

CS 381 REST API Usage Writeup

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The API for gists on Github, so far as I can tell, is a perfect representation of a truly RESTFUL interface. Each request follows a URL structure that points to a resource on github's servers, such as /gists or /users/{username}/gists. Each of these is referencing an item to get data about and / or to change data on. However, the biggest reason it can be considered RESTFUL is that it uses ONLY http requests for modification and retrieval. So, a GET request always provides data about the resource requested and cannot be used to modify the data. PUT requests make state changes to a resource. POST requests can be used to make new resources or modify bulk information on them. These verbs never show up in the URL's used to access Github's servers. Additionally, every request sent from the client is stateless. We are not ever relying on the server to know information about the client that isn't explicitly sent with each request, another requirement for a RESTFUL interface.