

# InfraThrone Elite – Pre-Course Playbook

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**Mission:** Remove all friction before Week 1. Make sure everyone operates at the same elite readiness level.

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## 1. Environment & Tooling Setup

Before Day 1, ensure these are **installed, tested, and usable without Googling**.

### Local Tooling

- **Core CLI:** kubectl, helm, terraform, ansible
- **Container Runtime:** Docker with BuildKit enabled, or containerd
- **Shell Enhancements:** zsh/bash aliases, fzf, bat, exa
- **Git Hooks:** pre-commit, secret scanning enabled

### Cloud

- AWS + GCP + Azure accounts with:
    - Budget alerts
    - Pre-provisioned VPC, subnets, and firewall rules
  - CLI auth configured (aws-cli, gcloud)
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## 2. Mandatory Pre-Reads

You **must** complete these to speak the same language:

- Google SRE Book – Incident Response, Postmortems, SLOs
  - Kubernetes The Hard Way – Kelsey Hightower
  - Netflix Chaos Engineering Whitepaper
  - AWS Well-Architected Framework – Ops + Security pillars
  - Cloudflare Postmortems (at least 3)
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## 3. Baseline Competency Test

You'll be expected to perform these live **without assistance**:

- Debug a CrashLoopBackOff pod without external docs
  - Prove or disprove a DNS issue in under 15 mins
  - Deploy an app with Terraform to GCP without copy-paste
  - Trace an HTTP request from browser → LB → pod logs
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## 4. Warm-Up Drills

Practice these until they're **muscle memory**:

- Linux: Find top CPU process + its open network connections in <60s
  - K8s: Scale a deployment to 0 and back up with no downtime
  - Terraform: Roll back to a previous state file
  - Security: Detect secrets in Git history & rotate credentials
  - Networking: Simulate packet loss with tc netem
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## 5. Elite Mindset Rules

- RCA > Fix: Always find the root cause before declaring victory
  - Stay Calm Under Fire: Alerts, pings, chaos — you lead the room
  - Own the Incident: No blame games, only resolution paths
  - Document Live: Keep real-time notes during any outage
  - Fail, Fix, Repeat: Break things intentionally to learn faster
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## 6. Cheatsheets

### Linux Debug Flow

1. uptime – load
2. dmesg -T – kernel issues
3. top/htop – CPU/mem
4. iostat/iotop – disk
5. ss -tulpn – network

### K8s Debug Flow

1. kubectl get events --sort-by=.metadata.creationTimestamp
2. kubectl describe pod
3. kubectl logs --previous
4. kubectl exec -it -- sh
5. Check node conditions + kubelet logs

## Terraform Debug Flow

1. terraform state list
  2. terraform plan -refresh-only
  3. terraform import
  4. terraform state rm (last resort)
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## 7. Final Checklist Before Week 1

1. Tooling installed & tested
  2. Cloud CLI auth verified
  3. Completed all pre-reads
  4. Passed baseline drills
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