

List of HTTP header fields

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HTTP header fields are components of the header section of request and response messages in the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP). They define the operating parameters of an HTTP transaction.

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General format

The header fields are transmitted after the request or response line, which is the first line of a message. Header fields are colon-separated name-value pairs in clear-text string format, terminated by a carriage return (CR) and line feed (LF) character sequence. The end of the header section is indicated by an empty field, resulting in the transmission of two consecutive CR-LF pairs. Historically, long lines could be folded into multiple lines; continuation lines are indicated by the presence of a space (SP) or horizontal tab (HT) as the first character on the next line. This folding is now deprecated.^[1]

Field names

A core set of fields is standardized by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) in RFCs 7230, 7231, 7232, 7233, 7234, and 7235. The permanent registry of header fields (<http://www.iana.org/assignments/message-headers/message-headers.xml#perm-headers>) and repository of provisional registrations (<http://www.iana.org/assignments/message-headers/message-headers.xml#prov-headers>) are maintained by the IANA. Additional field names and permissible values may be defined by each application.

Non-standard header fields were conventionally marked by prefixing the field name with x-^[2] but this convention was deprecated in June 2012 because of the inconveniences it caused when non-standard fields became standard.^[3] An earlier restriction on use of Downgraded- was lifted in March 2013.^[4]

Field values

A few fields can contain comments (i.e. in User-Agent, Server, Via fields), which can be ignored by software.^[5]

Many field values may contain a quality (*q*) key-value pair, specifying a weight to use in content negotiation.^[6]

Size limits

The standard imposes no limits to the size of each header field name or value, or to the number of fields. However, most servers, clients, and proxy software impose some limits for practical and security reasons. For example, the Apache 2.3 server by default limits the size of each field to 8190 bytes, and there can be at most 100 header fields in a single request.^[7]

Request fields

Header field name	Description	Example	Status
Accept	Content-Types that are acceptable for the response. See Content negotiation.	Accept: text/plain	Permanent
Accept-Charset	Character sets that are acceptable	Accept-Charset: utf-8	Permanent
Accept-Encoding	List of acceptable encodings. See HTTP compression.	Accept-Encoding: gzip, deflate	Permanent
Accept-Language	List of acceptable human languages for response. See Content negotiation.	Accept-Language: en-US	Permanent
Accept-Datetime	Acceptable version in time	Accept-Datetime: Thu, 31 May 2007 20:35:00 GMT	Provisional
Authorization	Authentication credentials for HTTP authentication	Authorization: Basic QWxhZGRpbjpvGVuIHNlc2FtZQ==	Permanent
Cache-Control	Used to specify directives that <i>must</i> be obeyed by all caching mechanisms along the request-response chain	Cache-Control: no-cache	Permanent
Connection	Control options for the current connection and list of hop-by-hop request fields ^[8]	Connection: keep-alive Connection: Upgrade	Permanent
Cookie	An HTTP cookie previously sent by the server with Set-Cookie (below)	Cookie: \$Version=1; Skin=new;	Permanent: standard
Content-Length	The length of the request body in octets (8-bit bytes)	Content-Length: 348	Permanent
Content-MD5	A Base64-encoded binary MD5 sum of the content of the request body	Content-MD5: Q2h1Y2sgSW50ZWdyXR5IQ==	Obsolete ^[9]
Content-Type	The MIME type of the body of the request (used with POST and PUT requests)	Content-Type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded	Permanent
Date	The date and time that the message was originated (in "HTTP-date" format as defined by RFC 7231 Date/Time Formats (http://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc7231#section-7.1.1.1))	Date: Tue, 15 Nov 1994 08:12:31 GMT	Permanent
Expect	Indicates that particular server behaviors are required by the client	Expect: 100-continue	Permanent
Forwarded	Disclose original information of a client connecting to a web server through an HTTP proxy ^[10]	Forwarded: for=192.0.2.60;proto=http; by=203.0.113.43 Forwarded: for=192.0.2.43, for=198.51.100.17	Permanent
From	The email address of the user making the request	From: user@example.com	Permanent
Host	The domain name of the server (for virtual hosting), and the TCP port number on which the server is listening. The port number may be omitted if the port is the standard port for the service requested. ^[11] Mandatory since HTTP/1.1.	Host: en.wikipedia.org:80 Host: en.wikipedia.org	Permanent
If-Match	Only perform the action if the client supplied entity matches the same entity on the server. This is mainly for methods like PUT to only update a resource if it has not been modified since the user last updated it.	If-Match: "737060cd8c284d8af7ad3082f209582d"	Permanent
If-Modified-Since	Allows a <i>304 Not Modified</i> to be returned if content is unchanged	If-Modified-Since: Sat, 29 Oct 1994 19:43:31 GMT	Permanent
If-None-Match	Allows a <i>304 Not Modified</i> to be returned if content is unchanged, see HTTP ETag	If-None-Match: "737060cd8c284d8af7ad3082f209582d"	Permanent
If-Range	If the entity is unchanged, send me the part(s) that I am missing; otherwise, send me the entire new entity	If-Range: "737060cd8c284d8af7ad3082f209582d"	Permanent
If-Unmodified-Since	Only send the response if the entity has not been modified since a specific time.	If-Unmodified-Since: Sat, 29 Oct 1994 19:43:31 GMT	Permanent
Max-Forwards	Limit the number of times the message can be forwarded through proxies or gateways.	Max-Forwards: 10	Permanent
Origin	Initiates a request for cross-origin resource sharing (asks server for an 'Access-Control-Allow-Origin' response field) .	Origin: http://www.example-social-network.com	Permanent: standard
Pragma	Implementation-specific fields that may have various effects anywhere along the request-response chain.	Pragma: no-cache	Permanent
Proxy-Authorization	Authorization credentials for connecting to a proxy.	Proxy-Authorization: Basic QWxhZGRpbjpvGVuIHNlc2FtZQ==	Permanent
Range	Request only part of an entity. Bytes are numbered from 0. See Byte serving.	Range: bytes=500-999	Permanent
Referer ^[sic]	This is the address of the previous web page from which a link to the currently requested page was followed. (The word "referrer" has been misspelled in the RFC as well as in most implementations to the point that it has become standard usage and is considered correct terminology)	Referer: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page	Permanent

Header field name	Description	Example	Status
TE	The transfer encodings the user agent is willing to accept: the same values as for the response header field Transfer-Encoding can be used, plus the "trailers" value (related to the "chunked" transfer method) to notify the server it expects to receive additional fields in the trailer after the last, zero-sized, chunk.	TE: trailers, deflate	Permanent
User-Agent	The user agent string of the user agent	User-Agent: Mozilla/5.0 (X11; Linux x86_64; rv:12.0) Gecko/20100101 Firefox/21.0	Permanent
Upgrade	Ask the server to upgrade to another protocol.	Upgrade: HTTP/2.0, HTTPS/1.3, IRC/6.9, RTA/x11	Permanent
Via	Informs the server of proxies through which the request was sent.	Via: 1.0 fred, 1.1 example.com (Apache/1.1)	Permanent
Warning	A general warning about possible problems with the entity body.	Warning: 199 Miscellaneous warning	Permanent

Common non-standard request fields

Field name	Description	Example
X-Requested-With	mainly used to identify Ajax requests. Most JavaScript frameworks send this field with value of XMLHttpRequest	X-Requested-With: XMLHttpRequest
DNT ^[12]	Requests a web application to disable their tracking of a user. This is Mozilla's version of the X-Do-Not-Track header field (since Firefox 4.0 Beta 11). Safari and IE9 also have support for this field. ^[13] On March 7, 2011, a draft proposal was submitted to IETF. ^[14] The W3C Tracking Protection Working Group is producing a specification. ^[15]	DNT: 1 (Do Not Track Enabled) DNT: 0 (Do Not Track Disabled)
X-Forwarded-For ^[16]	a <i>de facto</i> standard for identifying the originating IP address of a client connecting to a web server through an HTTP proxy or load balancer	X-Forwarded-For: client1, proxy1, proxy2 X-Forwarded-For: 129.78.138.66, 129.78.64.103
X-Forwarded-Host ^[17]	a <i>de facto</i> standard for identifying the original host requested by the client in the Host HTTP request header, since the host name and/or port of the reverse proxy (load balancer) may differ from the origin server handling the request.	X-Forwarded-Host: en.wikipedia.org:80 X-Forwarded-Host: en.wikipedia.org
X-Forwarded-Proto ^[18]	a <i>de facto</i> standard for identifying the originating protocol of an HTTP request, since a reverse proxy (or a load balancer) may communicate with a web server using HTTP even if the request to the reverse proxy is HTTPS. An alternative form of the header (X-ProxyUser-Ip) is used by Google clients talking to Google servers.	X-Forwarded-Proto: https
Front-End-Https ^[19]	Non-standard header field used by Microsoft applications and load-balancers	Front-End-Https: on
X-Http-Method-Override ^[20]	Requests a web application override the method specified in the request (typically POST) with the method given in the header field (typically PUT or DELETE). Can be used when a user agent or firewall prevents PUT or DELETE methods from being sent directly (note that this either a bug in the software component, which ought to be fixed, or an intentional configuration, in which case bypassing it may be the wrong thing to do).	X-HTTP-Method-Override: DELETE
X-ATT-DeviceId ^[21]	Allows easier parsing of the Make/Model/Firmware that is usually found in the User-Agent String of AT&T Devices	X-Att-Deviceid: GT-P7320/P7320XXLPG
X-Wap-Profile ^[22]	Links to an XML file on the Internet with a full description and details about the device currently connecting. In the example to the right is an XML file for an AT&T Samsung Galaxy S2.	x-wap-profile: http://wap.samsungmobile.com/uaprof/SGH-I777.xml
Proxy-Connection ^[23]	Implemented as a misunderstanding of the HTTP specifications. Common because of mistakes in implementations of early HTTP versions. Has exactly the same functionality as standard Connection field.	Proxy-Connection: keep-alive
X-UIDH ^{[24][25][26]}	Server-side deep packet insertion of a unique ID identifying customers of Verizon Wireless; also known as "perma-cookie" or "supercookie"	X-UIDH: ...
X-Csrf-Token ^[27]	Used to prevent cross-site request forgery. Alternative header names are: X-CSRFToken ^[28] and X-XSRF-TOKEN ^[29]	X-Csrf-Token: i8XNjC4b8KVok4uw5RftR38Wgp2BFwq1

Response fields

Field name	Description	Example	Status
Access-Control-Allow-Origin	Specifying which web sites can participate in cross-origin resource sharing	Access-Control-Allow-Origin: *	Provisional
Accept-Patch ^[30]	Specifies which patch document formats this server supports	Accept-Patch: text/example;charset=utf-8	Permanent
Accept-Ranges	What partial content range types this server supports via byte serving	Accept-Ranges: bytes	Permanent
Age	The age the object has been in a proxy cache in seconds	Age: 12	Permanent
Allow	Valid actions for a specified resource. To be used for a 405 <i>Method not allowed</i>	Allow: GET, HEAD	Permanent
Alt-Svc ^[31]	A server uses "Alt-Svc" header (meaning Alternative Services) to indicate that its resources can also be accessed at a different network location (host or port) or using a different protocol	Alt-Svc: h2="http2.example.com:443"; ma=7200	Permanent
Cache-Control	Tells all caching mechanisms from server to client whether they may cache this object. It is measured in seconds	Cache-Control: max-age=3600	Permanent
Connection	Control options for the current connection and list of hop-by-hop response fields ^[8]	Connection: close	Permanent
Content-Disposition ^[32]	An opportunity to raise a "File Download" dialogue box for a known MIME type with binary format or suggest a filename for dynamic content. Quotes are necessary with special characters.	Content-Disposition: attachment; filename="fname.ext"	Permanent
Content-Encoding	The type of encoding used on the data. See HTTP compression.	Content-Encoding: gzip	Permanent
Content-Language	The natural language or languages of the intended audience for the enclosed content ^[33]	Content-Language: da	Permanent
Content-Length	The length of the response body in octets (8-bit bytes)	Content-Length: 348	Permanent
Content-Location	An alternate location for the returned data	Content-Location: /index.htm	Permanent
Content-MD5	A Base64-encoded binary MD5 sum of the content of the response	Content-MD5: Q2hlY2sgSW50ZWdyXR5IQ==	Obsolete ^[34]
Content-Range	Where in a full body message this partial message belongs	Content-Range: bytes 21010-47021/47022	Permanent
Content-Type	The MIME type of this content	Content-Type: text/html; charset=utf-8	Permanent
Date	The date and time that the message was sent (in "HTTP-date" format as defined by RFC 7231) ^[35]	Date: Tue, 15 Nov 1994 08:12:31 GMT	Permanent
ETag	An identifier for a specific version of a resource, often a message digest	ETag: "737060cd8c284d8af7ad3082f209582d"	Permanent
Expires	Gives the date/time after which the response is considered stale (in "HTTP-date" format as defined by RFC 7231)	Expires: Thu, 01 Dec 1994 16:00:00 GMT	Permanent: standard
Last-Modified	The last modified date for the requested object (in "HTTP-date" format as defined by RFC 7231)	Last-Modified: Tue, 15 Nov 1994 12:45:26 GMT	Permanent
Link	Used to express a typed relationship with another resource, where the relation type is defined by RFC 5988	Link: </feed>; rel="alternate" ^[36]	Permanent
Location	Used in redirection, or when a new resource has been created.	Location: http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/People.html	Permanent
P3P	This field is supposed to set P3P policy, in the form of P3P:CP="your_compact_policy". However, P3P did not take off, ^[37] most browsers have never fully	P3P: CP="This is not a P3P policy! See http://www.google.com/support/accounts/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=151657 for more info."	Permanent

Field name	Description	Example	Status
	implemented it, a lot of websites set this field with fake policy text, that was enough to fool browsers the existence of P3P policy and grant permissions for third party cookies.		
Pragma	Implementation-specific fields that may have various effects anywhere along the request-response chain.	Pragma: no-cache	Permanent
Proxy-Authenticate	Request authentication to access the proxy.	Proxy-Authenticate: Basic	Permanent
Public-Key-Pins ^[38]	HTTP Public Key Pinning, announces hash of website's authentic TLS certificate	Public-Key-Pins: max-age=2592000; pin-sha256="E9CZ9INDbd+2eRQozYqgbQ2yXLVKB9+xcprMF+44U1g=";	Permanent
Refresh	Used in redirection, or when a new resource has been created. This refresh redirects after 5 seconds.	Refresh: 5; url=http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/People.html	Proprietary and non-standard: a header extension introduced by Netscape and supported by most web browsers.
Retry-After	If an entity is temporarily unavailable, this instructs the client to try again later. Value could be a specified period of time (in seconds) or a HTTP-date. ^[39]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example 1: Retry-After: 120 Example 2: Retry-After: Fri, 07 Nov 2014 23:59:59 GMT 	Permanent
Server	A name for the server	Server: Apache/2.4.1 (Unix)	Permanent
Set-Cookie	An HTTP cookie	Set-Cookie: UserID=JohnDoe; Max-Age=3600; Version=1	Permanent: standard
Status	CGI header field specifying the status of the HTTP response. Normal HTTP responses use a separate "Status-Line" instead, defined by RFC 7230. ^[40]	Status: 200 OK	Not listed as a registered field name (http://www.iana.org/assignments/message-headers/message-headers.xml)
Strict-Transport-Security	A HSTS Policy informing the HTTP client how long to cache the HTTPS only policy and whether this applies to subdomains.	Strict-Transport-Security: max-age=16070400; includeSubDomains	Permanent: standard
Trailer	The Trailer general field value indicates that the given set of header fields is present in the trailer of a message encoded with chunked transfer coding.	Trailer: Max-Forwards	Permanent
Transfer-Encoding	The form of encoding used to safely transfer the entity to the user. Currently defined methods (http://www.iana.org/assignments/http-parameters) are: chunked, compress, deflate, gzip, identity.	Transfer-Encoding: chunked	Permanent
TSV	Tracking Status Value, value suggested to be sent in response to a DNT(do-not-track), possible values: <pre> "! " - under construction "? " - dynamic "G " - gateway to multiple parties "N " - not tracking "T " - tracking "C " - tracking with consent "P " - tracking only if consented "D " - disregarding DNT "U " - updated </pre>	TSV: ?	Permanent
Upgrade	Ask the client to upgrade to another protocol.	Upgrade: HTTP/2.0, HTTPS/1.3, IRC/6.9, RTA/x11	Permanent
Vary	Tells downstream proxies how to match future request headers to decide whether the cached response can be used rather than requesting a fresh one from the origin server.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example 1: Vary: * Example 2: Vary: Accept-Language 	Permanent
Via	Informs the client of proxies through which the response was sent.	Via: 1.0 fred, 1.1 example.com (Apache/1.1)	Permanent

Field name	Description	Example	Status
Warning	A general warning about possible problems with the entity body.	Warning: 199 Miscellaneous warning	Permanent
WWW-Authenticate	Indicates the authentication scheme that should be used to access the requested entity.	WWW-Authenticate: Basic	Permanent
X-Frame-Options ^[41]	Clickjacking protection: deny - no rendering within a frame, sameorigin - no rendering if origin mismatch, allow-from - allow from specified location, allowall - non-standard, allow from any location	X-Frame-Options: deny	Obsolete ^[42]

Common non-standard response fields

Field name	Description	Example
X-XSS-Protection ^[43]	Cross-site scripting (XSS) filter	X-XSS-Protection: 1; mode=block
Content-Security-Policy, <i>X-Content-Security-Policy</i> , <i>X-WebKit-CSP</i> ^[44]	Content Security Policy definition.	X-WebKit-CSP: default-src 'self'
X-Content-Type-Options ^[45]	The only defined value, "nosniff", prevents Internet Explorer from MIME-sniffing a response away from the declared content-type. This also applies to Google Chrome, when downloading extensions. ^[46]	X-Content-Type-Options: nosniff
X-Powered-By ^[47]	specifies the technology (e.g. ASP.NET, PHP, JBoss) supporting the web application (version details are often in X-Runtime, X-Version, or X-AspNet-Version)	X-Powered-By: PHP/5.4.0
X-UA-Compatible ^[48]	Recommends the preferred rendering engine (often a backward-compatibility mode) to use to display the content. Also used to activate Chrome Frame in Internet Explorer.	X-UA-Compatible: IE=EmulateIE7 X-UA-Compatible: IE=edge X-UA-Compatible: Chrome=1
X-Content-Duration ^[49]	Provide the duration of the audio or video in seconds; only supported by Gecko browsers	X-Content-Duration: 42.666
Upgrade-Insecure-Requests ^[50]	Tells a server which (presumably in the middle of a HTTP -> HTTPS migration) hosts mixed content that the client would prefer redirection to HTTPS and can handle	Upgrade-Insecure-Requests: 1
X-Request-ID, X-Correlation-ID ^[51]	Correlates HTTP requests between a client and server.	X-Request-ID: f058ebd6-02f7-4d3f-942e-904344e8cde5

Effects of selected fields

Avoiding caching

If a web server responds with `Cache-Control: no-cache` then a web browser or other caching system (intermediate proxies) must not use the response to satisfy subsequent responses without first checking with the originating server (this process is called validation). This header field is part of HTTP version 1.1, and is ignored by some caches and browsers. It may be simulated by setting the `Expires` HTTP version 1.0 header field value to a time earlier than the response time. Notice that `no-cache` is not instructing the browser or proxies about whether or not to cache the content. It just tells the browser and proxies to validate the cache content with the server before using it (this is done by using `if-Modified-Since`, `If-Unmodified-Since`, `If-Match`, `If-None-Match` attributes mentioned above). Sending a `no-cache` value thus instructs a browser or proxy to not use the cache contents merely based on "freshness criteria" of the cache content. Another common way to prevent old content from being shown to the user without validation is `Cache-Control: max-age=0`. This instructs the user agent that the content is stale and should be validated before use.

The header field `Cache-Control: no-store` is intended to instruct a browser application to make a best effort not to write it to disk (i.e not to cache it).

The request that a resource should not be cached is no guarantee that it will not be written to disk. In particular, the HTTP/1.1 definition draws a distinction between history stores and caches. If the user navigates back to a previous page a browser may still show you a page that has been stored on disk in the history store. This is correct behavior according to the specification. Many user agents show different behavior in loading pages from the history store or cache depending on whether the protocol is HTTP or HTTPS.

The `Cache-Control: no-cache` HTTP/1.1 header field is also intended for use in requests made by the client. It is a means for the browser to tell the server and any intermediate caches that it wants a fresh version of the resource. The `Pragma: no-cache` header field, defined in the HTTP/1.0 spec, has the same purpose. It, however, is only defined for the request header. Its meaning in a response header is not specified.^[52] The behavior of `Pragma: no-cache` in a response is implementation specific. While some user agents do pay attention to this field in responses,^[53] the HTTP/1.1 RFC specifically warns against relying on this behavior.

See also

- HTTP header injection
- HTTP ETag
- List of HTTP status codes

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External links

- Headers: Permanent Message Header Field Names (<http://www.iana.org/assignments/message-headers/message-headers.xml#permanent-headers%7CMessage>)
- RFC 7230: Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Message Syntax and Routing
- RFC 7231: Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Semantics and Content
- RFC 7232: Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Conditional Requests
- RFC 7233: Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Range Requests
- RFC 7234: Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Caching
- RFC 7235: Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Authentication
- RFC 2965: IETF HTTP State Management Mechanism RFC
- HTTP/1.1 headers from a web server point of view (<http://www.and.org/texts/server-http>)
- Internet Explorer and Custom HTTP Headers - EricLaw's IEInternals - Site Home - MSDN Blogs (<http://blogs.msdn.com/b/ieinternals/archive/2009/06/30/internet-explorer-custom-http-headers.aspx>)

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Categories: Hypertext Transfer Protocol | Hypertext Transfer Protocol headers | Internet-related lists

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