Next.js Rendering Methods Guide

Overview

This guide explains the four main rendering methods in Next.js, their use cases, and how to implement them effectively.

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1. Server-Side Rendering (SSR)

```
// pages/ssr-example.js
export async function getServerSideProps(context) {
 // Access to request/response objects
  const { req, res } = context;
  // Can access cookies, headers, etc.
  const userAgent = req.headers['user-agent'];
  // Dynamic data that changes on every request
  const currentTime = new Date().toISOString();
  // Data that needs to be fresh on every request
  const res = await fetch('https://api.example.com/live-data', {
    headers: {
      'Cache-Control': 'no-cache',
      'Authorization': `Bearer ${process.env.API_KEY}`
    }
  });
  const data = await res.json();
  return {
    props: {
      data,
      currentTime,
```

- Data fetched on every request
- · Access to request/response objects
- Can use dynamic data (cookies, headers, etc.)
- Good for personalized content
- SEO-friendly
- · Hooks run only on client after hydration

2. Client-Side Rendering (CSR)

```
// pages/csr-example.js
export default function CSRPage() {
  const [data, setData] = useState(null);
  useEffect(() => {
    fetch('https://api.example.com/data')
      .then(res => res.json())
      .then(data => setData(data));
  }, []);
  return (
    <div>
     <h1>CSR Page</h1>
     {data ? (
       {JSON.stringify(data, null, 2)}
     ) : (
       Loading...
     )}
    </div>
```

```
);
}
```

- Data fetched in browser
- Initial HTML is empty
- Poor SEO
- Good for user-specific content
- All hooks run on client

3. Static Site Generation (SSG)

```
// pages/ssg-example.js
export async function getStaticProps() {
 // Can only access build-time environment variables
  const apiKey = process.env.API_KEY;
  // Data that doesn't change frequently
  const res = await fetch('https://api.example.com/static-content', {
    headers: {
      'Authorization': `Bearer ${apiKey}`
    }
  });
  const data = await res.json();
 // Can generate static paths
  const paths = data.map(item => ({
    params: { id: item.id.toString() }
  }));
  return {
    props: {
      lastGenerated: new Date().toISOString()
 };
}
// Optional: Generate static paths for dynamic routes
export async function getStaticPaths() {
  return {
    paths: [
      { params: { id: '1' } },
      { params: { id: '2' } }
    fallback: false // Show 404 for non-existent paths
```

- Data fetched at build time only
- No access to request/response objects
- Can generate static paths for dynamic routes
- Best for content that rarely changes
- Excellent SEO
- Fastest performance
- · Hooks run only on client

4. Incremental Static Regeneration (ISR)

```
// pages/isr-example.js
export async function getStaticProps() {
  const res = await fetch('https://api.example.com/data');
  const data = await res.json();
 return {
    props: { data },
    revalidate: 60 // Revalidate every 60 seconds
 };
export default function ISRPage({ data }) {
  useEffect(() => {
    console.log('Client-side effect');
  }, []);
  return (
    <div>
      <h1>ISR Page</h1>
      {JSON.stringify(data, null, 2)}
    </div>
```

```
);
}
```

- · Data fetched at build time
- Periodic revalidation
- Good SEO
- Good for semi-static content
- Hooks run only on client

Comparison Table

Feature	SSR	CSR	SSG	ISR
Data Fetching	Server (every request)	Client	Build time	Build time + revalidate
SEO		×		
Performance	Good	Poor	Excellent	Good
Use Case	Dynamic content	User-specific	Static content	Semi-static content
Hooks Usage	Client-side only	Full	Client-side only	Client-side only

Best Practices

1. Choose the Right Method

- Use SSR for dynamic, SEO-critical pages
- Use CSR for user-specific content
- Use SSG for static content
- Use ISR for semi-static content

2. Data Fetching

- Keep data fetching in getServerSideProps or getStaticProps
- Use hooks only for client-side effects
- Avoid data fetching in useEffect for SEO-critical pages

3. Performance

- o Implement proper loading states
- Use appropriate caching strategies
- o Consider using ISR for frequently updated content

4. **SEO**

- Use SSR or SSG for SEO-critical pages
- o Implement proper meta tags
- Ensure content is available in initial HTML

Additional Resources

- Next.js Documentation
- React Hooks Documentation
- Next.js Data Fetching

If you want, I can also add **SEO tags (<Head>)** examples inside these pages! Just ask.