CODING NOMADS

9) HTTP & Web Services   Lesson

HEAD and OPTIONS Requests with Postman

3 min to complete · By Ryan Desmond, Jared Larsen

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The HTTP methods discussed in this course so far have been **CRUD** focused. As you probably recall, CRUD stands for: **C**reate **R**ead **U**pdate **D**elete

These four actions are critical in affording users complete control over a resource through an API. However, not all HTTP methods are geared towards CRUD functionality. Some of them are used to help users navigate and utilize your API without consulting the documentation.
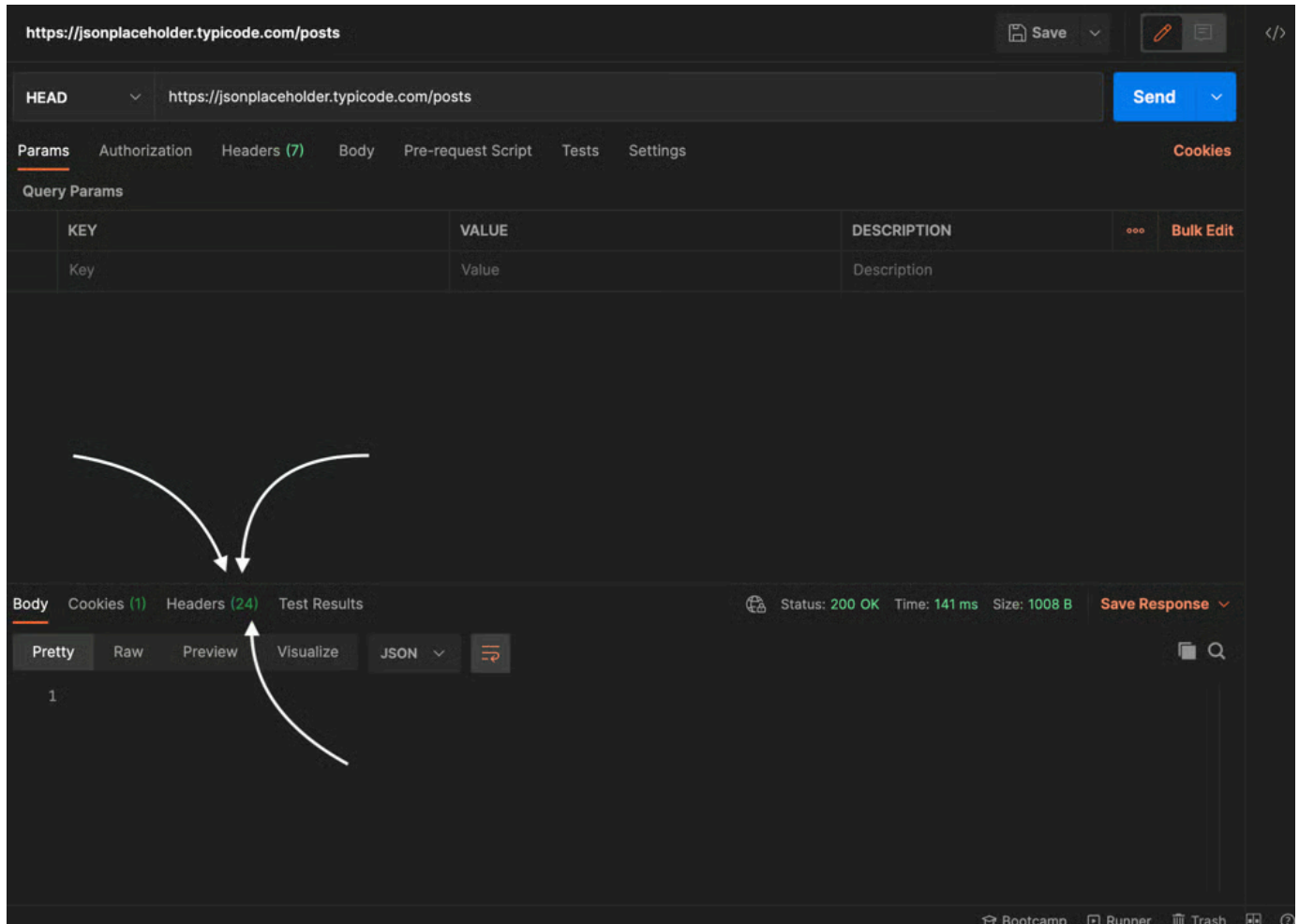
The HEAD method

Like PATCH and PUT, the GET and HEAD methods are similar. The only real difference between the two is that when the server receives a HEAD request, it doesn't return the HTTP body that a GET response would normally contain.

This allows you to request data about the resource without actually having the resource returned to you. Therefore, the HEAD method, like PUT, is all about efficiency. This is especially true when requesting large files from servers. You want to ensure you have the right file before you spend a bunch of time waiting for it to download.

Follow this link and check out the results. It's a RESTful API that returns a bunch of lorem ipsum as JSON: https://jsonplaceholder.typicode.com/posts

Now, take a look at the following response when you make a HEAD request to the same URL:

Notice how the response body is empty, but Postman indicates that 24 headers were returned. Try it yourself, make a few HEAD requests across the web using Postman, and look at the headers that get returned. Usually, you'll be able to find something useful in there.

The OPTIONS method

The HTTP OPTIONS method is beneficial when you either can't find an APIs documentation, or it's poorly written. It allows some semblance of navigation without documentation. It does this by requesting the HTTP methods the server will accept for a given URL. The options will be returned in a comma-separated string stored in a header. Try submitting an OPTIONS request to the CodingNomads tasks endpoint using Postman:

```
http://demo.codingnomads.co:8080/tasks_api/tasks
```

You should see a header called `Allow`, which lists the possible methods. In this case, GET, HEAD, POST, and PUT.

Summary: HEAD & OPTIONS HTTP Methods

HEAD and OPTIONS are HTTP methods that provide information about resources. HEAD returns only headers, while OPTIONS can be used to discover other available methods for the specified endpoint.

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