

cURL CLI Command & HTTP Flags Cheat Sheet

Syntax reference for cURL HTTP methods, authentication headers, JSON payloads, and CLI flags.

Live cURL to Code Converter: <https://lotsofnetwork.com/curl-converter>

Flag & Syntax	Example Snippet	Command Behavior
-X, --request <METHOD>	curl -X POST https://api.com	Sets HTTP verb (GET, POST, PUT, DELETE, PATCH, HEAD)
-H, --header <HEADER>	-H "Authorization: Bearer <token>"	Passes custom HTTP header (can be repeated multiple times)
-d, --data <DATA>	-d "param1=val1¶m2=val2"	Sends HTTP POST data; auto-sets form-urlencoded
--json <JSON_STRING>	--json '{"username":"admin"}'	Sends JSON payload; auto-sets application/json (curl 7.82+)
-u, --user <USER:PWD>	-u "api_key:secret_pass"	Generates standard HTTP Basic Authentication header
-k, --insecure	curl -k https://self-signed.local	Bypasses TLS/SSL certificate verification for testing
-s, -sS, --silent	curl -sS https://api.com	Silent mode (suppresses progress bar; -sS still shows errors)
-L, --location	curl -L https://short.url	Automatically follows HTTP 301, 302, 307, 308 redirects
-o, --output <FILE>	curl -o bundle.zip https://cdn.com/f	Writes response output to a specified local filename
-O, --remote-name	curl -O https://site.com/image.png	Saves response to local file using the remote filename
-I, --head	curl -I https://lotsofnetwork.com	Fetches response HTTP headers only (sends HEAD request)
-v, --verbose	curl -v https://api.com	Outputs full TLS handshake, request headers, and response info

Production cURL Recipes & Workflows

Recipe Name	Copy-Ready Terminal Command
POST JSON with Bearer Token	curl -X POST https://api.com/v1/users -H "Authorization: Bearer \$TOKEN" --json '{"role":"admin"}'
Download with Redirects & Resume	curl -L -C - -O https://releases.ubuntu.com/jammy/ubuntu.iso
Inspect HTTP Headers & Redirect Chain	curl -IL https://lotsofnetwork.com
Benchmark Latency & TTFB	curl -s -w "DNS: %{time_namelookup}s Connect: %{time_connect}s Total: %{time_total}s\n" -o /dev/null https://lotsofnetwork.com