# HOW TO BUILD A CHATBOT WITH AMAZON LEX

## INTRODUCTION

Chatbots have become essential in modern applications. They are computer programs designed to simulate conversations with humans. They are used in websites, mobile applications and messaging platforms to answer questions, provide support or automate tasks.
Amazon Lex is an AWS Service that helps developers to build communication interfaces such as chatbot etc. It supports both text and voice input.
This guide will walk you through the process of building a chatbot from scratch, what Chatbot is and how it works, Implementing a chatbot using Amazon Lex, how to design a conversation. By the end of this guide, you will have a working guide that can interact with users effectively.

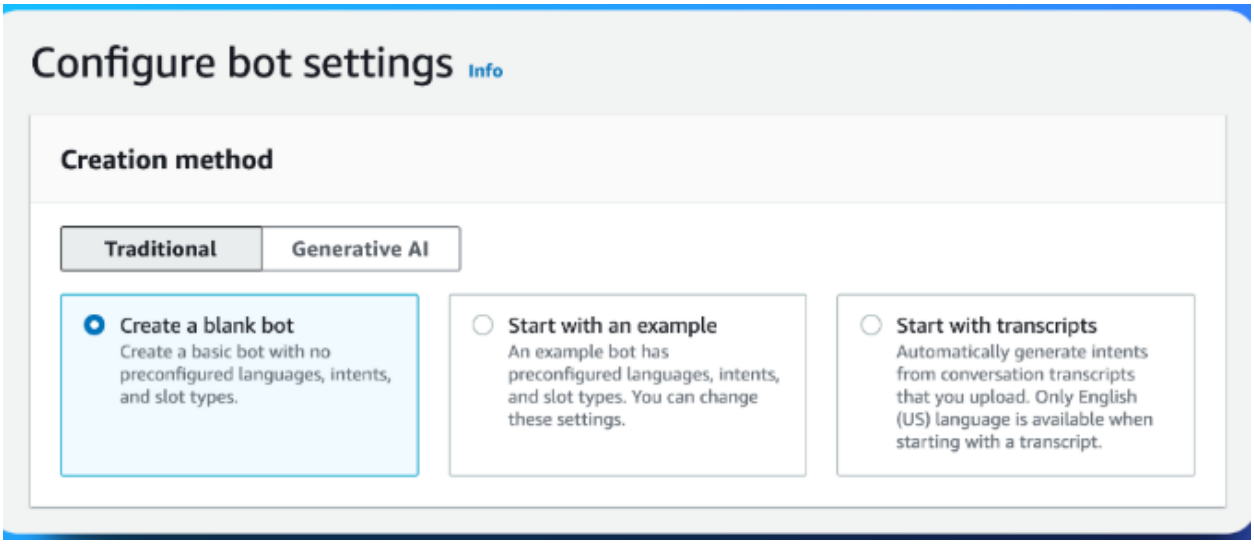
## PREREQUISITES

- AWS Account
- Amazon Lex
- AWS Lambda
-

## STEP 1: SET UP YOUR CHATBOT

Log into AWS account and navigate to Amazon Lex by typing Lex into the search bar of the Console.

- Select **create bot**
- Select **Traditional**
- Select **create blank bot**



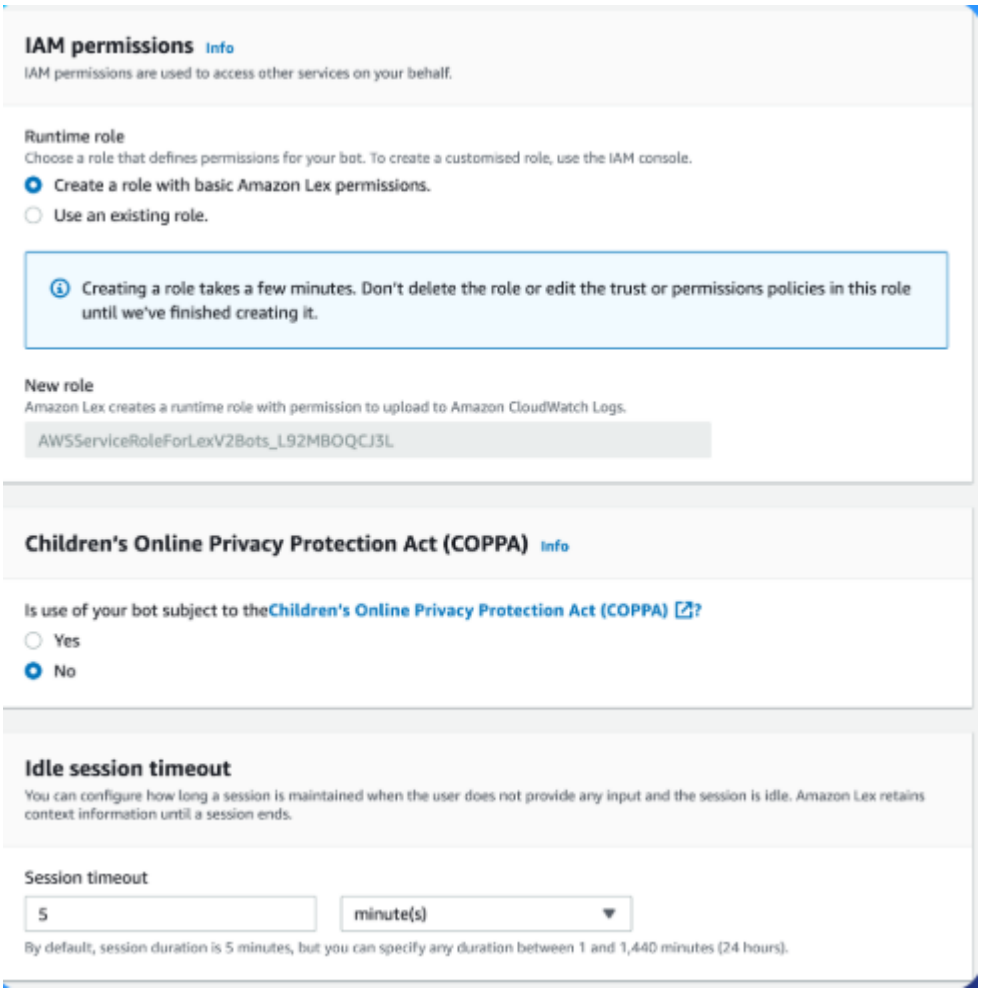

- For bot name, enter "**BankerBot**"
- For description enter "**BankerBot to help customers check their balance and make transfers**".
- Under IAM permissions, select **create a role with basic Amazon Lex permissions**.

We need Amazon Lex permission to call other AWS services on your behalf and it will be used to call Lambda service

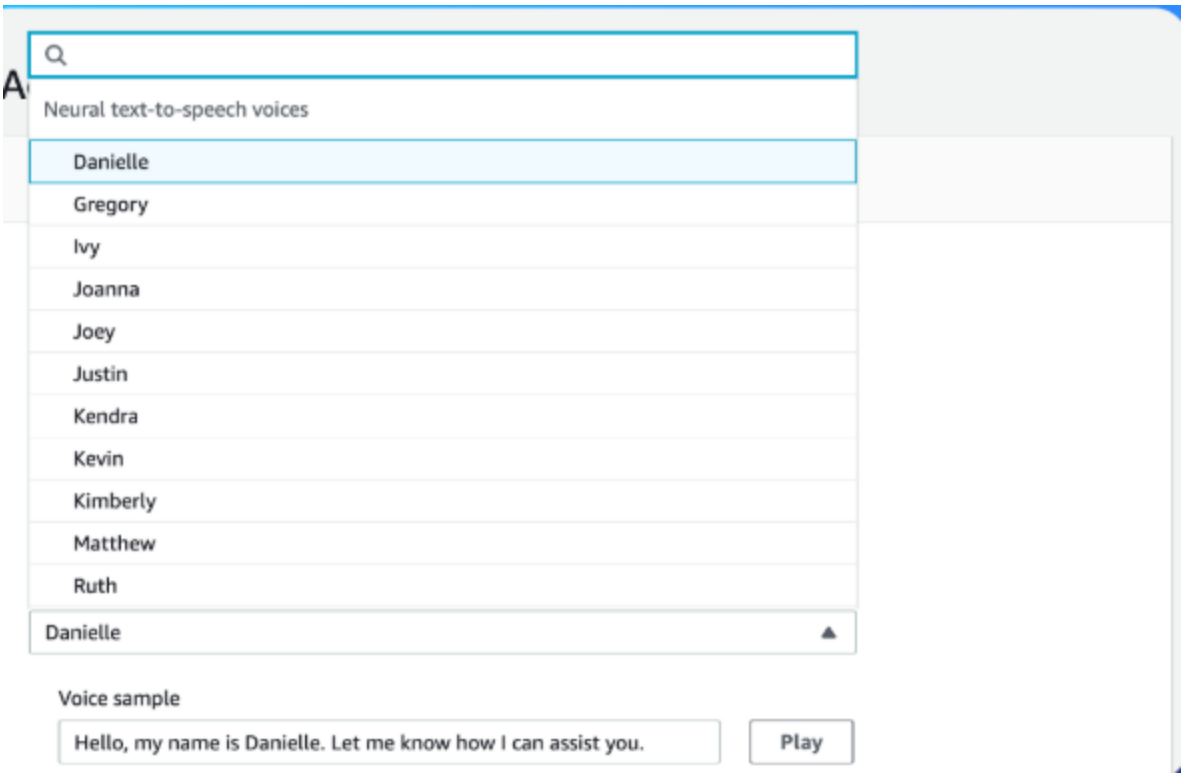
- Under children's Online Privacy Permission Act, select **No**

- Under Idle Session timeout, keep the default of " **5** mins".

What the Idle timeout session mean is that if the user does not add any input for 5mins, their session will expire.

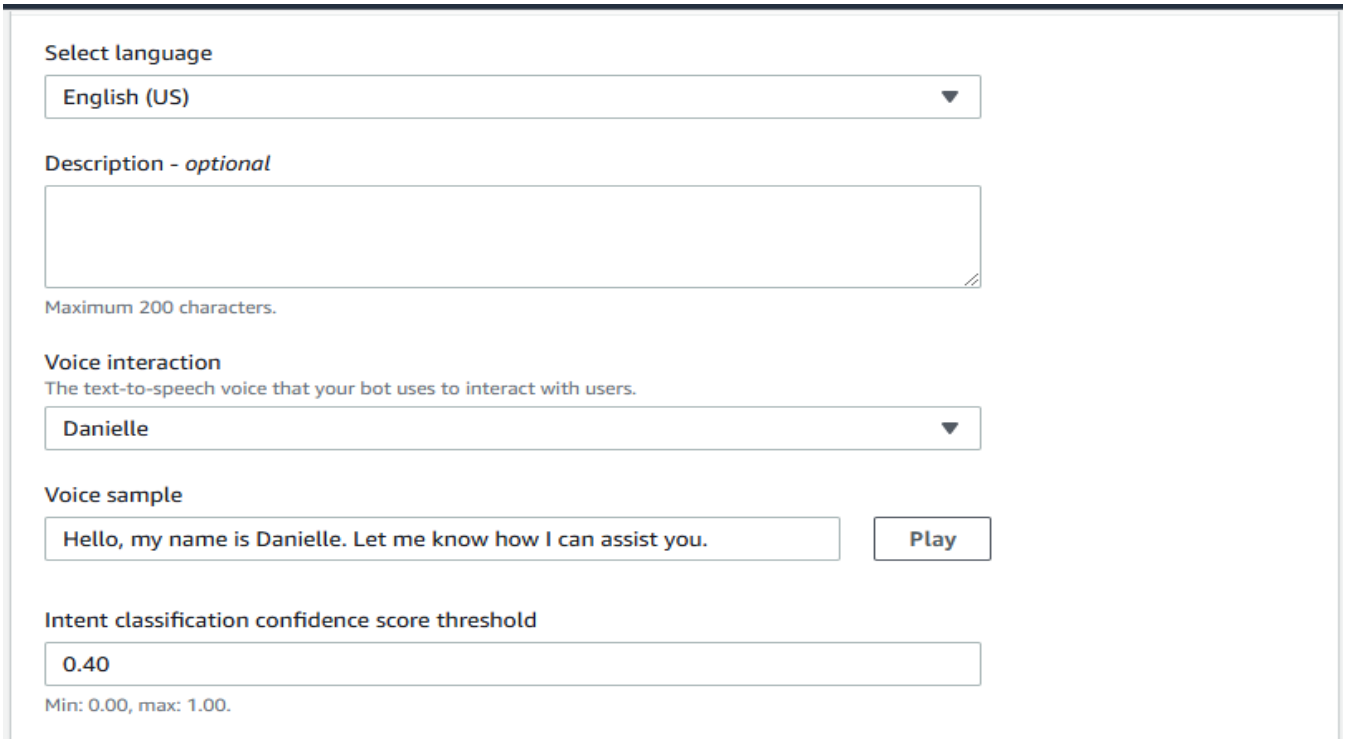



- Select **next** and keep the Language as **English**.
- Under voice interaction, click on the dropdown to hear different voice actions and select one




- For intent classification confidence score threshold, keep the default value of **0.4**

This threshold is like a minimum score for the chatbot to understand what the user is trying to say, so setting it to 0.4 means the chatbot needs at least 40% confidence that it understands what the user is trying to say but if the chatbot confidence is below that then an error message will be thrown.

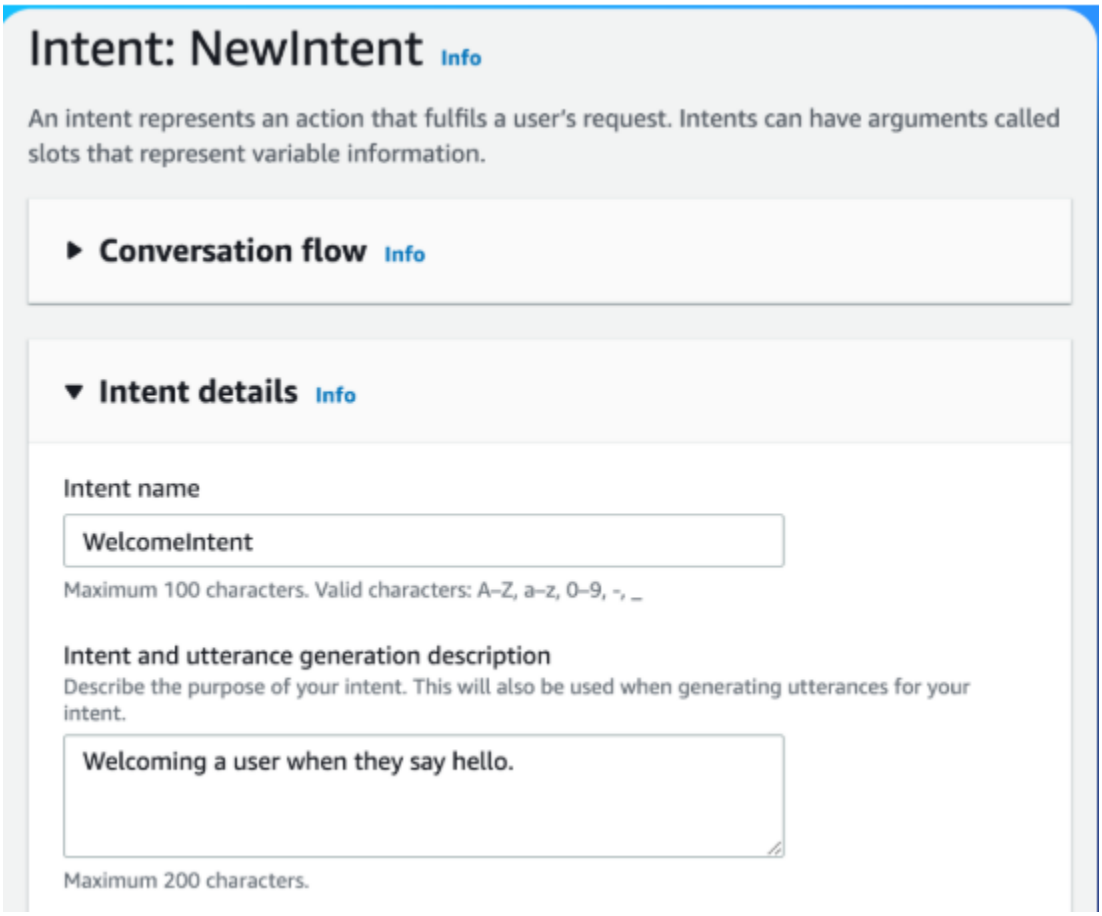


- Select **Done**

## STEP 2: CREATE YOUR FIRST INTENT

When the Bot is created, you will automatically see a new page called Intent: NewIntent
An intent is what the user is trying to achieve in their conversation with the chatbot. So you build your chatbot by defining different intents.

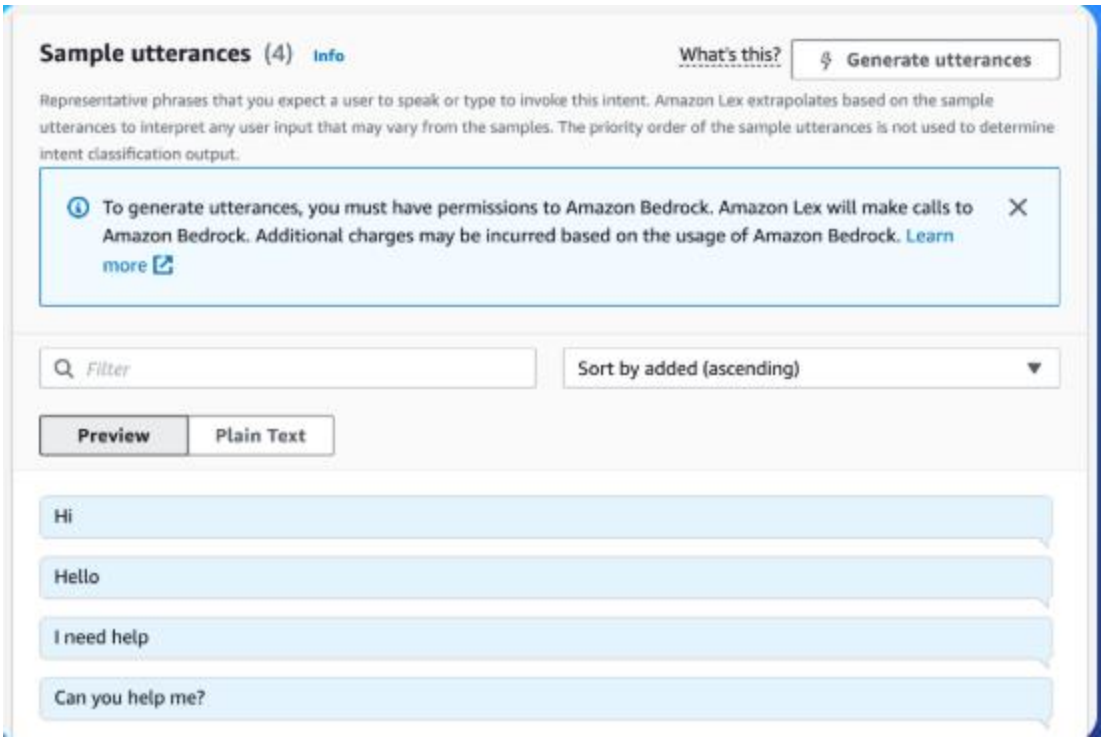
- Under the intent details, enter the intent name, "**WelcomeIntent**".
- Add a description, "**Welcoming a user when they say Hello**".



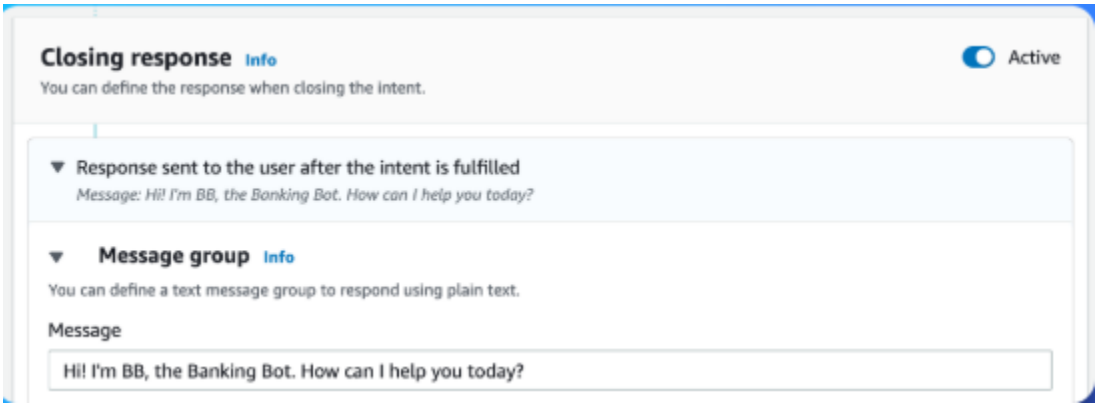

- Scroll down to the sample utterances panel and click the **plain** text button
- Write a user input that will trigger the intent as seen below

**Hi**
**Hello**
**I need help**
**Can you help me?**

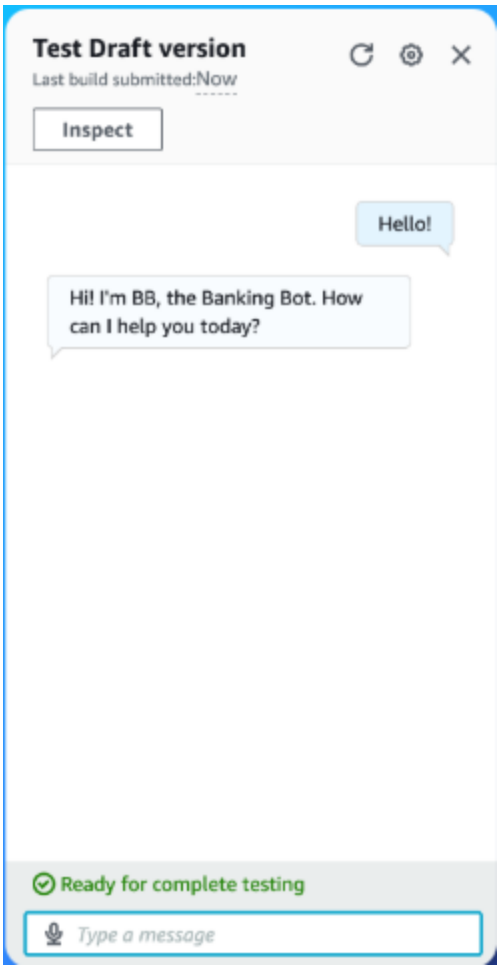
- Click back the **preview** button to see the utterances in chat form.




- Scroll down to closing response and expand the speech bubble for " **Response sent to the user after the intent is fulfilled".**
- In the message field enter a message "**Hi! I am BB the BankingBot, How can I help you today?"**

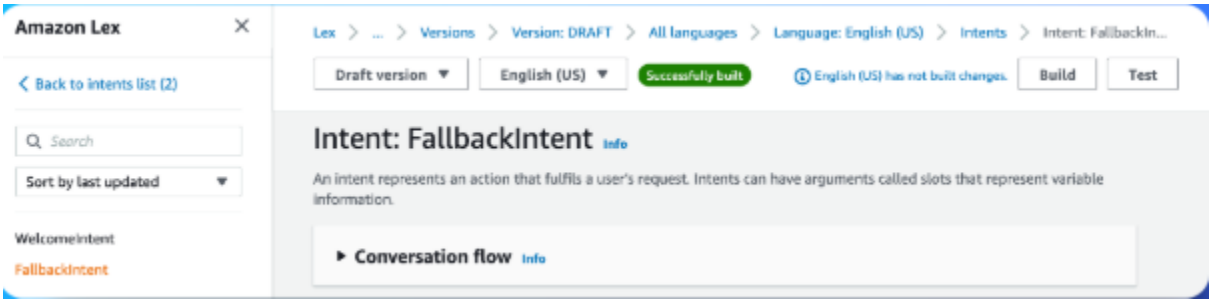



- Choose **save** intent and choose **build**.
- Choose **test** and a dialog box will pop up and you can interact with the bot with the user input that you had pasted on the sample utterance panel.

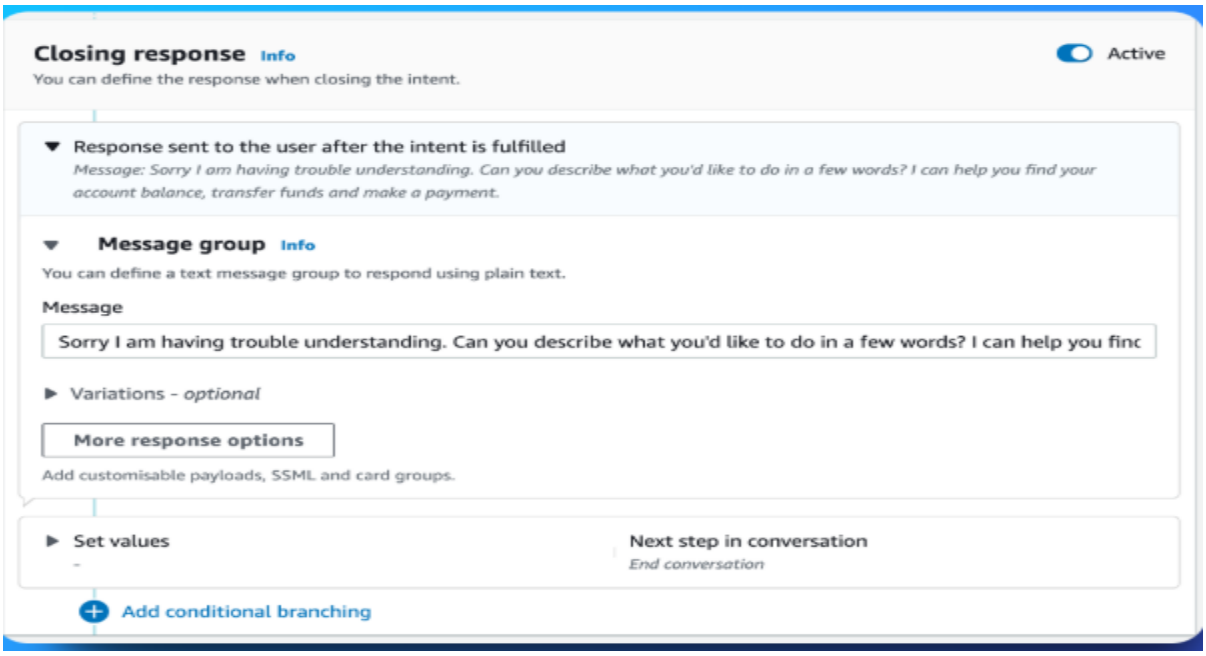



## STEP 3: MANAGE FALLBACKINTENT

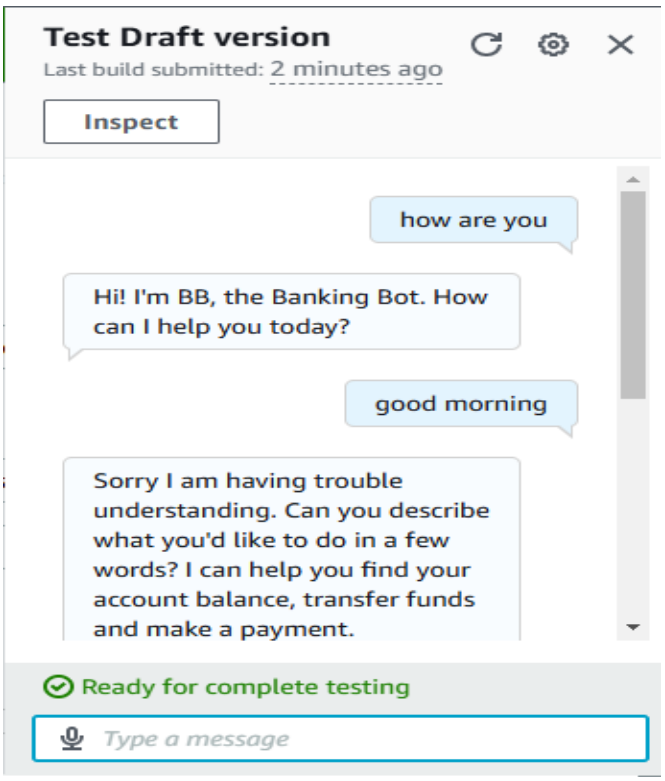
- In your left hand navigation panel, choose "**FallBackIntent**".




- Scroll down to **closing responses**.
- Expand the speech bubble for "**Response sent to the user after the intent is fulfilled**".
- In the message field, add the text " **Sorry I am having trouble understanding. Can you describe what you would like to do in a few words? I can help you find your Account Balance, transfer funds and make a payment."**




- Test these:
  - **Help me**
  - **Hiya**
  - **How are you**
  - **Good morning**



- Move over to another toggle next to the label **variations-optional**
- Click open the toggle and enter the text "**hmm could you try rephrasing that? I can help you find your Account Balance, transfer funds and make a payment."**
- You can add another variation.

Variations will give the user dynamic responses making them sound more conversational.

- Choose **Save** intent, choose **Build** and choose **Test**

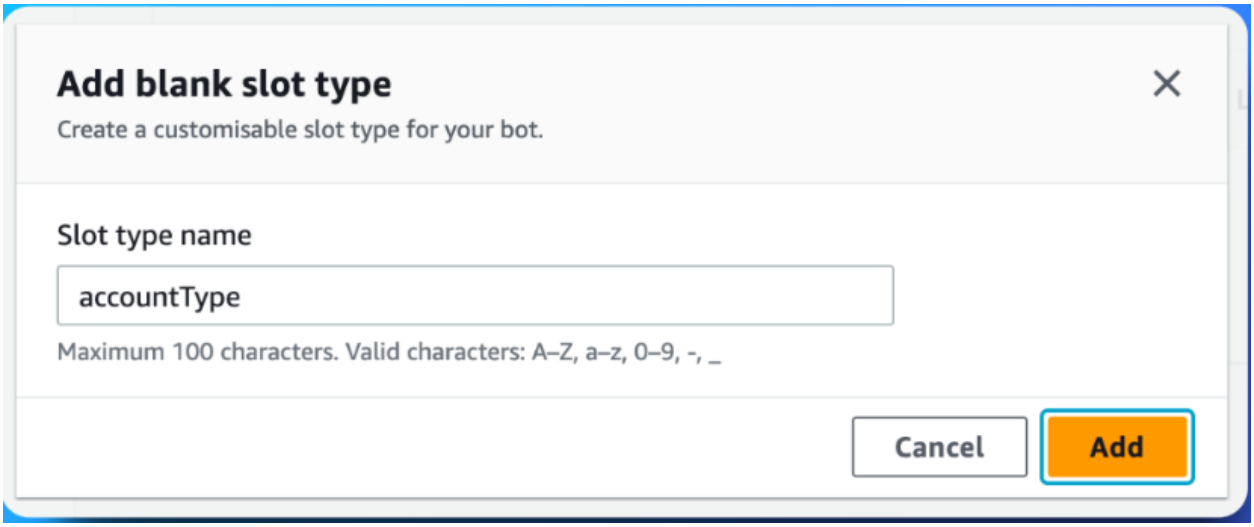
- Test these:
  - **Help me**
  - **Hiya**
  - **How are you**
  - **Good morning**

# STEP 4: CREATE A CUSTOM SLOT FOR ACCOUNT TYPES

In the Amazon Lex Console, choose slot types on the left hand navigation panel
Slots are information needed by a chatbot to complete a user's request.

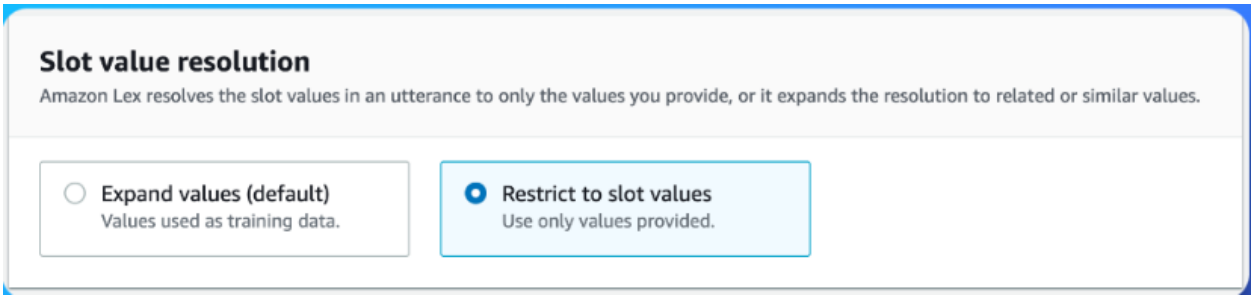
- Choose **Add slot type**.


- From the dropdown , choose **Add blank slot type.**
- Enter "**accountType"** for the slot type name and choose **Add**.



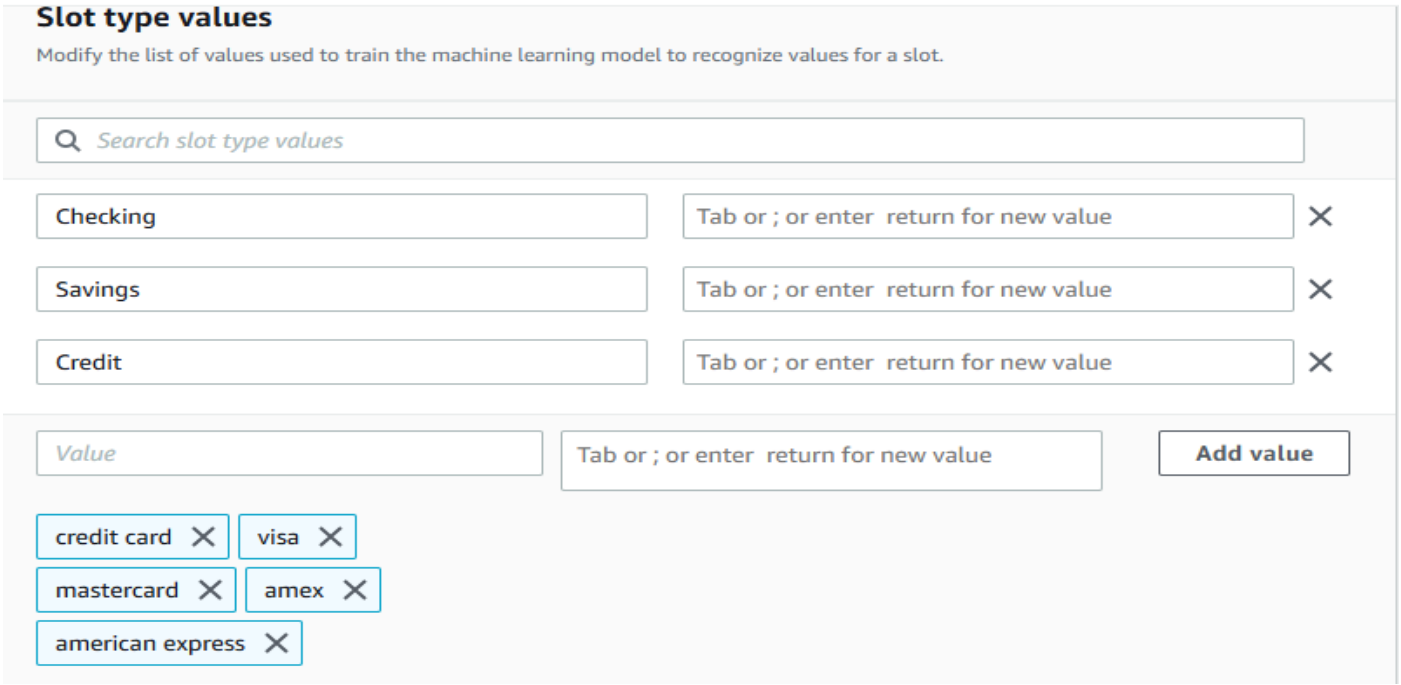
- This will bring up a large slot types editor panel.
- In the slot value resolution panel,choose "**Restrict to slot values**"

Selecting Restrict to slot values makes sure that only the values that you specify will count as a valid accountType.




- Add other three accountTypes, **Savings,Credit and Checking** accounts.
- In the value fields, enter "**Checking"** and click enter.
- Do the  same for "**Savings"**.
- In the second field, enter **Credit** and press "**;"** after everytime you add a new one. Credit card, visa, mastercard, amex, american express.
- Choose **Add value**.

By entering specific slot type values, we make sure that our Bankerbot only recognizes and accept the bank account types (Checking, Credit and Savings). This prevents any confusion with the user.

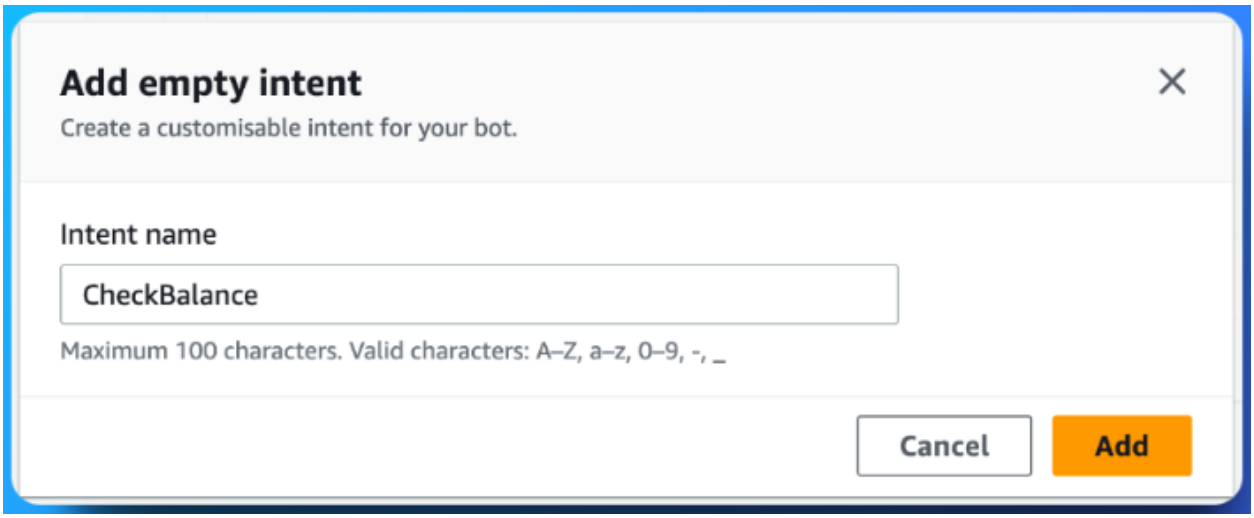



- Choose **Save slot type**.

**STEP 5: CREATE THE CHECKBALANCE INTENT**

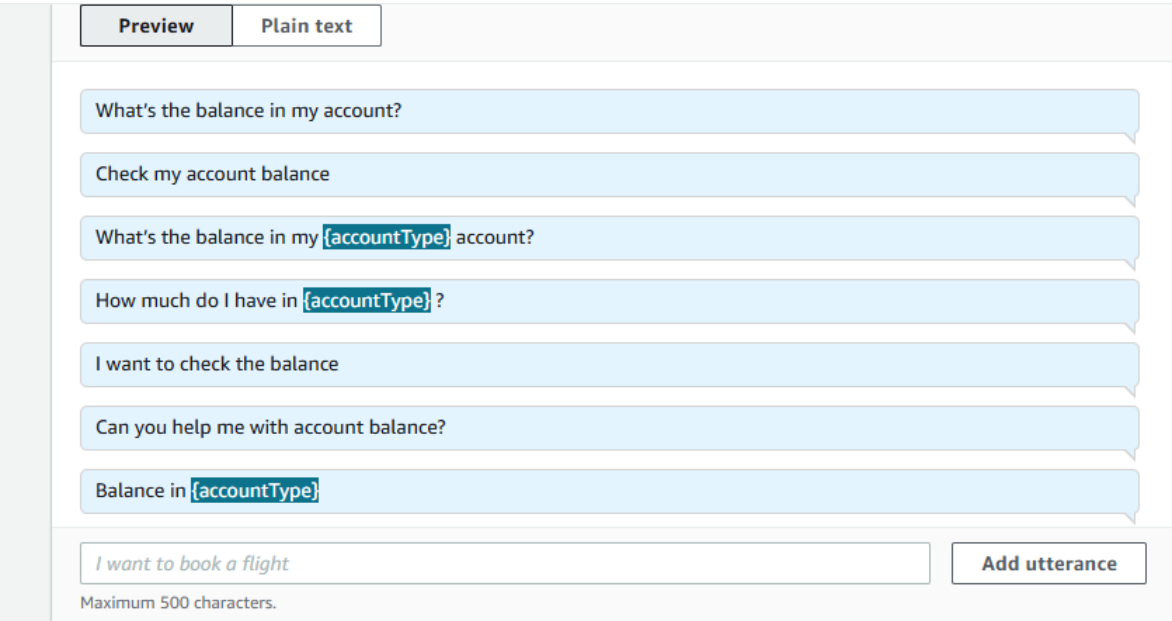
After the custom slots are all set up, the BankerBot now knows about the different account types and it is ready to help users check their account balance.

- Head back to Intents in your left hand navigation panel.

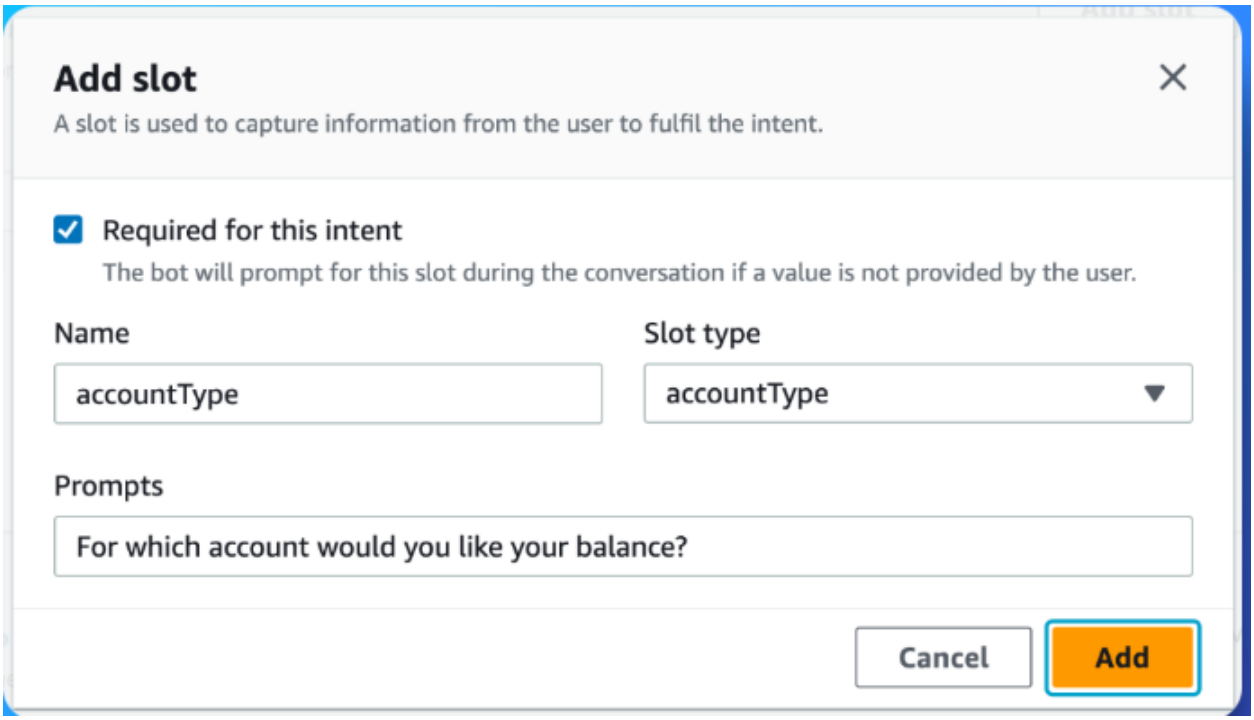



- Choose **Add intent** then **Add empty intent**.
- Enter "**CheckBalance**" as your intent name and choose **Add**.
- Enter "**intents to check the balance in the specified account type**" on the intents details panel.
- Scroll down to **Sample utterances** and switch to **Plain text**
- Add the utterances below and switch to **Preview**.

**What's the balance in my account?**
**Check my account balance**
**What's the balance in my {accountType} account?**
**How much do I have in {accountType} ?**
**I want to check the balance**
**Can you help me with account balance?**
**Balance in {accountType}**

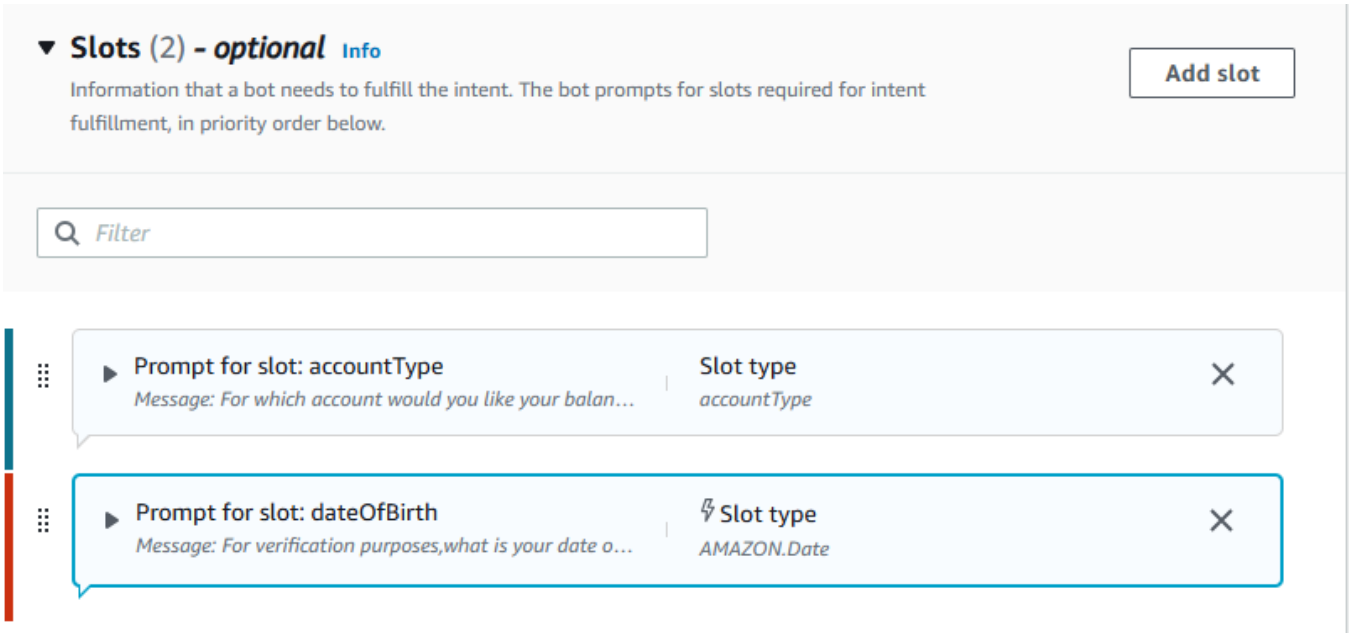



- Scroll down until you see the Slots Pane and choose **Add slot** button.
- For slot's Name enter "**accountType"** and for the slot type, choose your custom slot value **accountType** which you had created.
- Enter the prompt "**For which account would you like your balance?**" and choose **Add**.




- Next, choose **Add slot** and use the values below for the next slot.
  **Name: DateOfBirth**

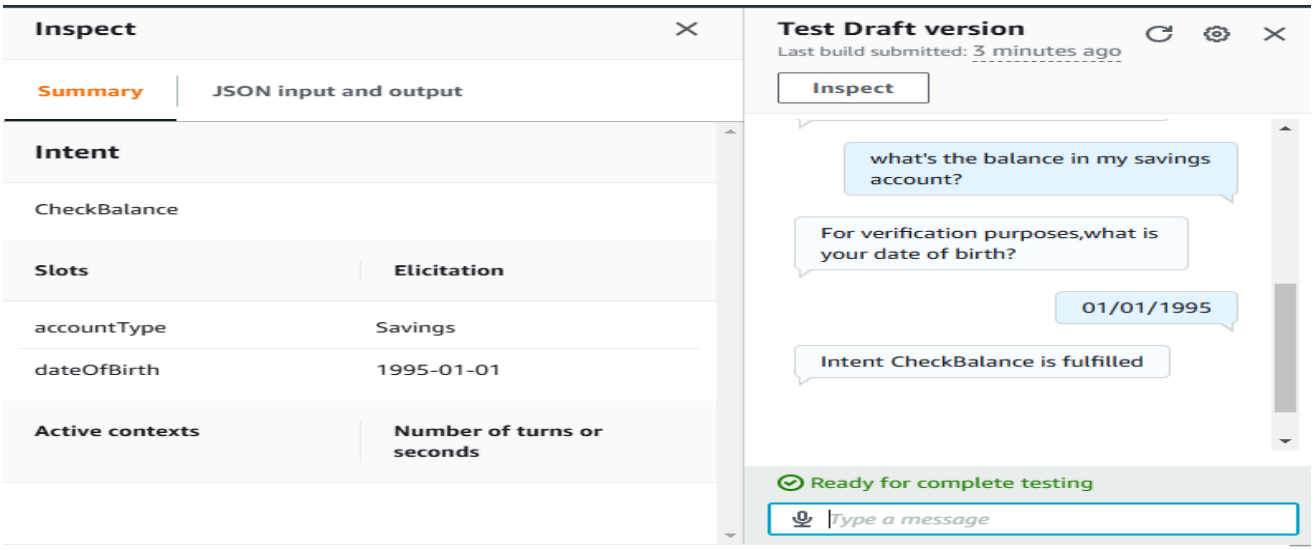
**Slot type: Amazon.Date**
**Prompts: For verification purposes, what is your date of birth?**




- **Save** intent, choose **Build** and choose **Test**.
- In your chat window, enter "**what's the balance in my savings account?**" but this time Lex will only prompt you for your date your birth as it already know that it should be the Savings account it checks.
- Follow Amazon Lex Prompts and enter an account type and birth date.

If the Bot returns "**intent CheckBalance fulfilled**", it means the bot has successfully taken in the user's details but doesn't actually know how to calculate the bank yet.

- Choose inspect

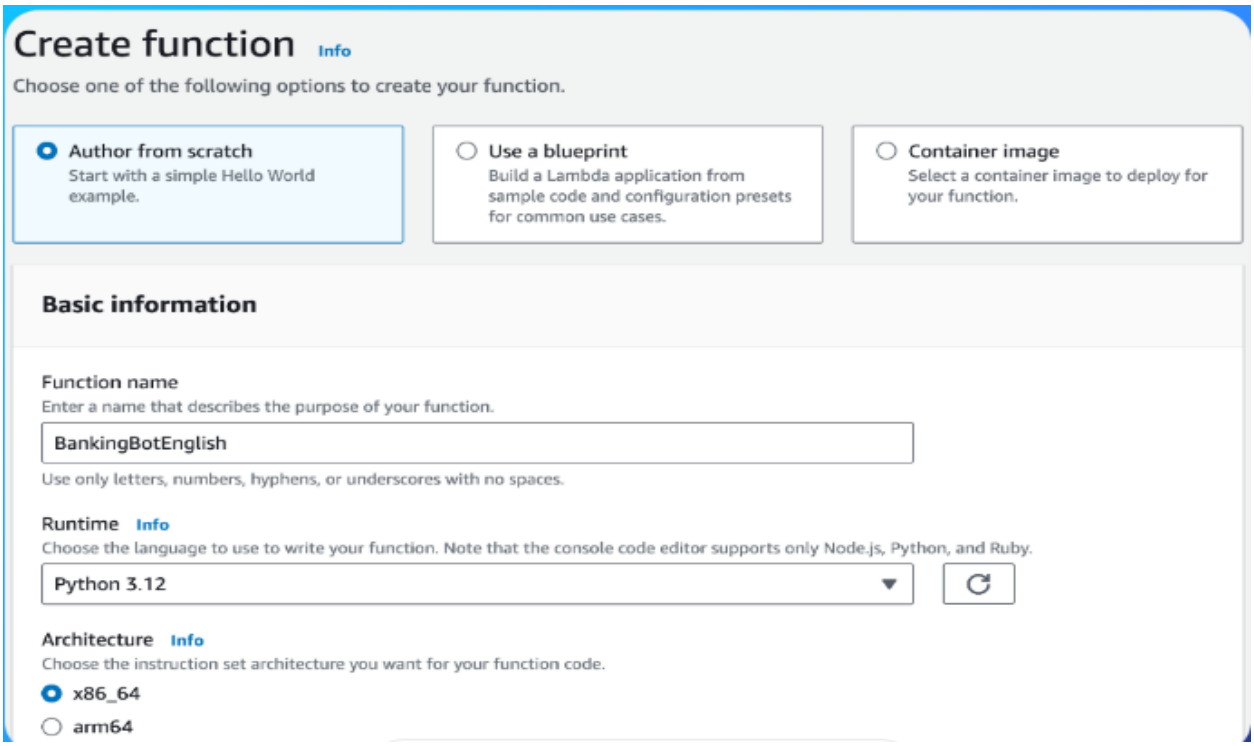



**STEP 6: CREATE YOUR AWS LAMBDA FUNCTION**

Lambda is a service that helps you run code in the cloud without server management. Lambda will manage the servers for you.

Lambda will be used here to generate a random bank balance numbers.

- Head to **Lambda** in the AWS Console and choose "**Author from scratch**".
- Enter the function name "**BankingBotEnglish**".
- Choose runtime **Python 3.12** or a later version of python 3.




- Select **Create function** and scroll down to the **Function code** Section.

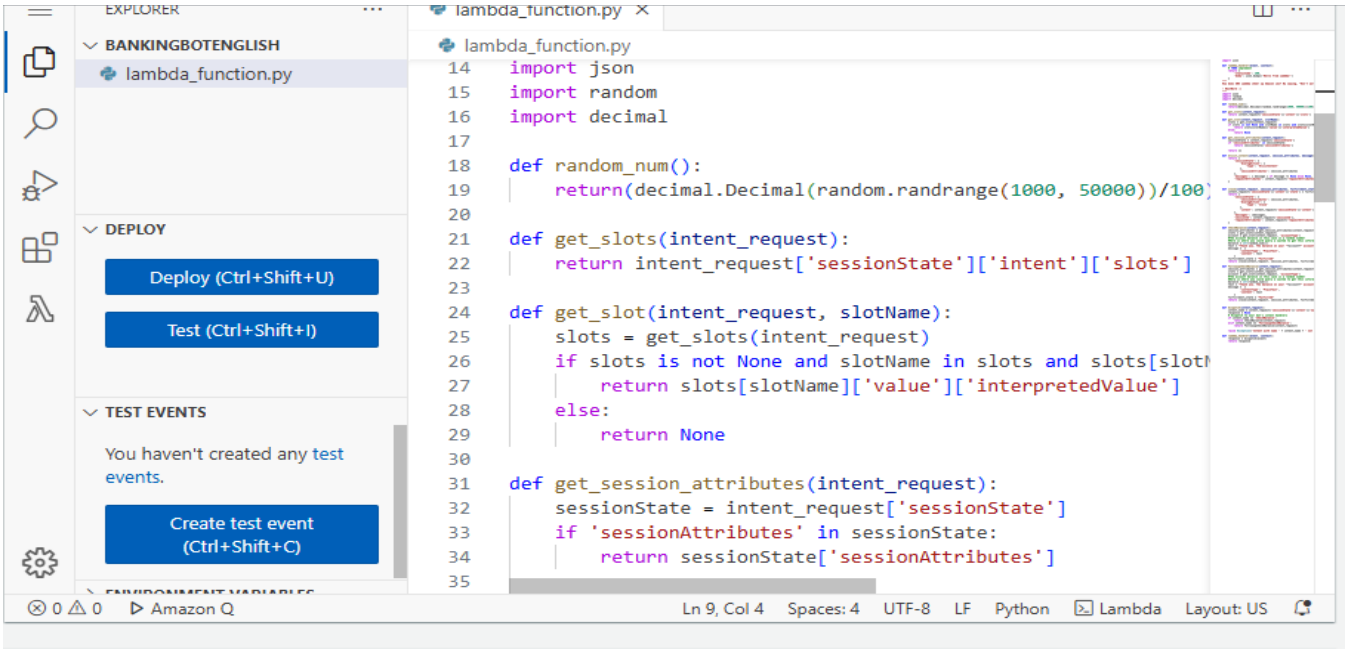
- Double-click on "**lambda_function.py**" on the left hand file browser and add the source code file below. The python script will help the chatbot give users quick answers about their account balances.

```
"""
How does AWS Lambda cheer up Amazon Lex? By saying, "Don't worry, I've got
your back(end)!"

- NextWork :)
"""
import json
import random
import decimal

def random_num():
    return(decimal.Decimal(random.randrange(1000, 50000))/100)

def get_slots(intent_request):
    return intent_request['sessionState']['intent']['slots']

def get_slot(intent_request, slotName):
    slots = get_slots(intent_request)
    if slots is not None and slotName in slots and slots[slotName] is not
None:
        return slots[slotName]['value']['interpretedValue']
    else:
        return None

def get_session_attributes(intent_request):
    sessionState = intent_request['sessionState']
    if 'sessionAttributes' in sessionState:
        return sessionState['sessionAttributes']

    return {}

def elicit_intent(intent_request, session_attributes, message):
    return {
        'sessionState': {
            'dialogAction': {
                'type': 'ElicitIntent'
            },
            'sessionAttributes': session_attributes
        },
        'messages': [ message ] if message != None else None,
        'requestAttributes': intent_request['requestAttributes'] if
'requestAttributes' in intent_request else None
    }


def close(intent_request, session_attributes, fulfillment_state, message):
    intent_request['sessionState']['intent']['state'] = fulfillment_state
    return {
        'sessionState': {
            'sessionAttributes': session_attributes,
            'dialogAction': {
                'type': 'Close'
```

```
            },
            'intent': intent_request['sessionState']['intent']
        },
        'messages': [message],
        'sessionId': intent_request['sessionId'],
        'requestAttributes': intent_request['requestAttributes'] if
'requestAttributes' in intent_request else None
    }

def CheckBalance(intent_request):
    session_attributes = get_session_attributes(intent_request)
    slots = get_slots(intent_request)
    account = get_slot(intent_request, 'accountType')
    #The account balance in this case is a random number
    #Here is where you could query a system to get this information
    balance = str(random_num())
    text = "Thank you. The balance on your "+account+" account is
$"+balance+" dollars."
    message =  {
            'contentType': 'PlainText',
            'content': text
        }
    fulfillment_state = "Fulfilled"
    return close(intent_request, session_attributes, fulfillment_state,
message)

def FollowupCheckBalance(intent_request):
    session_attributes = get_session_attributes(intent_request)
    slots = get_slots(intent_request)
    account = get_slot(intent_request, 'accountType')
    #The account balance in this case is a random number
    #Here is where you could query a system to get this information
    balance = str(random_num())
    text = "Thank you. The balance on your "+account+" account is
$"+balance+" dollars."
    message =  {
            'contentType': 'PlainText',
            'content': text
        }
    fulfillment_state = "Fulfilled"
    return close(intent_request, session_attributes, fulfillment_state,
message)


def dispatch(intent_request):
    intent_name = intent_request['sessionState']['intent']['name']
    response = None
    # Dispatch to your bot's intent handlers
    if intent_name == 'CheckBalance':
        return CheckBalance(intent_request)
    elif intent_name == 'FollowupCheckBalance':
        return FollowupCheckBalance(intent_request)

    raise Exception('Intent with name ' + intent_name + ' not supported')

def lambda_handler(event, context):
    response = dispatch(event)
```

```
return response
```

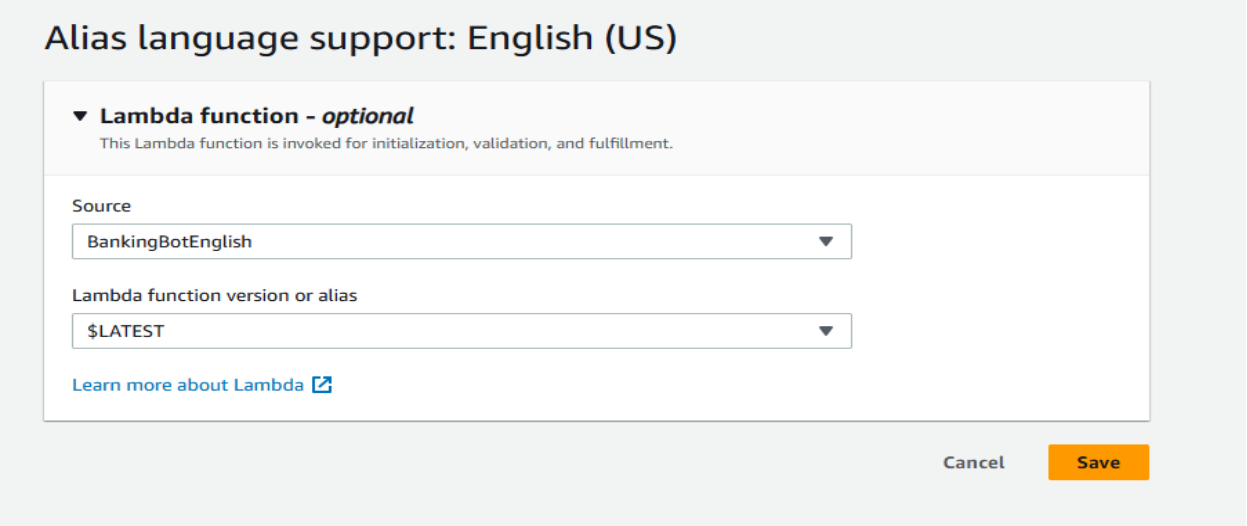
- Paste the code on your text editor and choose **Deploy.**




**STEP 7: CONNECT AWS LAMBDA WITH AMAZON LEX**

We need Amazon Lex and Lambda to work together so that when a user asks for a bank account balance, Lex can trigger Lambda to calculate the number right away. So we will connect the Lambda function to BankerBot.

- Head back to Amazon Lex Console and select **BankerBot** and on the left hand menu, choose **Aliases**.
  You can think of Alias as a pointer for a specific version of your bot.
- Choose the default, **TestBotAlias** (this is the default version of your bot that is made for testing and development).
- From the Languages panel, select **English (US)** and a Lambda function panel will pop up. This panel lets you associate a Lambda function to this TestBotAlias version of the bot.
- Choose your Lambda function **BankingBotEnglish** for source and leave the Alias field at the default, **$LATEST**. Using this version means you are directing your Alias to always use the most up to date version of Lambda function.

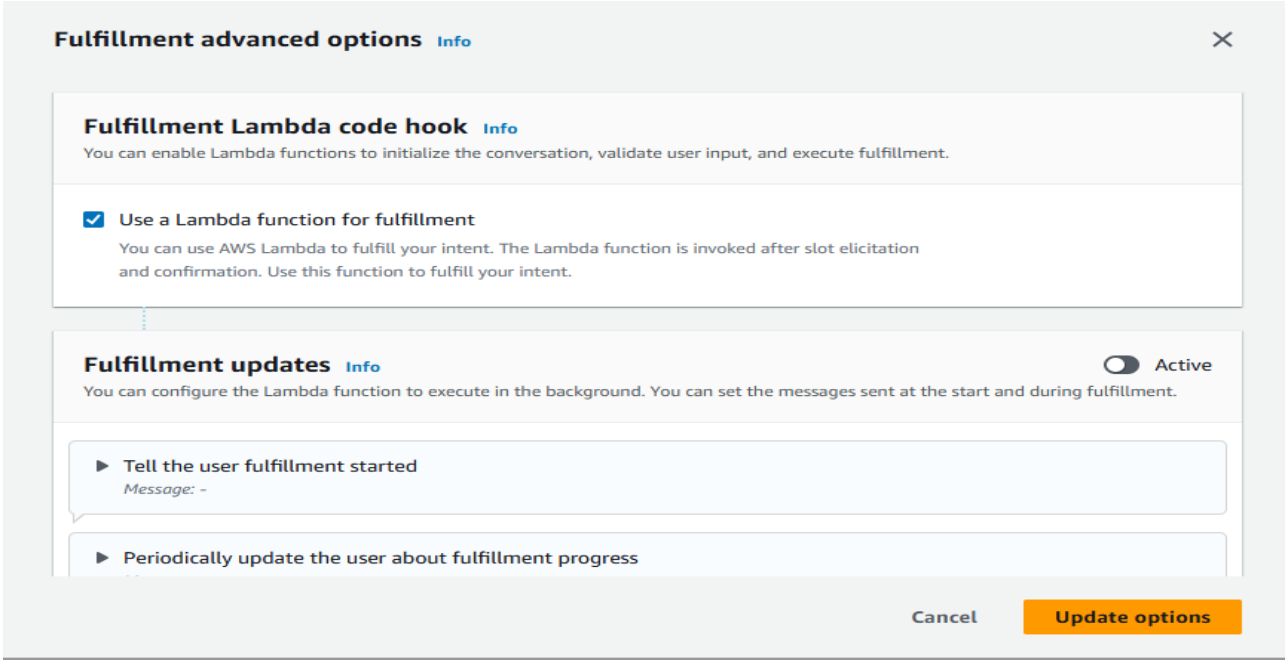



- Choose **Save**

**STEP 8: CONNECT YOUR CHECKBALANCE INTENT WITH YOUR LAMBDA FUNCTION**

Lambda function has to be connected to the CheckBalance intent.

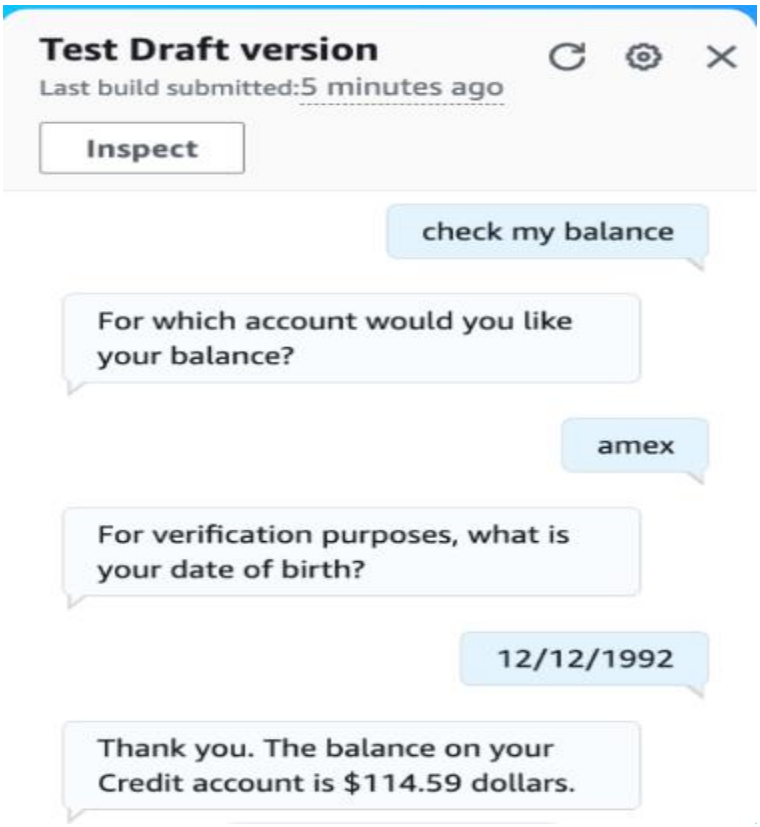
- Navigate to the **CheckBalance** Intent and scroll down to the **Fulfilment panel**.
- Expand the "**On successful fulfilment**" bubble and choose "**Advanced options**".
- Under the **Fulfilment Lambda Code Hook** panel, check the checkbox next to use a Lambda function for Fulfilment.
- Choose **Update Options**




- Choose **Save** intent
- Choose **Build**

- Choose **Test**

Ask for the balance of any of your accounts. The bot should be able to return random bank balance figures.

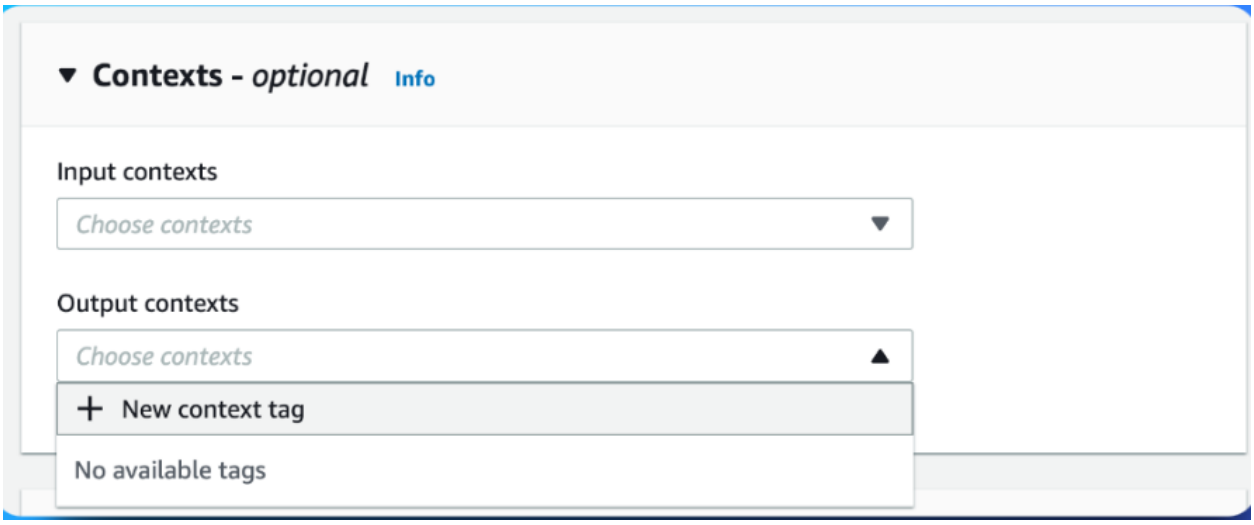



**STEP 9: SAVE USER INFORMATION WITH THE CHATBOT**

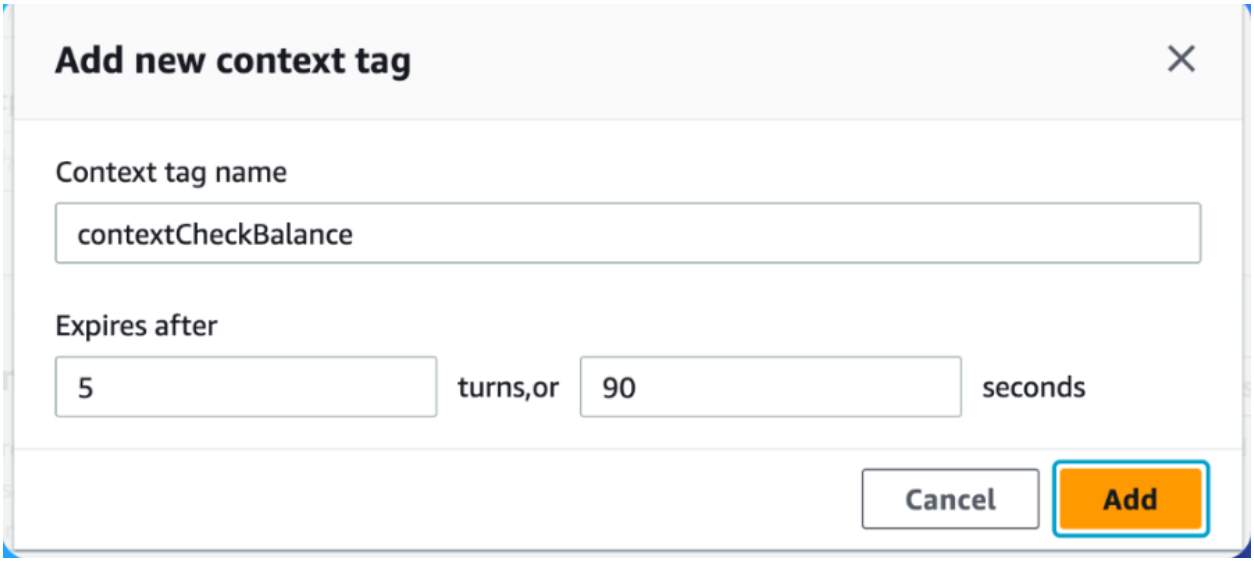
In the **CheckBalance** Intent page, scroll down to the **Contexts** panel.

Under the **Output contexts** dropdown, choose "**New context tag"**.

Contexts tags are used to store and check for specific information across different parts of a conversation. They help to save the user from having to repeat same information.




Name the new context "**contextCheckBalance**" and set up the time turns for **5** mins and **90** secs




Choose **Add**, **Save** intent, **Build** and **Test**.

**STEP 10: CREATE A FOLLOWUPCHECKBALANCE INTENT**

Imagine that BankerBot just used CheckBalance to give someone their account balance. Now the user has a **follow up question** - "What about my *other* account's balance?"

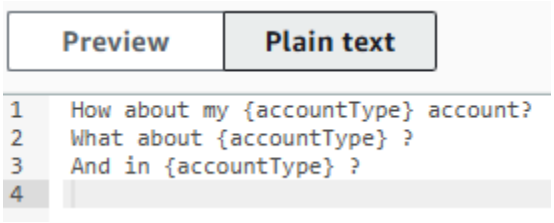
To solve this problem, let's set up a **new Intent** that will handle follow up questions without asking for the user's birthday again

- Head back to the **Intents** page to set up a new intent.
- Choose **Add intent**
- Choose **Add empty**
- Use the following properties to set up the new intent

  **Name**: **FollowupCheckBalance**

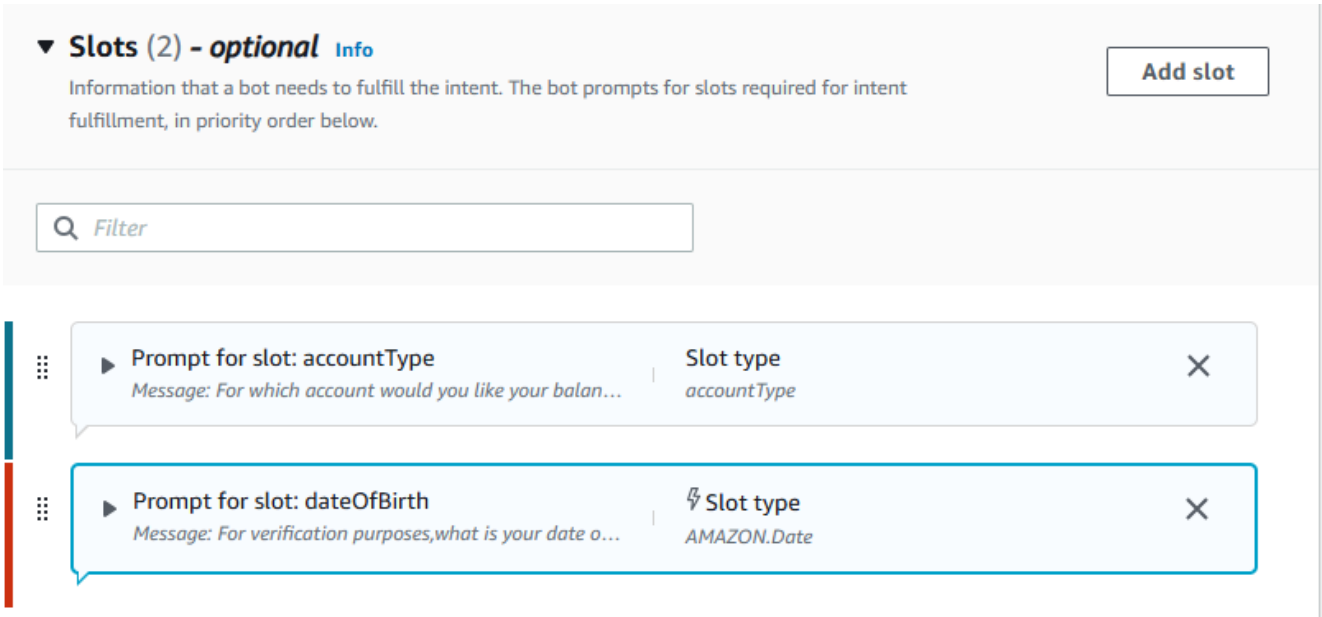
  **Description**: **Intent to allow a follow-up balance check request without authentication.**

**Input context**: **contextCheckBalance**
**Sample Utterances**: **How about my {accountType} account?**
**What about {accountType} ?**
**And in {accountType} ?**



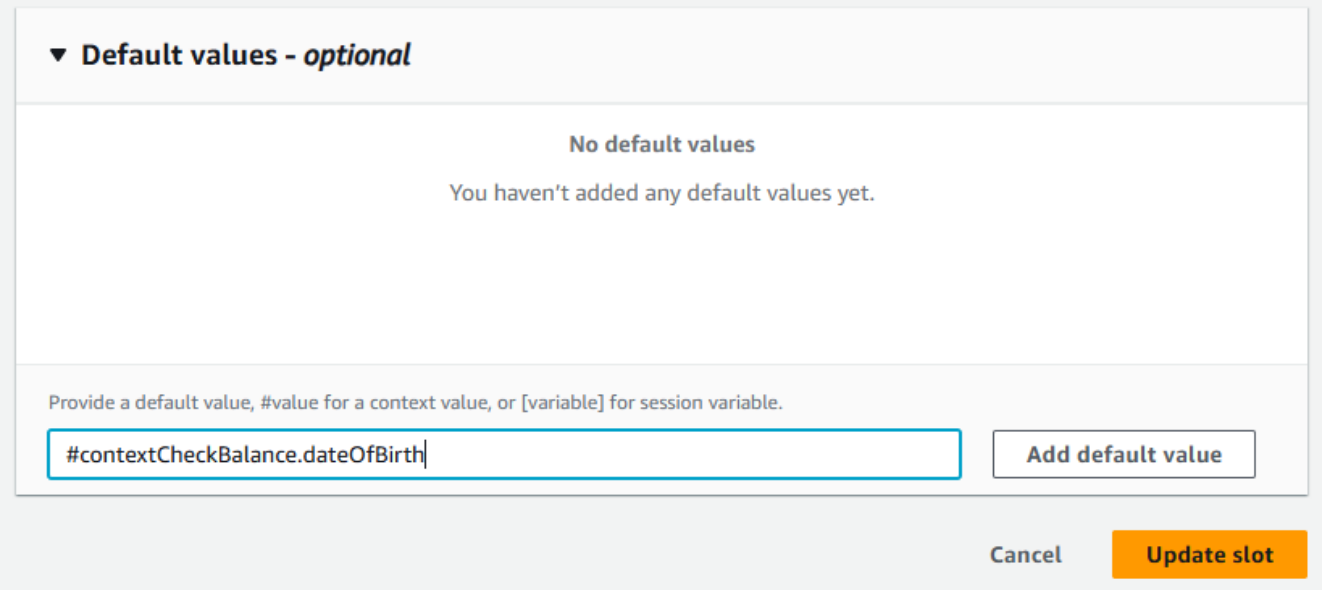

**Name**: **accountType**
**Prompt**: **For which account would you like your balance?**
**Slot Type**: **accountType**

- Add another new slot
  **Name: dateOfBirth**
  **Prompt**: **for verification purposes, what is your date of birth?**
  **Slot type**: **AMAZON.Date**

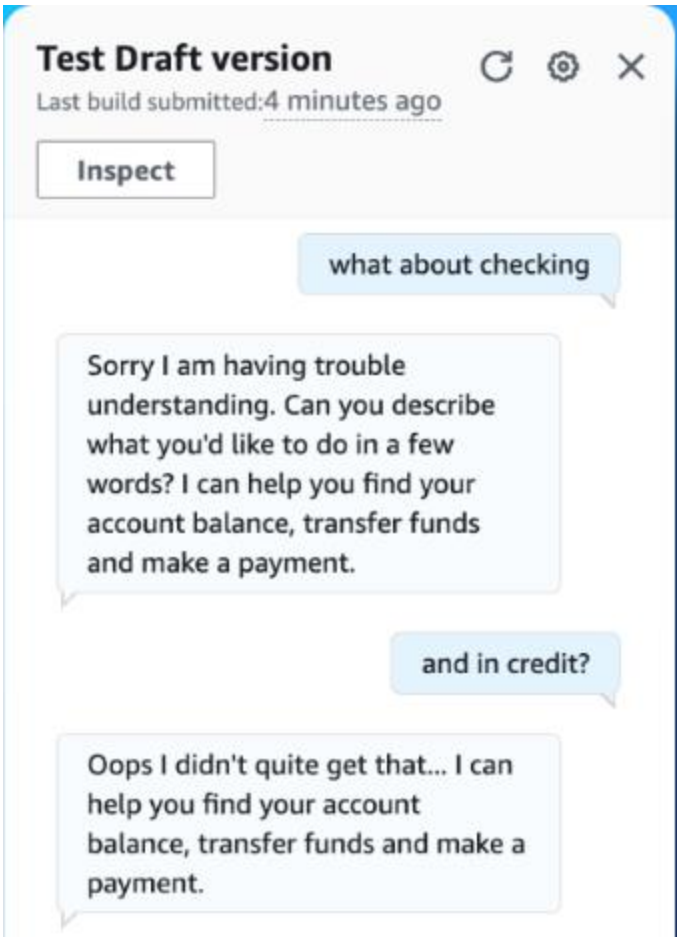



- Choose **Save** intent.
- You have to set up FollowupCheckBalance's dateOfBirth slot to use saved information.
- On the **FollowupCheckBalance** Intent page, expand the **dateOfBirth** slot and choose **Advanced options.**
- Scroll down to the **Default values** panel. This panel allows us to create default values for the intent's slots.

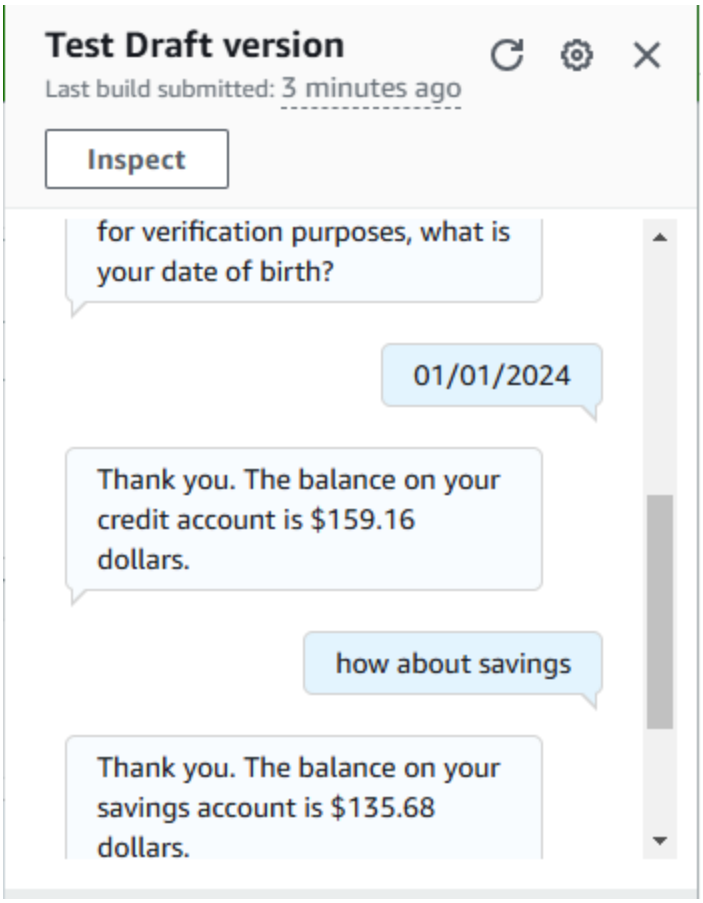
- Enter **"#contextCheckBalance.dateOfBirth**". This allows Amazon Lex to know that the input context which is contextCheckBalance should have the value of dateOfBirth in CheckBalance.
- Choose **Add default value**
- Choose **Update slot**.




- Head to the **Fulfilment panel** to make sure the Lambda function is also connected to the intent.
- Expand "**On successful fulfilment**" and choose "**Advanced options**".
- Head to the "**Fulfilment Lambda code hook**" panel and select the checkbox to enable a fulfilment Lambda for the intent.
- Choose **Update options**
- Choose **Save intent**
- Choose **Build**
- Choose **Test**
- Ask your chatbot "**What about checking?**"



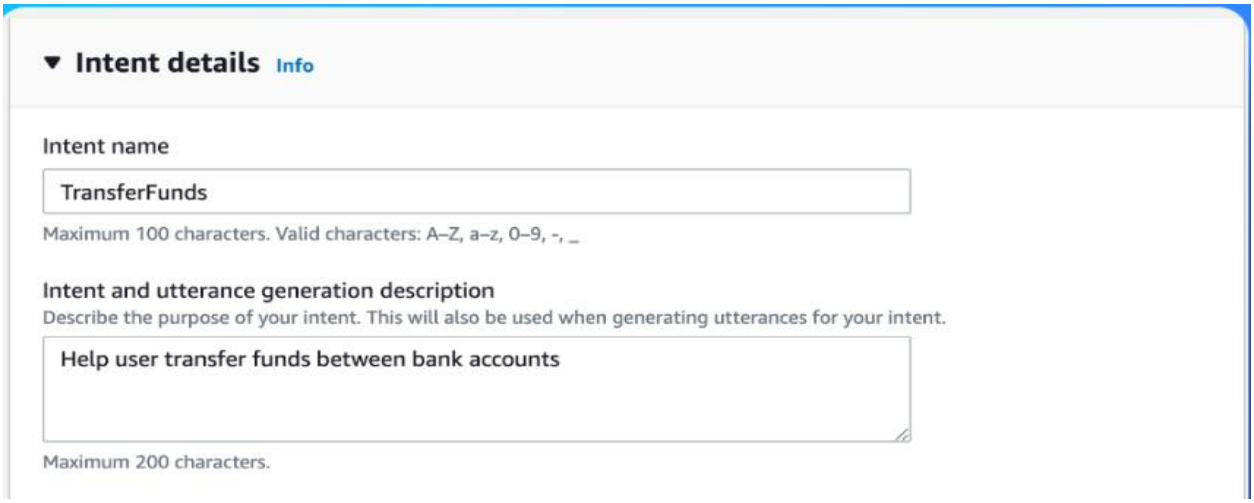

- **Why isn't the intent working?**
  No matter which utterance you use, you will just get an error response. This is because the FollowupCheckBalance intent's input context isn't available yet. The intent doesn't know your birthday! Activate the **CheckBalance** intent first.Then, the context for date of birth will be carried over to the **FollowupCheckBalance** intent.



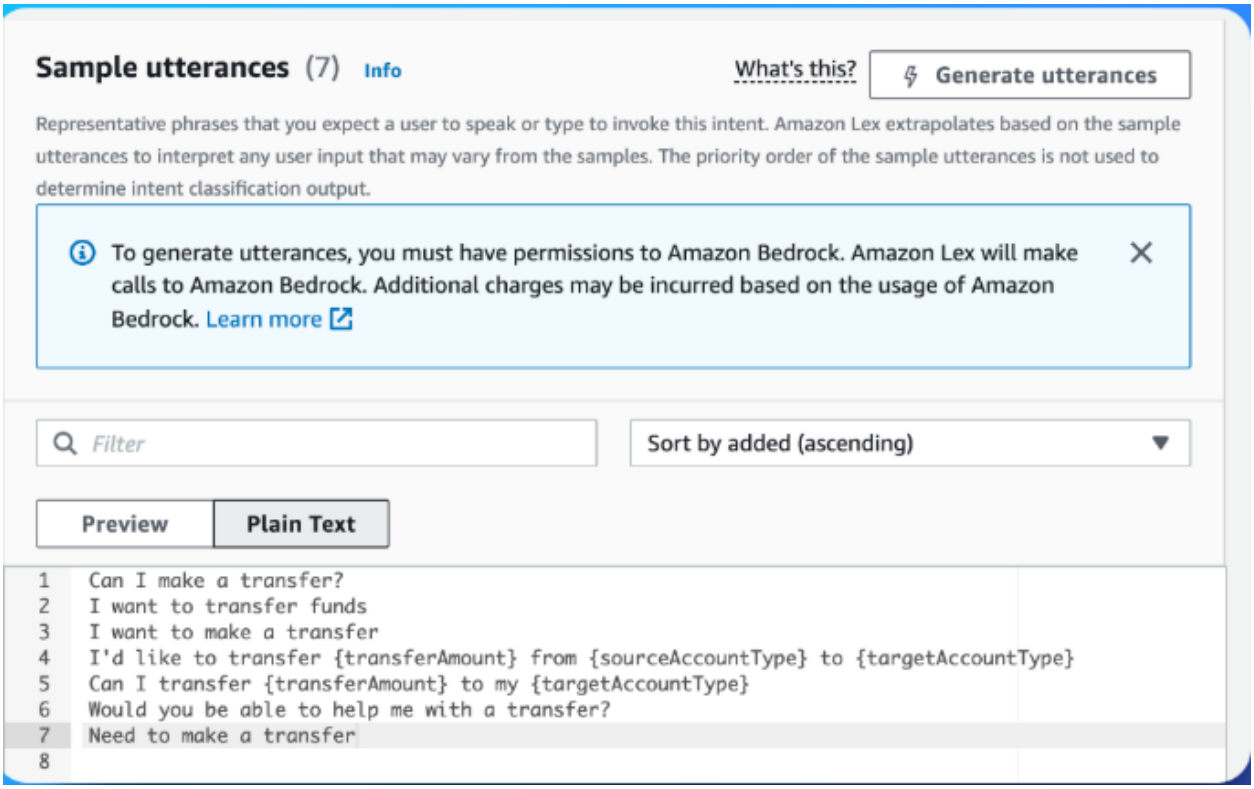

**STEP 11: BUILD A CHATBOT WITH MULTIPLE SLOTS**

We will create a new **TransferFunds** Intent to help users transfer money between accounts. A new intent that uses two **accountType** slots would be set up.

- Create a new empty intent with the following properties:
  **Name**: **TransferFunds**
  **Description: Help users transfer funds between two accounts**.



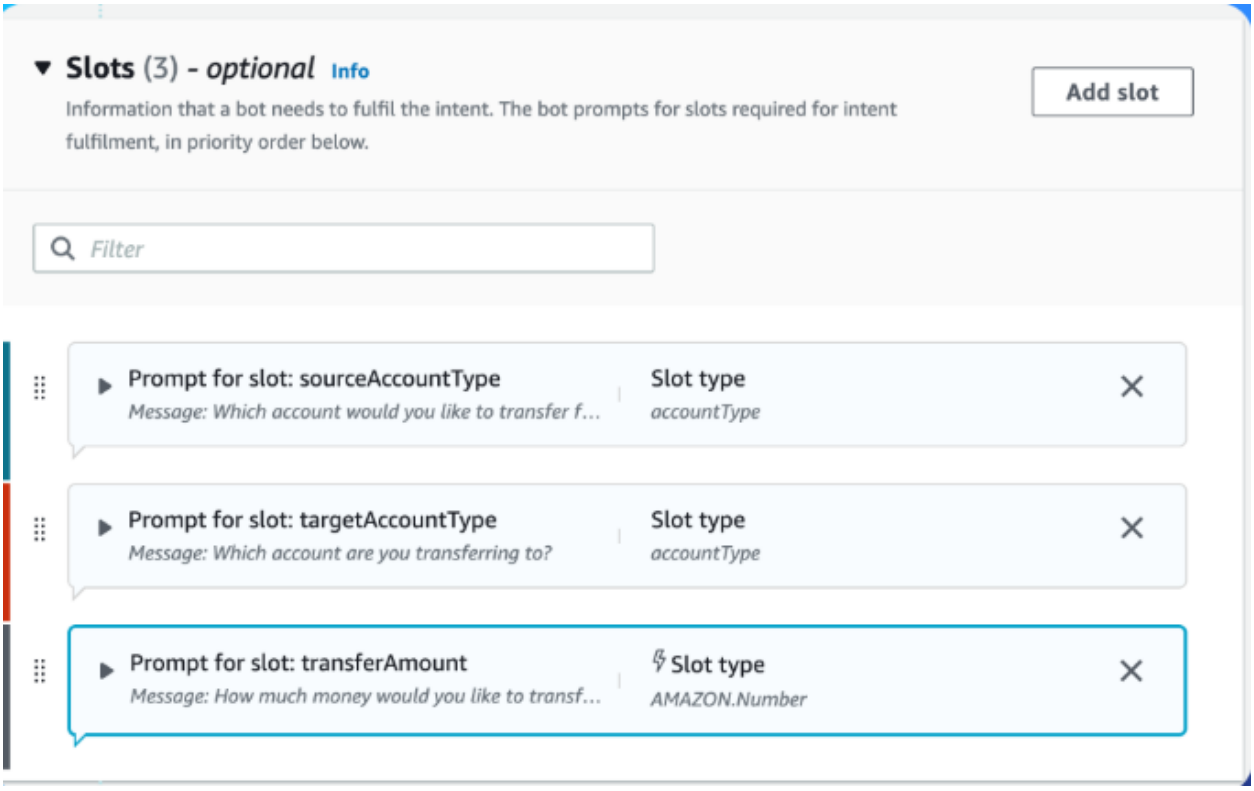
- Paste the sample utterances as plain text
  **Can I make a transfer?**
  **I want to transfer funds**
  **I'd like to transfer {transferAmount} from {sourceAccountType} to {targetAccountType}**
  **Can I transfer {transferAmount} to my {targetAccountType}**
  **Would you be able to help me with a transfer?**
  **Need to make a transfer**



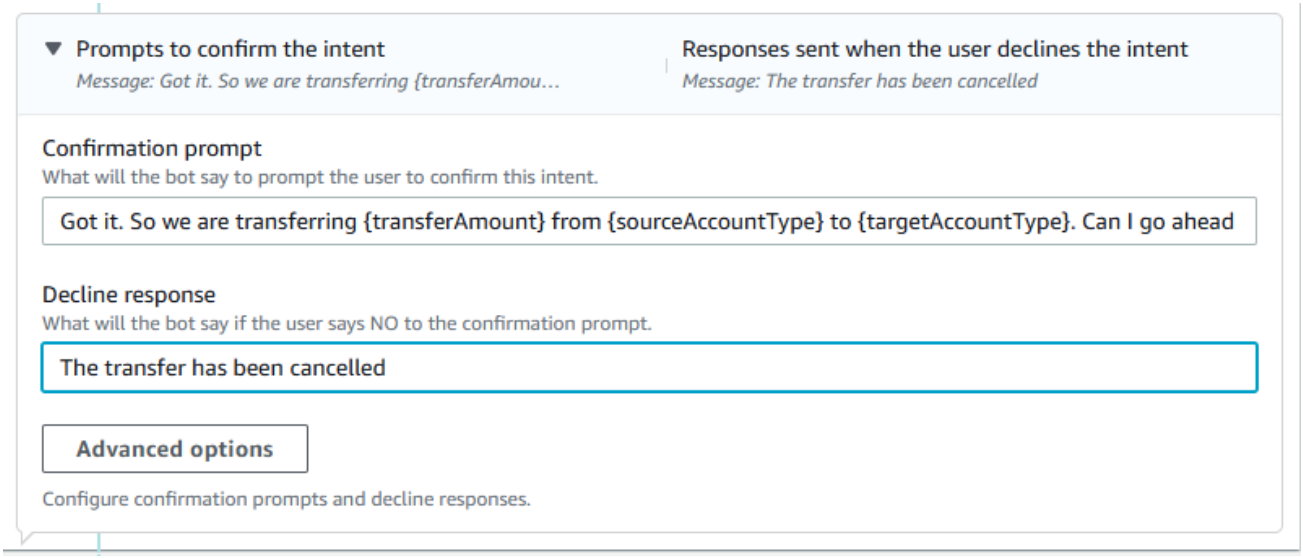

Add a new slot called "**sourceAccountType** with the prompt "**which account would you like to transfer from?"** and the slot type **"accountType".**

- Add another new slot called "**targetAccountType**" with the prompt "**which account are you transferring to?**" and the slot type "**accountType**".

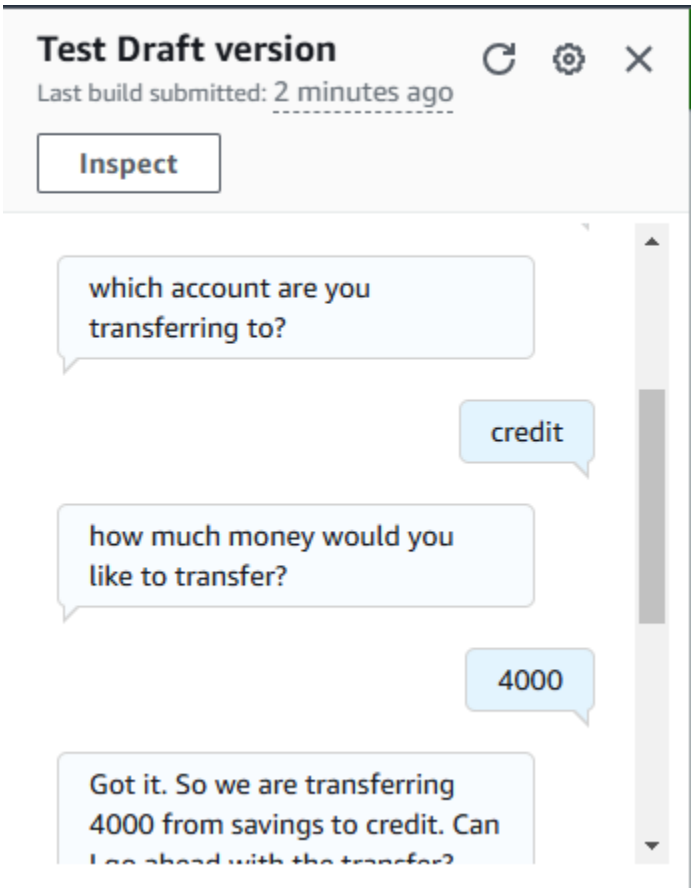
Add another new slot called "**transferAmount**" with the prompt "**how much money would you like to transfer?"** and the slot type "**AMAZON.Number**".




Scroll down to the confirmation panel and enter the following: "**Got it. So we are transferring {transferAmount} from {sourceAccountType} to {targetAccountType}. Can I go ahead with the transfer?"**
In **Decline response**, enter "**The transfer has been cancelled**."



Scroll to the **Closing response** pane and add the message "**The transfer is complete. {transferAmount} should now be available in your {targetAccountType} account."**
Choose **Save intent** and choose **Build**.
Choose **Test** and ask your chatbot : **I'd like to transfer money and continue the conversation**.

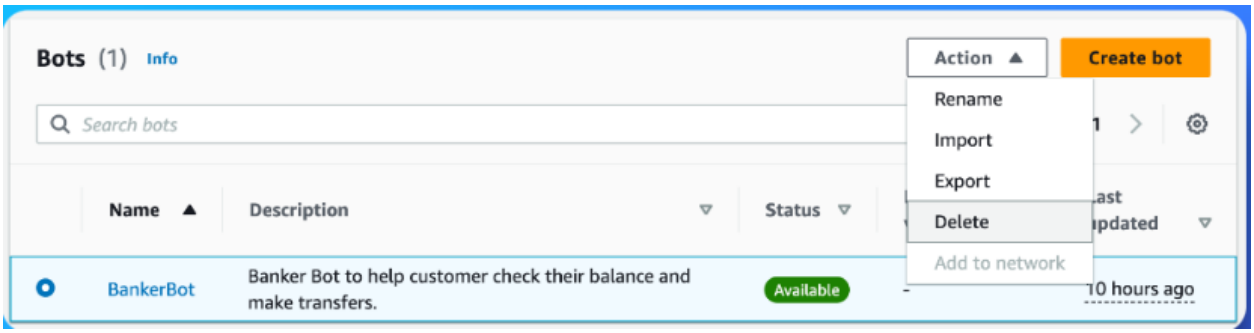



**STEPS BELOW ARE TO DELETE THE RESOURCES AFTER USE**
Deleting resources after use is very important as it avoids unnecessary costs and reduces the risks of unauthorized access.

- Head to your **Amazon Lex** console.
- Choose **Bots** on the left-hand sidebar.
- Choose the circle radio button next to BankerBot.
- Choose **Delete** from your Action drop-down.
- Choose **Delete.**

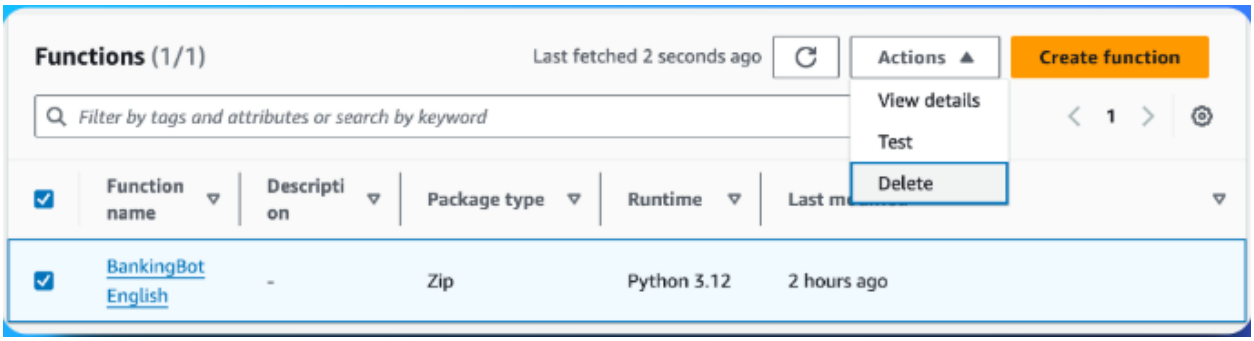
**Delete your BankerBot**

- Head to your **Amazon Lex** console.
- Choose **Bots** on the left-hand sidebar.
- Choose the circle radio button next to **BankerBot**.
- Choose **Delete** from your **Action** drop-down.
- Choose **Delete**.




**Delete your Lambda function**

- Head to your **AWS Lambda** console.
- Choose **Functions** on the left-hand sidebar.
- Choose the circle radio button next to **BankingBotEnglish**.
- Choose **Delete** from your **Action** drop-down.
- Choose **Delete**.



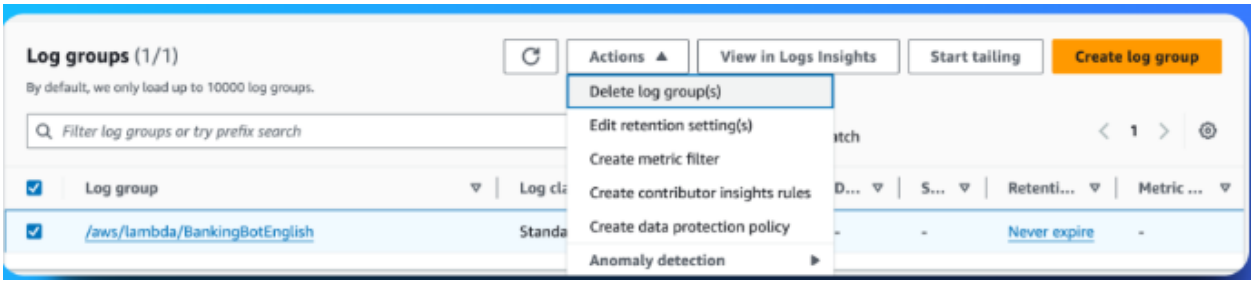

Delete your Lambda function log files

**What are Lambda function log files?**
These log files are records of events that happen when AWS Lambda functions are running. These logs include details like errors, warnings, and informational messages that help developers understand how their functions are performing.

In this project, log files have been produced each time your Lambda function was triggered i.e., when CheckBalance gives you a bank balance number.

The logs are stored in CloudWatch, an AWS service used for monitoring and managing all the log data across all your services.

- Head to **CloudWatch** in your AWS console.
- Choose **Logs** on the left-hand sidebar.
- Choose **Log groups.**
- Select the checkbox next to **BankingBot**.
- Choose **Delete log group(s)** in the **Actions** menu.
- Choose **Delete**.




## SUMMARY

This documentation walked through the process of building a chatbot from understanding is purpose to developing and deploying it. By following these steps, you should be able to create a chatbot that improves user interaction and automates responses effectively and efficiently.