curl cheat sheet

Build or explain any curl command, with quoting for bash, PowerShell and CMD.

Common commands

Show only the response headers

```
curl -I 'https://example.com'
```

Follow redirects

```
curl -sIL 'http://example.com'
```

Send JSON (POST)

```
curl -H 'Content-Type: application/json' \
  -d '{"name":"boga"}' \
  'https://api.example.com/users'
```

Send a bearer token

```
curl -H 'Authorization: Bearer YOUR_TOKEN' \
  'https://api.example.com/users'
```

Log in with a username and password

```
curl -u 'user:password' \
  'https://api.example.com/users'
```

Download a file

```
curl -LO 'https://example.com/report.pdf'
```

Upload a file

```
curl -T 'report.pdf' 'https://example.com/uploads/'
```

Test a new server before switching DNS

```
curl -I \
  --resolve 'example.com:443:203.0.113.10' \
  'https://example.com'
```

Test CORS (preflight)

```
curl -i \
  -X OPTIONS \
  -H 'Origin: https://app.example.com' \
  -H 'Access-Control-Request-Method: POST' \
  -H 'Access-Control-Request-Headers: Content-Type' \
  'https://api.example.com/users'
```

Test caching (304 Not Modified)

```
curl -I \
  -H 'If-None-Match: "abc123"' \
  'https://example.com/style.css'
```

Time a request

```
curl -s \
  -o /dev/null \
  -w 'DNS %{time_namelookup}s  Connect %{time_connect}s
TLS %{time_appconnect}s  TTFB %{time_starttransfer}s
Total %{time_total}s\n' \
  'https://example.com'
```

See everything curl sends and receives

```
curl -v 'https://example.com'
```

Flags you'll use most

`-s`	Silent: hide the progress meter (add -S to still show errors)
`-v`	Verbose: request, response headers and TLS details
`-i`	Include the response headers in the output
`-I`	Headers only (sends a HEAD request)
`-L`	Follow redirects
`-o file`	Save the response body to a file
`-O`	Save under the file name from the URL
`-d data`	Send data in the body (makes it a POST)
`--json data`	Send JSON with the right headers (curl 7.82+)
`-H 'Name: value'`	Add a request header
`-u user:pass`	Basic auth (just -u user asks for the password)
`-X METHOD`	Set the method (PUT, DELETE …)
`-F name=value`	Form field; name=@file uploads a file
`-T file`	Upload a file (PUT)
`-A agent`	Set the User-Agent
`-k`	Skip TLS certificate checks (testing only)
`-w format`	Print extra info, e.g. %{http_code}
`--resolve host:port:ip`	Send to a specific IP, keep the host name
`--max-time s`	Give up after s seconds
`--compressed`	Request and decode gzip or brotli responses

bash, PowerShell or CMD?

	bash / zsh	PowerShell	CMD
Program	`curl`	`curl.exe`	`curl`
Quotes	`'…'`	`'…'`	`"…"`, inner `\"`
Next line	`\`	`` ` ``	`^`
Discard output	`/dev/null`	`NUL`	`NUL`

Windows PowerShell 5.1 strips the double quotes inside arguments, so JSON arrives broken. PowerShell 7.3 and later are fine; on 5.1, send the JSON from a file: `-d '@body.json'`.