

[2018-01-03T14:55:28.179-05:00]

In your opinion, what preparation or background is necessary to take this course?

Course

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Harvard University

CS20 is basically required, but Boaz should at least try to match up more with the notation and naming conventions used in that class.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

I would say that CS50 is necessary background for this course because you need to know how to "think" like a computer scientist. The problem sets are largely logic and mathematics based, however, they are often within the scope of computers and computer programming, therefore some experience is needed.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

be comfortable with proofs

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

proof writing/sets/logic/etc at the level of CS20 at the very least

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS50/equivalent, some experience with proofs is helpful but not necessary.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

At least some CS experience. People who haven't programmed in their life are probably not well suited for this course.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Math background in proofs is necessary but they catch you up if you're behind, basic programming is definitely helpful but not necessary.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Some proof-based math.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS 50, CS 51, Stat 110

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Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

You should be comfortable with some proof techniques/discrete mathematics, and you should love CS/math.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Some proof experience, comfortability with math, a little coding and a desire to learn the material.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Not really any, ability to reason well is good

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

It requires us to have a good foundation on basic math and if possible, proof based math. Having a background on probability is very helpful for the second half of the course. Taking Stat 110 before or concurrently would be very helpful.

Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

CS20 as well as some previous CS experience

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Having some familiarity with proofs before coming into the class will make it a lot easier. Still, if this is your first proof-based course, it is good and will ease you into things. It might be harder for you than others though.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Basic knowledge of proofs

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Math 21ab + Interest in CS, and a good pset partner to bounce ideas with. CS20 not needed.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Honestly need a very strong background in proof based math. 21 series was definitely not sufficient -- I REALLY wish that 21c existed last year because I would have definitely taken it. There is a pretty strong imbalance between students who took 23/25 and the rest in terms of there preparedness to quickly grasp fundamentals and then start focusing on the nuances of the material

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Proof background a must, or expect to do a lot of catch-up work.

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Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

not much background is necessary. I hear stat110 helps

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Be able to write proofs because there is no proof-writing review at the beginning of the course.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

A lot of math. Definitely thorough comprehension of proofbase math.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Proof-based math class

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

A comfort with programming at the level of 50/51 is helpful. Much of the material in the latter half is redundant with 124.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

it is hard to say I think that some knowledge of theoretical cs would be helpful e.g. knowing how some NP algorithms work.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Proofs class. Math.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS 20 is not essential but very helpful

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

None. You can go in the course with just basic calculus knowledge. I came in knowing nothing about proofs, and came out being able to do all of them.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS50

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Magical brilliance? A baby CS121, much more than what CS20 teaches, but I guess CS20 helps.

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Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

You need to have a strong proof based math background and must generally be extremely good at math. As a student of math 21a and 21b background I was not at all prepared.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Some formal mathematics is important. CS20 will definitely prepare you for CS121.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Discrete math is most important thing.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Taking a proof-based math class before is definitely helpful, though not totally necessary. I imagine it would make reading the really math-heavy lecture notes a little bit easier. Taking Stat 110 before is also a big plus.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Strong math background. You want to know how to do proofs

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

strong understanding of discrete math (cs20 should be a required class for cs concentrators!!!!), basic understanding of algorithms and data structures would help

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

A class that rigorously involves proofs (Math 101). CS51 was helpful for making some of the concepts more concrete.

Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

-Theoretical math -Python experience

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Knowledge of proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Some understanding of proof-based math.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Proofs Basic knowledge of data structures

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Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Some proof based maths goes a long way, but isn't necessary. I think one could do this course with 0 experience if they tried hard.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Some proof-based math. Statistics is helpful (though I didn't have it). Some coding. Some knowledge of computer hardware is helpful.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Some background in proofs, mathematical notation, probability (but nothing major)

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Proof-writing, coding in Python

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Some proof based class (CS20 or something similar)

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Math 25. However, I would also argue that CS20 doesn't adequately prepare one for this course. The dept should seriously consider making this course easier or offering an intermediary alternative.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

None

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

strong math and proof background

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Work Ethic

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Probably more math than I had

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Some experience with proof-writing and formal math is definitely helpful

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Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

Far more than CS20 under Harry Lewis and the 21 series of math despite that being the exact prep they suggested. There was a presumption that everyone in the class was more in the math25 level of understanding of proofs and mathematical notation.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

The background necessary for this course was basic programming and advanced math understanding. I felt like Math 21a and 21b, CS50, and Stat110 were all needed.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS20, and taking Stat 110 concurrently or beforehand is helpful

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Lot of proof based math

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Not much background is needed.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

It was difficult not having any background in proof-based mathematics. You don't need any applied CS except maybe basic experience with Python.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Proof-based math, probability, and patience

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

CS20/HW 0, being ready to spend 6-7 hours understanding and writing proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Proof-based math. This course was much more math than CS in terms of the work required.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

A background in mathematical proofs is very helpful, especially in the beginning.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

A proof based math course is not required but would be the single most helpful thing to have taken beforehand.



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Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

math background

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

CS20

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

A proof background is helpful, as is a statistics background

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

experience with proofs, coding experience not really required

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

At least some experience with proofs, i.e. CS20, Math 23-55, or a 100-level Math course.

Evaluate the course overall.: **5 (excellent)**

proof background

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

General mathematical maturity, some experience writing proofs is nice but by no means required. Also, familiarity with some programing language at a basic level. Some familiarity with algorithms is also nice, but not required.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Proof based math background.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Experience in coding (important to understand what the theory is about) and in discrete mathematics.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

CS20

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

It would be best to have some prior knowledge of mathematical proof-writing or philosophy, perhaps. Some introduction to computer science (basic algorithms and complexity analysis) helps as well.

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Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Some proof background.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Mathematical maturity, nothing in particular. I haven't done proofs before, and picked it up along the way

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Understanding of proofs (CS 20 was helpful)

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Even though this is a Computer Science course, it is much more mathy than it is computer sciency. A strong level of proof writing will be extremely helpful.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Knowledge of proofs is not essential, but very helpful (or else you will have to learn while doing psets, which can be difficult).

Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

math 25+

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

I think some background in proof based math is necessary/advantageous.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

CS50+, some math background

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

proof writing

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

proof writing, theoretical math

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What advice on mathematical preparation would you give to future students of this class?

Course

COMPSCI 121

Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

Strong proof based background is necessary

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Take CS20 and work really hard while you're in it. Keep your notes accessible for CS121. CS20 should be absolutely required for this class-I don't know how the people without it survived. It would be great if CS121 and CS20 actually made some effort to make their curricula join up more; e.g. just having the same naming conventions and notation, and teaching relevant probability stuff.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

I would say to be very comfortable with algebra as this will be necessary for several of the problem sets.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

I didn't have any of the required proof preparation (I did 21a/b and stat 110 before), and I had no problem with the material

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Definitely make sure you feel comfortable with the mathematical background lecture notes before this course. Proof experience is recommended but I think it is definitely possible to take this class without prior proof experience.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

TAKE CS20 IF YOU DON'T HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE W/ PROOF WRITING/DISCRETE MATH!!!!!! Do not be a fool and assume the "introduction" part of the course title means you can dive in with no experience, because you will die. CS20 is meant to prepare you for 121! Definitely at the very least take their diagnostic test (assuming Prof Nesson puts it on the site again, as Harry Lewis has done in the past) before deciding you don't need CS20. If you have any doubts, at least shop CS20!

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

If you have experience with proofs then you're all set. If you don't, don't worry, but just be aware that the first couple weeks will require some extra work and patience from you.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

I don't think that too much mathematical preparation is required for most of the course (I got by fine without CS20). However, I do think that the probability lectures would've been incomprehensible if I hadn't been concurrently enrolled in Stat110. I don't know if students who don't have much probability background will comment on this, but I would certainly think that it would be a good idea to include probability as part of the summer work, so that students don't have to cover weeks of Stat110 material in a few days.

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Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Proof background is helpful. Otherwise they mostly help you out as you go if you're behind.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

I did Math 23, Math 154 and a summer school course in analysis, which I found more than sufficient for this class. Probably Math 23 is good enough, I think.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Have experience with proofs before this course. For example, Math 23/25 is great, or CS 20 or Math 104 also helps.

Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

Proof-based math

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Before taking the class, I would look through some online discrete math resources and generally try to be comfortable with most of the topics. If you love math and are willing to put in hard work, this class doesn't really require any crazy prerequisite mathematical knowledge.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Know how to do some basic proofs and proof concepts.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Experience with writing proofs is helpful, but not necessary. Comfortability with math is a must, as the course is very math-heavy and very theoretical (not a typical "coding" CS class).

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

doable with fairly little mathematical prep (e.g. no proof-background, no probability background) if willing to put in the work

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

CS20

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Background in proofs would be helpful but isn't necessary

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Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

Take CS20 before. No other math is really necessary.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

I think it's important to have some proof background coming into this course. Homework 0 gives a good taste of the "abstract" methods of proof. If you found that extremely difficult, you might want to consider CS 20 or Math 101 to learn about proofs

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Knowing mathematical notation is not enough, but you can learn everything on the fly. Just make sure you get a solid foundation for proofs during the first 3 weeks of the course which may seem easy, but is extremely essential.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Basic comfort with proofs, set theory, stat110 is useful for the probabilistic computation unit

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Definitely know proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Math21ab + Interest in CS is sufficient

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

I wish 21C existed last year. You really really should have some strong background in proof-based math or try to do most of the Math Background review before the class. Also should have a generally strong background in programming/CS fundamentals via CS50/51/61 (probably just two of those is necessary, if you're just starting out when you get to Harvard).

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

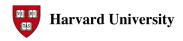
Definitely proof background.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

high school math (up through calc 2) was enough for me. I think this course taught me as much about math (set theory, graph theory, etc) as it did about computing

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Know how to do proofs and maybe a bit of set theory.



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Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

A math theory class. Definitely be comfortable with proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Math 21 is fine.

COMPSCI 121

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Make sure you have a basic understanding of how to write a proof and graph theory.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

A proofs based math class.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Previous proof experience would be pretty helpful.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS 20 is a good idea, and the class could get off to a smoother start if more students take CS 20 first

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Please don't get intimidated by the preparation that this course preports to require. Don't even get intimidated by the first problem set, which is only there to weed people out. I promise that by the 2nd pset, the work will get much easier. I came in here knowing absolutely nothing about proofs, statistics, mathematics, computer theory, etc and came out being able to do all the problems and having a good intuituion!

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Would recommend experience with proofs, and some probability. CS20 would be beneficial for incoming students.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

take CS20 or some class that has mathematical proofs. It helps a lot.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Really comfortable with algebra and limits wouldn't hurt.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Need more experience with writing proofs

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Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Taking CS20 alone will not prepare you. I suggest learning the course material the summer before or taking a math class such as 23 or above.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Take CS20 or have equivalent knowledge.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS20 would be nice but it does not help too much after the first quarter of the class once people are used to it. I think if the introduction on discrete math lecture is turned into two then no background is strictly required.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Proof-based math and statistics background are helpful though not necessary.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

You need to know more about proofs and learn a lot of math symbols. Learning latex/rmarkdown beforehand will save you a lot of time.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Take CS20

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Ask questions early if you have questions! Start in the summer reviewing the math background and CS20 material.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Take a rigorous class involving proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

-CS20 or some theoretical math -STAT 110

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Have some experience is proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

CS20 would be nice, (I took it prior) but you can definitely take the class without it.

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Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Know basic data structures and proof methods

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

If you have done any proof based maths class (I came in with 25a,b 122,123,124,130,131), this class is easy. If not, still quite feasible.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

I had some proof-based math background (had taken Math 112), and that definitely made the course not as difficult as it was for some of my peers - though I think it was still possible to take without having proof-based background. I think I saw that CS 20 may be required as a pre-req in the future - this may be a good idea. I got by without any Stats background, but, again, it would have been nice to have had some prior introduction to Stats.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Should know how to write proofs (otherwise this class will be much more difficult/a lot more work)

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

take 21a and 12b beforehand and also have a solid grasp of proofs

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Read the comments from TFs on Gradescope. I think those were surprisingly helpful in proof writing.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Definitely read up on proofs beforehand - many of the proofs we do aren't insanely formal and you get used to the format pretty quickly but it can be jolting at first without math 23/25/55 or CS20.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Just have solid foundation of stats and proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

discrete math

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

have proof experience



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Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Have a partner to talk things out with

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

I think it was probably necessary for me to have taken more calculus, but I can't be sure.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Practice with reading and writing proofs beforehand would be quite helpful, a lot of times I would understand the high-level ideas underlying a proof but struggle converting those ideas into a proof in a concise way that covered all the necessary details

Evaluate the course overall.: 1 (unsatisfactory)

At the absolute least you need cs20 and ideally more like math 25 or something of that nature.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Definitely need Math 21a and Math21b. Maybe even more!

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS20 at a minimum, and Stat 110 is very helpful too

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Lots of proof based math!

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Take CS20 or some class that teaches you how to write proofs for your own sake.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Not much math preparation is needed

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Familiarize yourself with the language of proof based mathematics! Definitely do the prep that Professor Barak mentions on his website as well as Homework 0, if possible over the summer. This helped me not feel as lost during the first couple weeks.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Take cs124 or another theoretical proof-based class. It's ideal to learn how to write proofs either on your own or through another class, rather than by attending a single proof section

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Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

make sure you can complete HW 0, use OCW to check over some 6.042J Psets.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Really none required - stat 110 concurrently can be helpful

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

This class requires more math skills than computer science, so make sure you have taken a rigorous proof-based math class before hand.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

My advice is to take a proof based math course prior to taking cs121. If cs121 was the first time I did proofs, I think I would be overwhelmed by the sheer amount of proofs you do in this class.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Proof based math courses are highly useful. Especially something like Math 25A, which covers a lot of the early material of this course (e.g. injectivity/surjectivity/bijectivity) and gives you a good idea of how to write a formal technical/mathematical proof.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

You technically build all the math from first principles, but you go through them so fast I'd recommend people have taken other discrete math courses beforehand (Stat 110, CS 20, etc.)

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Stat110 might be helpful. Writing proofs (CS20) is probably helpful.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS 20. Do it.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

CS20 should be sufficient

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Stat

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Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

i don't think you need that much actual math *knowledge*; i didn't know what graphs or big Oh were before this class. but i would tell them to do homework 0. and i do think proof writing background helps a ton.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

I think having taken Math 21a and Math 21b would be important at the very least (simply to build mathematical maturity). Ideally students would already have taken Math 23, Math 25 or Math 55, or a 100-level Math course.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

stricter prereqs

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

You don't need multivariable calculus or linear algebra. Just a willingness to wrestle with proofs.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Either take one of Math 23, 25, 25, or take CS20.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

I don't think any mathematical preparation is actually necessary: the introduction lecture and some googling is sufficient.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Practice writing proofs. If you have never taken a proof based course, practice on your own over the summer.

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Just take CS20, it's not worth the pain otherwise.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Past proof-writing is not necessary; familiarizing oneself with direct proofs, proofs by contradiction, proofs by contrapositive, proofs by construction, and other basic proof structures can be done through online resources.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Abstract, theoretical math preparation is important.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

I took Math 23 and definitely felt prepared.



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Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

I did the class without having done proofs before, and I was able to pick it up along the way. Some level of mathematical maturity will be very helpful.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Students should consider CS20, or Math 23 or higher. Students with no proof writing experience will find this course challenging.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

I think familiarity and comfort with writing proofs is pretty important, as well as experience understanding and learning new mathematical notation. A small amount of combinatorics background is probably also helpful but not necessary.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

CS20 provides a good basis of knowledge.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

If you have not taken 23 or above you should really take cs20 before this. As someone who has taken several proof based courses before this I did not find the material overly challenging. However, many of the people I knew who took only 21 struggled.

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Proofs at the level of CS 20

Evaluate the course overall.: 2 (fair)

Basic math proof background.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

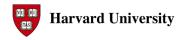
The MIT course that they recommend for over the summer is great in terms of lecture videos. You can try to read Sipper, but it's probably less helpful, since a lot of it is taught differently in 121.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Definitely be comfortable writing rigorous proofs; knowing basic probability would also help.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

CS 20 is extremely helpful, especially with regard to proofs, though it is possible to learn the material without it. Background in computational theory does help but isn't as crucial.



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Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

I would really recommend having taken some other proof based class before CS121, but I think that it wouldn't take too long to get the hang of it if you have not.

Evaluate the course overall.: 3 (good)

Though it will be more difficult for students with little proof based math experience, it is not necessary. The class does a good job getting those up to speed.

Evaluate the course overall.: 5 (excellent)

Work with someone who knows how to write proofs

Evaluate the course overall.: 4 (very good)

Go into this course comfortable writing proofs. If you *think* you've written proofs before, you will need additional preparation.