proactively and effectively test your own code? Make sure you're covering corner cases and edge cases.
- Is the code correct? Did the code result in the correct output? Did it return an error when it should?
- Does the code follow typical language-specific conventions? Is it easily readable?
- Are you systematically debugging and finding errors? Be methodical. Identify errors on your own and handle them.
- Did you communicate clearly and share your thought process? Talk out loud and explain why you're doing what you're doing as you code!

Additional notes and accommodations

Breaks

If you need to step away for a water break, bathroom break, or urgent matter at any point during your team screen interview, please let your interviewer know.

What to wear

Please wear whatever makes you feel most comfortable and confident for an interview - appearance will not be factored into the hiring decision. Stripe is a casual work environment; it's likely that many of your interviewers will be dressed casually.

Accommodations

Stripe is committed to providing support to applicants and candidates requiring reasonable accommodations during our hiring process. If you require an accommodation due to a disability, please submit a request by completing this form. Examples include, but are not limited to, extended time, additional breaks, closed captioning, or sign language interpreters during your interviews. Once your form is submitted, a member of our Candidate Accommodations team will review your request and contact you within 2 business days.

Communities

We believe in creating an environment that makes Stripe an excellent home for everyone, where all employees feel included and have the ability to learn, grow, and do their best work. Our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs aka Stripe Communities) help us achieve this goal by creating community, serving as a resource to Stripes to positively influence the work environment, producing opportunities for learning and career development of members, and assisting Stripe in fulfilling other aspects of its commitment to inclusion and diversity.

What comes next?

After the virtual team screen interview, we will reach out via email to communicate whether or not you will move forward to the virtual onsite stage. If you have been recommended to move forward, we will collect your availability and provide more guidance on how to prepare for the virtual onsite interviews.

Thank you again for your time and interest in Stripe.

We want to make your experience as pleasant as possible, so please let your recruiter know if there is anything else we can do to set you up for success.

The Stripe team is looking forward to meeting you!

Interviews and Stripe's Operating Principles

Stripe's operating principles guide how we interact with each other and our users, translating our values and beliefs into concrete actions. The principles articulated here detail the everyday behaviors we focus on, our core traits, and what we expect of our leaders—and all are rooted in the core expectation that Stripes operate with high integrity, maturity, and respect for others at all times.

Operating Principles

How we work	Who we are	And leaders…
Users first. We have a weighty obligation to the businesses built on Stripe and the everyday people they serve. Because we're so critical to our users' success, we must keep their needs front and center in all we do.	**Curious.** We lead with a genuine interest in people, ideas, and the unknown. We work hard to understand other points of view, and prefer investigating to being right.	**Obsess over talent.** The quality of the Stripes you attract and retain defines your team, so developing an unusually keen talent radar can be your biggest competitive advantage. Be the person who reads and investigates every candidate packet.
Move with urgency and focus. A bias for action speeds our learning and delights our users. Focus on what matters most, make fast initial progress, and iterate toward the best outcome.	**Resilient.** Startups are tumultuous places and the audacity of our goals will mean occasional failure. We view setbacks as opportunities to sharpen our skills.	**Elevate ambitions.** Know where your team is headed next year/in 4 years/in 10 years, and develop a compelling vision for that future. Guide your team to redefine what's possible by expanding what's reasonable.
Be meticulous in your craft. Doing things well is in Stripe's DNA. We value craftsmanship for its own sake, and are fervently committed to producing surprisingly great work.	**Humble.** Stripes are humble, not arrogant or complacent, and create an inclusive environment for all. We aren't wedded to how we currently do things—lots about our current practices will turn out to be wrong.	**Set the pace and energy.** Slow, incremental progress is not an engaging org strategy—Stripe is a marathon of sprints.
Seek feedback. We value intellectual honesty and look for other Stripes with the expertise to refine our ideas, challenge us, and deepen our understanding across the business.	**Macro-optimistic.** Stripes reject cynicism, knowing that all problems can be solved with the right understanding, and progress is only inevitable through focused effort. We are believers in the long term.	**Make decisions; be accountable.** It's not always clear who should make a decision. Effective leaders embrace decision-making in cases of murky ownership, either making the call themselves or collaborating across the necessary teams to drive an outcome. They clearly communicate decisions and hold themselves and their teams accountable for results.
Deliver outstanding results. Stripes are high achievers with a drive to succeed. We take end-to-end accountability for seeing our work through and delivering on our commitments.	**Exothermic.** Stripes generate an energy and warmth that is infectious across teams and throughout the company. We are genuinely excited about our work, and about creating an exceptionally welcoming environment for all Stripes.	**Lead with clarity and context.** Translate chaos into a clear, compelling plan. Be deeply informed about what's happening across Stripe, and create your team's plans in reference to the broader work.
		Solve problems. Be a persistent force for progress. Our leaders must work with their teams and across Stripe to quickly and effectively solve problems—especially when they're hard.

Behavioral Interviewing with STAR

Wherever you see 'Operating Principle Interview' referenced as part of the interview process, you should use the following framework and tips to guide your response.

Situation/Task: explain the situation or task so the interviewer understands the context of your example

Action: provide details on what you (and/or a teammate, partner, or stakeholder) did to address the situation or carry out the task

Result: describe what your actions achieved and the ways in which you were effective, successful, unsuccessful, impactful, transformative, notable, etc.

Tips:

➔ Be detailed, yet concise. Interviewers will ask follow-up questions when they need more details, but it's best to stick to the STAR format in order to cover the who, what, where, why, and how behind your response

➔ Never feel obligated to share details, metrics, people, or initiatives that are confidential or proprietary. If you need to redact sensitive details from your response, just explain this to the interviewer

➔ Use "I" instead of "we" when speaking in first person about something that you individually owned, a decision that you individually made, or other instances where it's important to clarify this to the interviewer. "We" can be used to represent the work of the broader team or a group of colleagues.

➔ Specific examples help interviewers get a clear picture of who you are and how you work. Avoid generalizations ("this happens a lot, so I usually…") or hypotheticals ("I would…")

➔ Try not to repeat examples; the more variety you share, the better your interviewers will understand the complexity and scope of your work

➔ Ask clarifying questions. Interviewers are happy to make sure you understand what is being asked or re-frame a question that may have been unclear