> **Document type**: API authentication guide
> **Audience**: Merchant and agency developers
> **Purpose**: This document describes how to authenticate to an API. The name of the API has been removed from the document.

Authenticate to the API

When you make a request to the API, you need to provide an OAuth 2.0 access token in the header of the request. An access token is a set of short-lived credentials that grants you permission to call the API.

To get an access token, you first generate your API credentials on the merchant console. You then exchange your API credentials for an access token by making a POST request to a token endpoint.

Access token expire every 15 minutes. After your access token expires, you can request a new access token by using the same client permissions.

Step 1: Generate API credentials

To generate your API credentials by using the merchant console, do the following:

1. Sign in to the merchant console as an owner or admin.
2. Choose **Settings**.
3. Under **Settings**, choose **API Credentials**.
4. Choose **Generate credentials**.
5. For **Credentials name**, enter a name that helps you identify the purpose of the credentials.
6. Choose the permissions that you want the API credentials to have. You can choose **Full access** or **Custom**.
    - **Full access:** Lets you edit and view access to all the listed permissions. Choosing this option automatically selects all APIs in the list.
    - **Custom:** Lets you select permissions from a list. If you choose this option, you need to manually select specific APIs that you need.
7. Choose **Generate**. The merchant console generates your API credentials and then takes you to a page where you can download a file that contains the credentials. The file contains a client ID, client secret, target ID, and a list of permissions that the credentials have access to.
8. Download the credentials file to your computer.
9. Locate and open the downloaded credentials file.

Step 2: Use API credentials to get an access token

To get an access token for the API, do the following:

Make an HTTPS POST request

Make an HTTPS POST request to `https://api.writing-sample.com/token` with the following fields in the body of the request.

Request Fields

Field	Description	Required?
`client_id`	The client ID of the API credentials that you downloaded in the preceding section.	Yes
`client_secret`	The client secret of the API credentials that you downloaded in the preceding section.	Yes
`grant_type`	OAuth 2.0 grant type. Use `client_credentials`.	Yes

Example Request

In the following example request, replace the following placeholders:

- `EXAMPLE_CLIENT_ID` with the `client_id` from the API credentials that you downloaded.
- `EXAMPLE_CLIENT_SECRET` with the `client_secret` from the API credentials that you downloaded.

```
curl --location --request POST 'https://api.writing-sample.com/token' \
--header 'Content-Type: application/x-www-form-urlencoded' \
--header 'x-api-version: 2024-11-01' \
--data-urlencode 'client_id=EXAMPLE_CLIENT_ID' \
--data-urlencode 'client_secret=EXAMPLE_CLIENT_SECRET' \
--data-urlencode 'grant_type=client_credentials'
```

Get the access token from the response

Get the access token from the response, which contains the following fields.

Successful Response Fields

Field	Description
`access_token`	Token that you use to access the API.
`expires_in`	Time until the token expires, in seconds.

Example Failed Response (HTTP 400)

```
 {
    "message": "Content type is null or invalid. Ensure content type is: application/x-www-form-urlencoded",
    "code": "InvalidContentType",
    "type": "ValidationError"
}
```

Failed Response Fields

Field	Description
`message`	Description of the cause of the error.
`code`	(Only present for HTTP 400 `InvalidParameterException` responses.) Code that further describes the cause of the HTTP 400 error. For a list of possible codes, see the table in the following section.
`type`	The exception type thrown by the service. Examples: `ValidationError` or `AccessDeniedError`.

Error Codes

HTTP Status Code	Error Type	Error Code	Description
400	`ValidationError`	`InvalidContentType`	The `Content-Type` field in the request is missing or invalid. The `Content-Type` field must be `application/x-www-form-urlencoded`.
400	`ValidationError`	`NonDeserializableContent`	The request payload isn't in a format that the server can interpret.
400	`ValidationError`	`InvalidClientId`	The request payload doesn't contain a `client_id` field, or the specified `client_id` is incomplete, malformed, or invalid.
400	`ValidationError`	`InvalidClientSecret`	The request payload doesn't contain a `client_secret` field, or the specified `client_secret` is incomplete, malformed, or invalid.
400	`ValidationError`	`InvalidGrantType`	The request payload doesn't contain a `grant_type` field, or the specified `grant_type` is incomplete, malformed, or invalid. The `grant_type` must be `client_credentials`.
401	`AccessDeniedError`	N/A	The requested payload doesn't have permission to receive an access token.
429	`ThrottlingError`	N/A	The request was throttled by the service. Requests are throttled after a limit of 12 requests per second per `client_id` is reached.
500	`InternalServerError`	N/A	An internal error occurred. Try again.