

TOPIC: Browser vs Node.js Runtime

(Same JavaScript • Different Capabilities • Internals • Interview Traps)

NOTE 1: JavaScript vs Runtime (core distinction)

- **JavaScript** = the language (ECMAScript)
- **Runtime** = environment that runs JS
- Runtime provides:
 - Global object
 - APIs
 - Event loop integration
 - I/O capabilities

👉 Same JS code, **different powers** depending on runtime.

NOTE 2: What browsers provide

Browser runtime includes:

- DOM
- BOM (`window`, `location`, `history`)
- Web APIs:
 - `setTimeout`
 - `fetch`
 - `localStorage`
 - Events
- Rendering engine

Browser JS is **UI-focused**.

CODE 1: Browser-only globals

```
js

window;
document;
localStorage;
alert;
```

NOTE 3: What Node.js provides

Node.js runtime includes:

- File system access

- Network access
- OS-level APIs
- `require` / `import`
- `process`
- `Buffer`
- No DOM

Node JS is **server / system-focused**.

CODE 2: Node-only globals

```
js

global;
process;
__dirname;
__filename;
Buffer;
```

NOTE 4: Global object differences

Aspect	Browser	Node
Global object	<code>window</code>	<code>global</code>
Standard access	<code>globalThis</code>	<code>globalThis</code>
DOM access	Yes	No

CODE 3: Global access

```
js

globalThis === window; // Browser: true
globalThis === global; // Node: true
```

NOTE 5: Module systems

Browser

- ES Modules only
- `<script type="module">`
- Uses `import` / `export`

Node.js

- CommonJS (`require`)
- ES Modules (`import`)
- Depends on config

CODE 4: Browser module

```
js

// browser.js
export const x = 10;
```

html

```
<script type="module" src="browser.js"></script>
```

CODE 5: Node CommonJS

```
js

const fs = require("fs");
```

NOTE 6: File system access

- Browser: (sandboxed)
- Node: full access

CODE 6: Node file system

```
js

const fs = require("fs");

fs.readFileSync("data.txt", "utf8");
```

NOTE 7: Networking

- Browser:
 - `fetch`
 - Subject to CORS
- Node:
 - `http`, `https`
 - No CORS restriction (server-side)

CODE 7: Fetch comparison

js

```
// Browser & modern Node
fetch("/api/data");
```

■ NOTE 8: Event loop differences (important)

Browser

- Single event loop
- Rendering between tasks
- UI blocking is critical

Node.js

- libuv-based loop
- Multiple phases
- No rendering

■ CODE 8: Node event loop phases (conceptual)

txt

Timers → I/O → Poll → Check → Close

■ NOTE 9: Timers behavior differences

- `setTimeout` exists in both
- Precision and scheduling differ
- Node timers are less tied to UI

■ CODE 9: Timer example

js

```
setTimeout(() => {
  console.log("Runs later");
}, 0);
```

■ NOTE 10: Security model

Browser

- Strong sandbox
- No direct OS access
- Same-origin policy

Node

- Full system access

- Security depends on developer

NOTE 11: Performance considerations

- Browser:
 - JS + rendering compete
 - Heavy JS hurts UX
- Node:
 - JS handles many clients
 - Blocking code kills throughput

CODE 10: Blocking danger in Node

```
js

while (true) {}
// Freezes entire server
```

NOTE 12: Use cases

Browser

- UI
- Interactions
- Animations
- Client-side logic

Node.js

- APIs
- Databases
- File handling
- Real-time servers

NOTE 13: Common interview traps

- JavaScript ≠ Browser
- Node is not multithreaded JS
- DOM is not part of JS
- Event Loop exists in both, but differs
- `window` is undefined in Node

FINAL MENTAL MODEL

- JavaScript is universal
- Runtime defines capabilities
- Browser = UI + Web APIs

- Node = OS + Server APIs
- Same syntax, different powers
- `globalThis` unifies globals

 STOP HERE

Next recommended continuation:

- 1 Fetch API (deep, real-world async flow)
- 2 Error Handling (sync vs async, try/catch pitfalls)
- 3 Memory Management & Garbage Collection

Reply with **next** or the **number** you want to continue.