A JSON Web Token (JWT) is a [JSON object](http://www.w3schools.com/json/) that is defined in [RFC 7519](https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc7519) as a safe way to represent a set of information between two parties.

The token is composed of a header, a payload, and a signature.

Simply put, a JWT is just a string with the following format:

header.payload.signature

It should be noted that a double quoted string is actually considered a valid JSON object.

To show how and why JWT are actually used, we will use a simple 3 entity example (see the below diagram). The entities in this example are the user, the application server, and the authentication server. The authentication server will provide the JWT to the user. With the JWT, the user can then safely communicate with the application.

