Creating and configuring an Express.js application involves setting up a Node.js project, installing Express, and defining the structure of your application. Below is a step-by-step guide:

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1. Install Node.js and npm

Make sure you have Node.js and npm installed. You can check their versions with:

```
node -v
npm -v
```

If not installed, download them from the official Node.js website.

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2. Initialize a Node.js Project

Create a new directory for your project and initialize it:

```
mkdir my-express-app
cd my-express-app
npm init -y
```

This creates a `package.json` file with default configurations.

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3. Install Express

Install Express using npm:

```
npm install express
```

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4. Create the Application

Create an entry file (e.g., `app.js`) and add the following boilerplate code:

```
const express = require('express');
const app = express();
const PORT = 3000;
```

```
// Middleware for parsing JSON
app.use(express.json());

// Default route
app.get('/', (req, res) => {
    res.send('Hello, Express!');
});

// Start the server
app.listen(PORT, () => {
    console.log(`Server is running on http://localhost:${PORT}`);
});
```

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5. Run the Application

Start your Express app:

```
node app.js
```

Visit `http://localhost:3000` in your browser to see the response: **"Hello, Express!"**

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6. Configure Middleware

Express supports middleware for handling requests, responses, and other operations.

Example:

```
// Serve static files
app.use(express.static('public'));

// Custom middleware
app.use((req, res, next) => {
    console.log(`${req.method} ${req.url}`);
    next(); // Pass control to the next middleware
});
```

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7. Define Routes

Define routes for different endpoints:

```
app.get('/users', (req, res) => {
   res.json([{ id: 1, name: 'Alice' }, { id: 2, name: 'Bob' }]);
});

app.post('/users', (req, res) => {
   const user = req.body;
   res.status(201).json(user);
});
```

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8. Use Environment Variables

Use a library like `dotenv` to manage configuration:

```
npm install dotenv
```

Create a `.env` file:

```
PORT=3000
```

Load environment variables in `app.js`:

```
require('dotenv').config();
const PORT = process.env.PORT || 3000;
```

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9. Organize Project Structure

For larger projects, use the following structure:

```
my-express-app/
├── public/          # Static files
├── routes/          # Route definitions
│   └── users.js
├── models/          # Data models
├── controllers/     # Business logic
├── app.js           # Main entry point
├── package.json
├── .env             # Environment variables
```

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10. Connect to a Database (Optional)

You can integrate databases like MongoDB, PostgreSQL, or MySQL.

Example: MongoDB with Mongoose

npm install mongoose

In `app.js`:

```
const mongoose = require('mongoose');
mongoose.connect('mongodb://localhost:27017/mydatabase', {
    useNewUrlParser: true,
    useUnifiedTopology: true,
});
```

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11. Add Error Handling

Use middleware for centralized error handling:

```
app.use((err, req, res, next) => {
    console.error(err.stack);
    res.status(500).send('Something went wrong!');
});
```

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12. Testing and Debugging

- Use tools like **Postman** or **cURL** to test API endpoints.

Install **nodemon** for automatic restarts during development:
npm install --save-dev nodemon
Update `package.json`:

```
"scripts": {
  "start": "node app.js",
  "dev": "nodemon app.js"
}
```

Run the app in development mode:
npm run dev

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With this setup, you can develop, test, and deploy your Express.js application. Let me know if you need help with a specific feature!