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16 API Terms Every Developer Should Know

Whether you're building backend services or just integrating with one, knowing these terms will make your life a whole lot easier:

- Resource – The data or service you're working with (e.g. user, file, product)
- Request – The call you make to ask the server for something
- Response – What the server sends back to you
- Response Code – Status of the request (e.g. 200 OK, 404 Not Found)
- Payload – The actual data being sent in a request or response
- Pagination – Breaking large sets of data into manageable pages
- Method – The action: GET, POST, PUT, DELETE
- Query Parameters – Filters or options added to the URL (e.g. ?page=2)
- Authentication – Proving who you are before getting access
- Rate Limiting – Limits on how often you can call the API
- API Integration – Connecting two or more services using APIs
- API Gateway – A single entry point to handle and route API calls
- API Lifecycle – From design to deprecation—every API has a life story
- CRUD – The basics: Create, Read, Update, Delete
- Cache – Stored data that speeds up future requests
- Client – The app or device that's making the request

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**Resource**

Fundamental concept in REST, represent data or service.

**Request**

A Call made to a server to access a resource.

**Response**

Data sent back from the server to the client.

**Response Code**

Status indicator of a HTTP request (e.g., 404 not found).

**Payload**

Data sent with a request or response.

**Pagination**

Process of diving response data into discrete pages.

**Method**

HTTP action such as GET, POST, PUT, DELETE.

**Query Parameters**

Data appended to the URL to define or refine searches.

**Authentication**

Verification of a user's identity.

**Rate Limiting**

Restricting the number of request a user can make.

**API Integration**

Connecting various services using APIs.

**API Gateway**

Service that provides a single entry point for APIs.

**API Lifecycle**

Phases of API Development and retirement.

**CRUD**

Acronym for create, read, update, delete.

**Cache**

Temporary storage to speed up data retrieval.

**Client**

Device or program that request data from a server