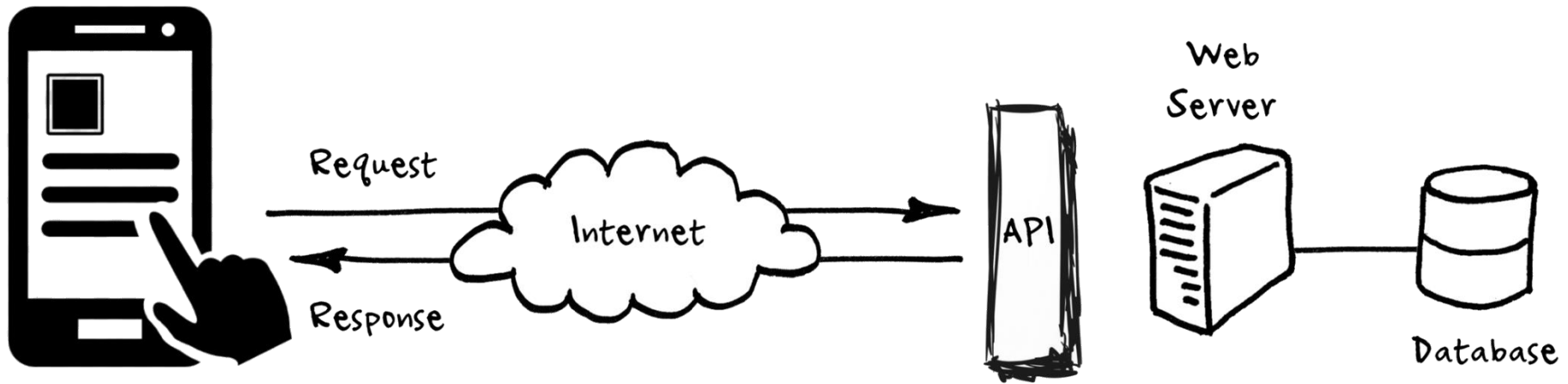




Calling Web API



Outline

1. Web API
2. Accessing Web API using dio package

Web API

(aka Web Services / REST API)



Working with Web APIs – the Why?

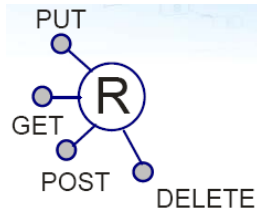
- Phones can not serve as centralized data stores, so we **need servers**
- Even when we can do heavy tasks on-device, we should not
 - Servers are powerful, phones are not
 - Processing a lot of data / complex computation on a phone is a drain on its resources: Battery, CPU, Memory
- As good citizens on an Android phone, our **apps should consume as little resources as possible**
- Calling Web APIs lets the app connect to the outside world

What is a Web API?

- Web API = Web accessible Application Programming Interface accessible via HTTP to allow programmatic access to applications
 - Also known as Web Services
 - Can be accessed by a broad range of clients including browsers and mobile devices
- Web API is a web service that accepts requests and returns **structured data** (JSON in most cases)
 - Programmatically accessible at a particular URL
 - You can think of it as a Web page returning JSON instead of HTML
- Major goal = **interoperability between heterogeneous systems**



Web Services Principles



- **Resources have unique address (nouns) i.e., a URI**

Any **information that can be named can be a resource**: a document or image, a dynamic service to get weather or news, a collection of books and their authors, and so on

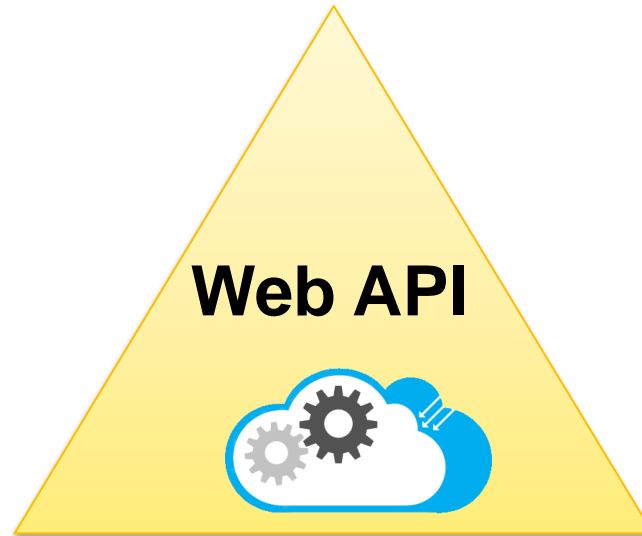
e.g., <http://example.com/customers/123>

- **Can use a Uniform Interface (verbs) to access them:**
 - HTTP verbs: GET, POST, PUT, and DELETE
- **Resource has representation(s) (data format)**
 - A resource can be in a variety of data formats such as **JSON** and **XML**

Web API Main Concepts

Nouns (Resources)

e.g., <http://example.com/employees/12345>



Verbs

e.g., GET, POST

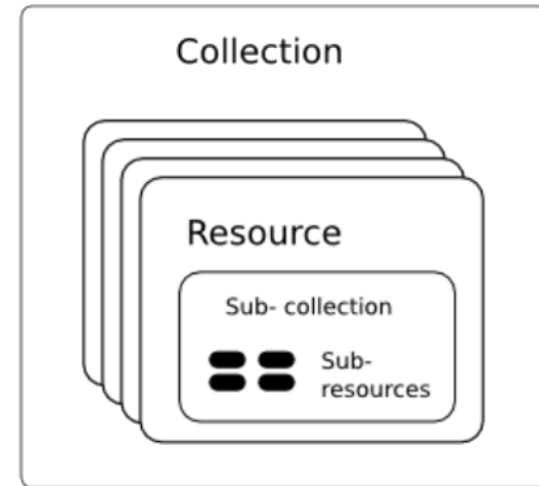
Representations

e.g., XML, JSON

Naming Resources

- Web API uses URL to identify resources

Often **api** path is used
for better organization



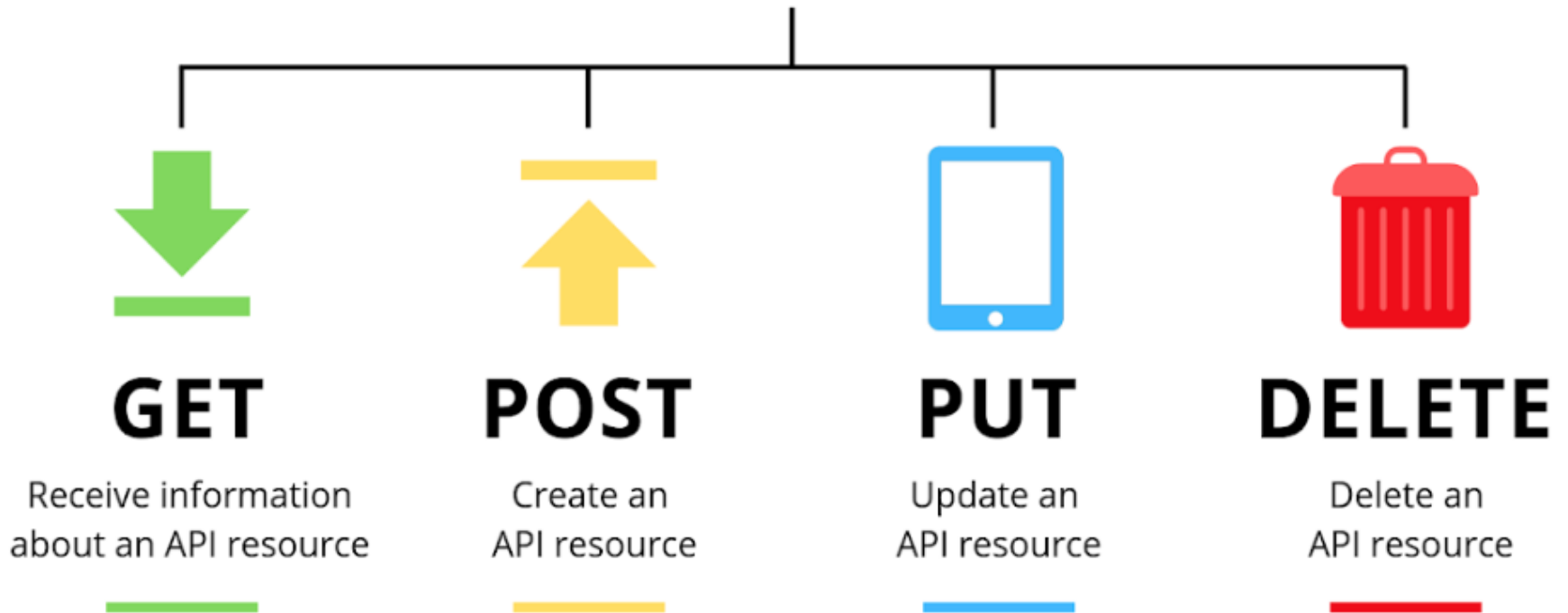
- <http://localhost/api/books/>
 - <http://localhost/api/books/ISBN-0011>
 - <http://localhost/api/books/ISBN-0011/authors>

 - <http://localhost/api/classes>
 - <http://localhost/api/classes/cmcs356>
 - <http://localhost/api/classes/cs356/students>
- As you traverse the **path** from more generic to more specific, you are navigating the data

HTTP Verbs

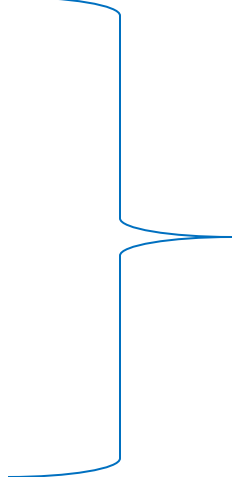
HTTP Verbs represent the **actions** to be performed on resources

REST API Methods



CRUD (Create, Read, Update and Delete) Operations and their Mapping to HTTP Verbs

- **GET** - Read a resource
 - **GET** /books - Retrieve all books
 - **GET** /books/:id - Retrieve a particular book
- **POST** - Create a new resource
 - **POST** /books - Create a new book
- **PUT** - Update a resource
 - **PUT** /books/:id - Update a book
- **Delete** – Delete a resource
 - **DELETE** /books/:id - Delete a book



The resource data (e.g., book details) are placed in the **body** of the request

Example 2 - Task Service API

Task	Method	Path
Create a new task	POST	/tasks
Delete an existing task	DELETE	/tasks/{id}
Get a specific task	GET	/tasks/{id}
Search for tasks	GET	/tasks
Update an existing task	PUT	/tasks/{id}

Representations

- In all requests and responses, it is important to share data in a **format which both the client and server can understand**
- Two main formats are commonly used:

- **JSON**

```
{  
    code: 'cmp312',  
    name: 'Mobile App Development'  
}
```

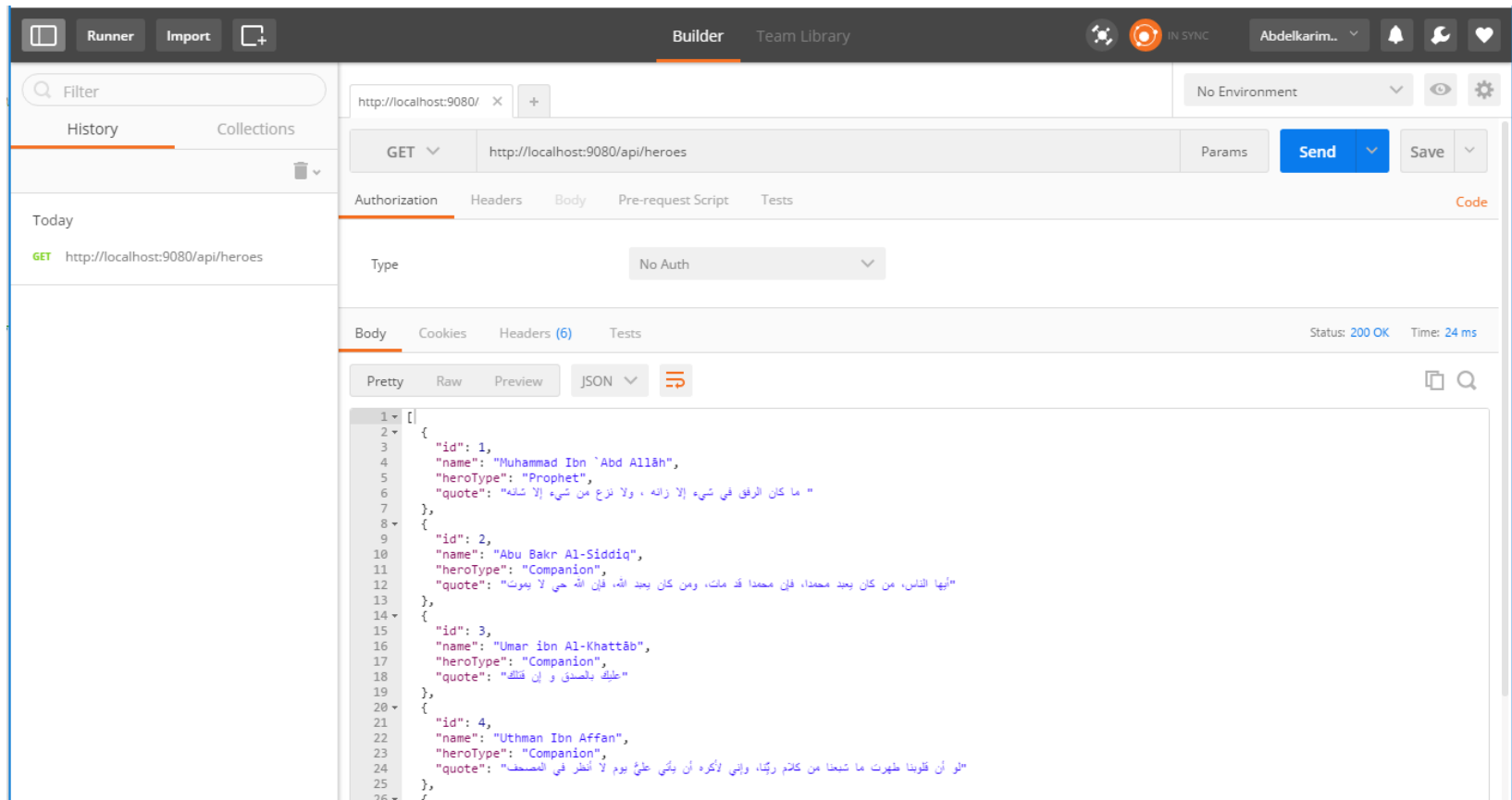
- **XML**

```
<course>  
  <code>cmps312</code>  
  <name>Mobile App Development</name>  
</course>
```

Testing Web API

- Using Postman to test Web API

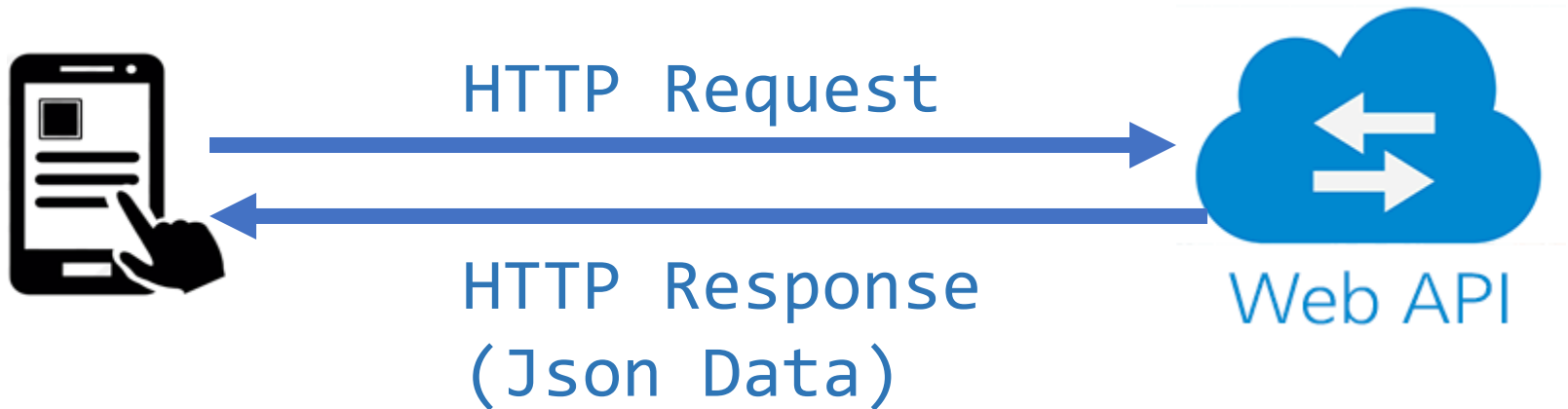
<https://www.postman.com/downloads/>



dio

dio

- **dio** is HTTP networking package for Dart/Flutter, for a mobile app to call a remote Web API
 - Make HTTP requests and handle responses



dio – 3 Programming Steps

1. Define **Serializable Data Classes** for input/output objects used when interacting with the Web API
2. Create an instance of dio
3. Use its **.get**, **.post**, **.put**, **.delete** methods to interact with the remote Web API



Simple usage

```
import 'package:dio/dio.dart';  
final dio = Dio();  
void getPage() async {  
    final response = await dio.get('https://dart.dev');  
    print(response);  
}
```

1. Define Serializable Data Classes for input/output objects used when interacting with the Web API

@Serializable

```
data class Country (  
    // Map alpha3Code property in the json file  
    // to the code property  
    @SerializedName("alpha3Code")  
    var code: String = "",  
    var name: String,  
    var capital: String,  
    @SerializedName("region")  
    var continent: String,  
    @SerializedName("subregion")  
    var region: String,  
    var population: Long,  
    var area: Double = 0.0,  
    var flag: String,  
)
```

2. Configure dio instance

- Create the client

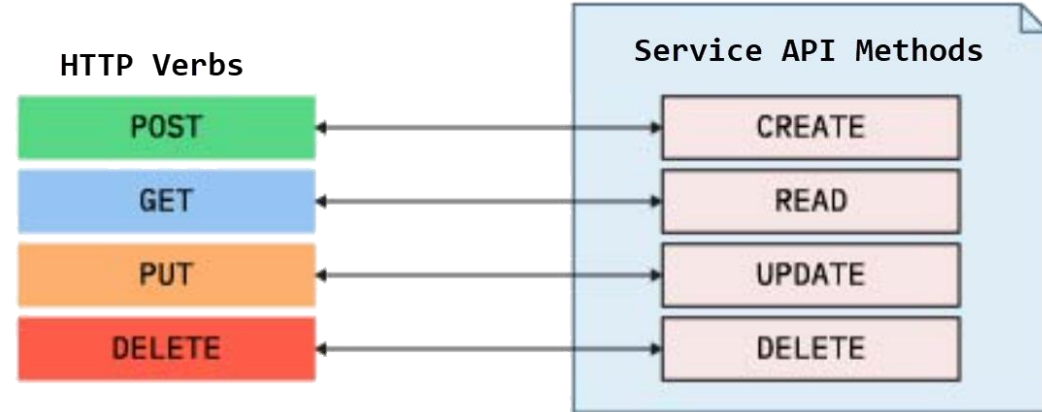
```
import io.ktor.client.*  
var client = HttpClient()
```

- Add plugins to extend the client functionality, such JSON serialization, and Logging

```
var client = HttpClient(OkHttp) {  
    //Json Plugin auto-parse from/to json when sending  
    // and receiving data from the Web API  
    install(ContentNegotiation) {  
        json(  
            json = Json {  
                ignoreUnknownKeys = true  
                prettyPrint = true  
            }  
        )  
    }  
    //Log HTTP request/response details for debugging  
    install(Logging) { level = LogLevel.BODY } // or .Headers or .Body  
}
```

3. Use Get/Post/Put/Delete to interact with the Web API

- HttpClient provides specific functions for basic HTTP methods: get, post, put, and delete.



```
const BASE_URL = "https://api.polygon.io/v1/open-close"
var symbol = "Tesla"
var url = "$BASE_URL/$symbol"
print(">>> Debug: getStockQuote.url: $url")
var response = dio.get(url)
var stockQuote = response.data
```

Path Parameters vs. Query Parameters

- Required parameters can be passed using **path parameters** appended to the URL path
 - E.g., **/students/1234** this will return the details of the student with the id 1234
- Named **query parameters** can be added to the URL path after a **?** E.g., **/posts?sortBy=createdOnDate**
- Query parameters are often used for **optional** parameters (e.g., optionally specifying the property to be used to sort of results)

Post / Put Request

- Set the body of a request using body property
 - It accepts different types of payloads, including plain text or an object that get auto-serialized to a Json document

```
final response = dio.post("http://localhost:8080/posts") {  
    body = "Body content"  
}
```

```
final response = dio.post("http://localhost:8080/customers") {  
    contentType(ContentType.Application.Json)  
    body = Customer(3, "Ktor", "Client")  
}
```

Delete Request

- Use the `client.delete` method to delete a resource
 - Specify the resource id to be deleted in the request url

```
var url = "https://jsonplaceholder.typicode.com/todos/1"
var response = dio.delete(url)

if (response.status == HttpStatus.OK) {
    // HTTP-200
}
```