

✦ FREE PROFESSIONAL GUIDE

The Ultimate API Documentation Checklist

50+ Essential Points for Production-Ready API Documentation



What's Inside?

✓ Essential Documentation

✓ Authentication & Security

✓ Endpoint Documentation

✓ Error Handling

✓ Code Examples

✓ Version Management

✓ Performance Guidelines

✓ Testing & Validation

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API Documentation Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure your API documentation is comprehensive and developer-friendly

1. Essential Documentation

- ☐ Overview page explaining what the API does **HIGH**
- ☐ Getting started guide with first API call example **HIGH**
- ☐ Base URL and environment endpoints (dev, staging, prod)
- ☐ API versioning strategy clearly explained
- ☐ Rate limiting and throttling policies **HIGH**
- ☐ Changelog documenting all API changes

2. Authentication & Security

- ☐ Authentication methods explained (API key, JWT, OAuth) **HIGH**
- ☐ How to obtain API credentials
- ☐ Token refresh process documented
- ☐ Security best practices and recommendations
- ☐ HTTPS/TLS requirements clearly stated **HIGH**
- ☐ Authorization scopes and permissions explained

3. Endpoint Documentation

☐ HTTP method clearly specified (GET, POST, PUT, DELETE) **HIGH**

☐ Full endpoint path with parameters highlighted

☐ Request parameters documented (path, query, body) **HIGH**

☐ Required vs optional parameters marked clearly

☐ Data types specified for all parameters

☐ Parameter validation rules and constraints

☐ Request headers documented

☐ Response format and structure **HIGH**

☐ HTTP status codes explained (200, 201, 400, 401, 404, 500)

4. Code Examples

☐ Examples in multiple languages (Python, JavaScript, cURL) **MEDIUM**

☐ Complete, runnable code samples

☐ Example requests with all required parameters

☐ Example responses for success cases **HIGH**

☐ Example error responses **HIGH**



5. Error Handling

- ☐ Error code reference table **HIGH**
- ☐ Error message format explained
- ☐ Common errors and solutions
- ☐ Troubleshooting guide
- ☐ Error response examples



6. Data Models

- ☐ Schema definitions (OpenAPI/JSON Schema)
- ☐ Object properties documented
- ☐ Data type specifications
- ☐ Enum values listed
- ☐ Relationships between objects



7. Pagination & Filtering

- ☐ Pagination parameters explained
- ☐ Default page size documented
- ☐ Filtering syntax and options
- ☐ Sorting parameters
- ☐ Response metadata structure



8. Testing & Sandbox

- ☐ Test environment provided **MEDIUM**
- ☐ Sample data available
- ☐ Interactive API explorer (Swagger UI)



9. Performance

- ☐ Rate limits documented
- ☐ Response time expectations
- ☐ Caching recommendations
- ☐ Bulk operations support
- ☐ Webhook alternatives



10. SDKs & Libraries

- ☐ Official SDK links **NICE**
- ☐ Installation instructions
- ☐ Quick start examples
- ☐ SDK documentation links



11. Webhooks

- ☐ Available webhook events
- ☐ Webhook payload examples
- ☐ Setup instructions
- ☐ Security & verification
- ☐ Retry policy explained



12. Support & Contact

- ☐ Support email/contact form
- ☐ FAQ section
- ☐ Status page link
- ☐ Community forum/Discord

☐ Interactive API Explorer (Swagger UI,

☐ SLA information

☐ Postman collection available



Need Help with Your API Documentation?

I help companies create comprehensive API documentation that reduces support tickets by 60% and cuts developer onboarding time in half.



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