

## 1. URL (file.path)

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This is the direct link to your uploaded image (e.g.,  
<https://res.cloudinary.com/demo/image/upload/v12345/abc.png>).  
You can use it in your frontend to display the image.

But Cloudinary cannot identify or manage the file just from the URL — because the URL changes when you apply transformations or rename the file.

## 2. Public ID (file.filename / custom id)

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This is the unique identifier Cloudinary assigns to each uploaded file (e.g., "abc123xyz").

You use `public_id` for management operations:

- Deleting an image
- Updating/replacing an image
- Transformations (e.g., `resize`, `crop`, `compress`, `watermark`)

Example:

```
cloudinary.uploader.destroy(public_id)
```

This will delete the file, no matter what URL versions exist for it.

Why not just use URL?

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If you only store the URL, you cannot delete/modify the file from Cloudinary.  
The URL is only for access, not for management.

If you want to remove old images when a mentor/book/user is deleted, you need the `public_id`.

■ Best practice:

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Save both in DB:

```
{  
  url: file.path,  
  public_id: file.filename  
}
```

- Use `url` to display images.
- Use `public_id` when you need to delete/update from Cloudinary.