

Express (Node.js web framework) Node.js Routers (networking) Web Development 

Web Development: What does a route/router mean in express.js?

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2 Answers



Vishwas Gopinath, Software Engineer

Answered December 11, 2015



Originally Answered: What does a route/router mean in express.js?

Routing refers to determining how your application responds to a client request.

In layman's terms, consider a building which has four rooms. One has a doctor, the second an engineer, the third a lawyer and in the last one, a teacher. There is a person outside these rooms, sitting at a desk. When a customer arrives, let us assume he asks for the doctor. Then the person at the desk handles this request by taking him to room A where the doctor is. If a customer comes looking for an engineer, the desk person takes him to room B. And so on.

Similarly, when a HTTP request is made to the server, the router determines how to handle that request. The HTTP request method can be GET/POST so on.

```
app.METHOD(PATH, HANDLER)
```

Here is an example

 71   2

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When a GET request is made to the home page, Hello World is sent as a response.

Tried my best, if the answer is misleading please let me know :)

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As beautifully explained by Vishwas, Routing simply refers to how your application handles a request.

Let's say for some website or app, you visit a URL called

http://www.someapp.com/myorders?id=20, when your app receives this request, it sees you have a path called **/myorders** appended to the URL. This is where the Router comes in. The router checks to see if there is any function/method that has been configured to handle requests coming through the **/myorders** route path. These functions are called *Route Handlers*.

If a route handler is found, it is invoked. It is upto the route handler function to then extract the route parameter(s) such as **id** in this case and its associated value. And this is where you do what is needed to handle this route and return back a response, which in this hypothetical scenario might involve fetching details of orders with ID no. 20 from the database and sending back a page with the details OR if it is an API endpoint, then you might just want to send data back as JSON (as shown below)

```
1 const Router = require('express').Router();
2 Router.get('/myorders/:id', (request, response) => {
3   // get data here from the db
4   res.json(dataFetchedFromDb);
5 });
6 module.exports = Router;
```

Then in your server.js, you might use it like :

```
1 const routes = require('./routes');
2 app.use(routes);
```

Hope this helps.


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