

CODING TIPS



# NULL VS ZERO

What is the difference?





! /  
Abi, what is the  
difference between  
being **null** or having  
a size of **zero** in a list?



Got this question yesterday!



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You're hanging out at home and your buddy is in the other room.

You ask him to bring you a cup of water.



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He walks back into  
the room with one  
of the following:

A horizontal line with a right-pointing arrow at the end, indicating a continuation or next step.

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**01.**  
**Nothing at all:**  
this is the null array.



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02.

**An empty cup:**  
this is the empty list case.



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03.

**A cup with water:**

this is the non-empty list case.



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Now, case **1** and **2** might feel the same to you, but logically, they are different.



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An empty cup is obviously not the same thing as no cup at all. They just aren't. One is a cup. One is not.

The fact that he brought you an empty cup might signal something different than nothing at all. For example, it might signal that he heard you but you didn't have any water.



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