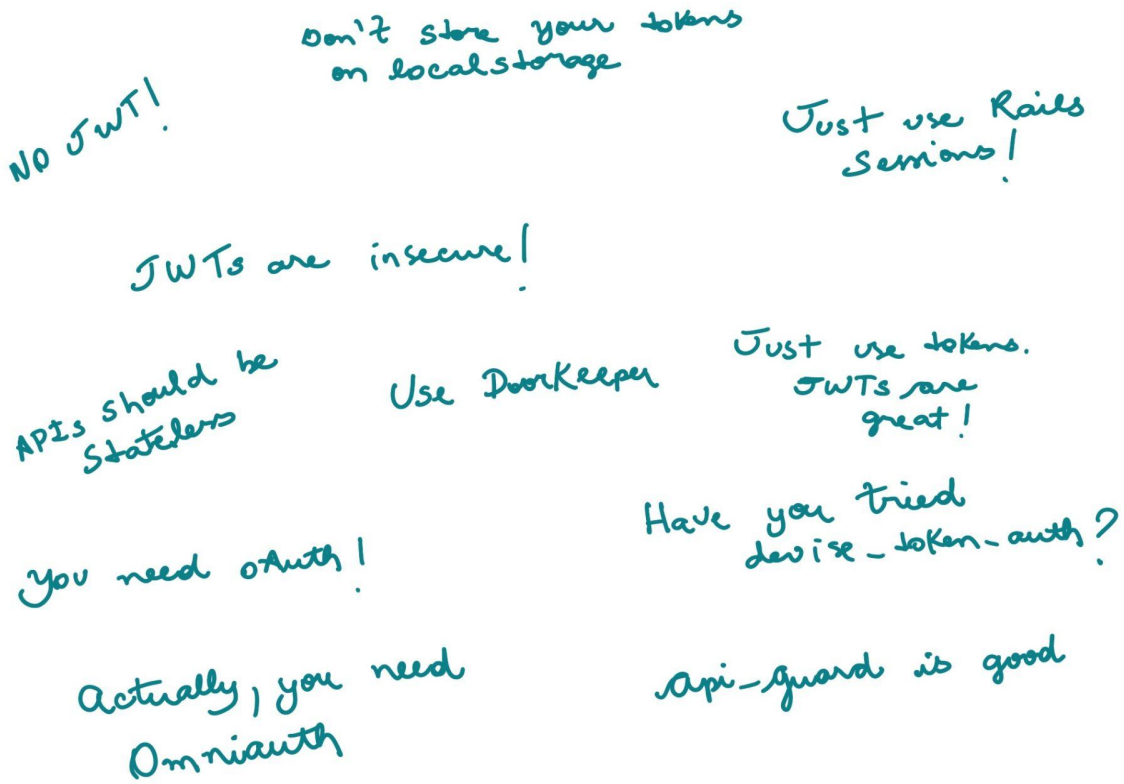
Should you create a new Rails as API-only 🤔?

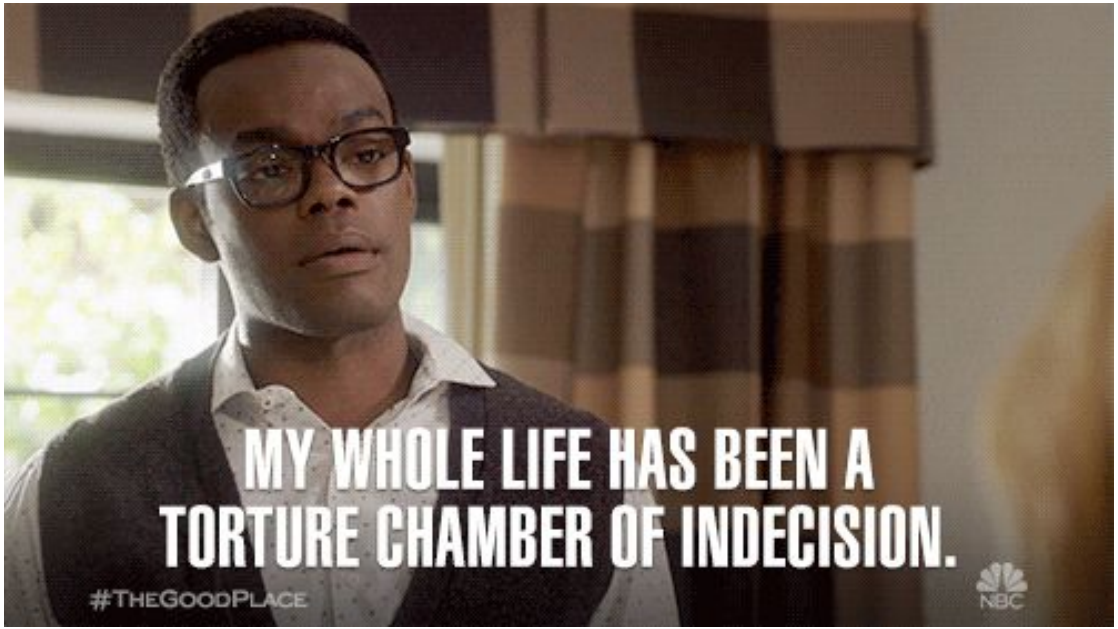
Stefanni Brasil
stefannibrasil.me | @stefannibrasil

APIs can be confusing 🤯



APIs can be confusing 🤯

Let’s meet my friend Chidi Anagonye 👋



It depends! Will...

✔️ Your client (a SPA, a mobile native app, another application) render all HTML pages?

✔️ Your client create the presentation the user will actually see?

✔️ Your Rails API have the solo responsibility to serve JSON resources to your client?

If you need a Rails application that serves JSON resources to an **API client** or **client-side framework**… YES!

Rails API was built for that!

What does a Rails API-only look like?

- ❌ no views
- ❌ no helpers
- ❌ no assets
- ❌ no new & edit actions
- ❌ no sessions & cookies

How is it different from a regular Rails app?

rails new my_app

/assets

/channels

/controllers

/helpers

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

rails new my_api -- api

/channels

/controllers no new & edit actions, render :json

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

/layouts/mailer

How is it different from a regular Rails app?

rails new my_app

/assets

/channels

/controllers

/helpers

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

rails new my_api -- api

/channels

/controllers no new & edit actions, render :json

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

/layouts/mailer

How is it different from a regular Rails app?

rails new my_app

/assets

/channels

/controllers

/helpers

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

rails new my_api -- api

/channels

/controllers no new & edit actions, render :json

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

/layouts/mailer

How is it different from a regular Rails app?

rails new my_app

/assets

/channels

/controllers

/helpers

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

rails new my_api -- api

/channels

/controllers no new & edit actions, render :json

/jobs

/mailers

/models

/views

/layouts/mailer

What if I realize I actually need a full stack Rails app after creating my API-only one?

- Change the config.rb file;
- Inherit ActionController from ActionController::Base
- Generate default directories for assets, views, view helpers;
- Add back new & edit action;
- Add back necessary middleware (sessions, cookies, etc.)
- Add all the modules you might need from ActionController::Base
- Add back CSRF protection to your (new) SessionsController
- Learn from this experience :)

What if I realize I actually need a full stack Rails app after creating my API-only one?

- Change the config.rb file;
- Inherit ActionController from ActionController::Base
- Generate default directories for assets, views, view helpers;
- Add back new & edit action;
- Add back necessary middleware (sessions, cookies, etc.)
- Add all the modules you might need from ActionController::Base
- Add back CSRF protection to your (new) SessionsController
- **Learn from this experience :)**

RAILS API-ONLY?!

A Ruby on Rails API-only cheat sheet by Stefanni Brasil

When should you use it?

✔ If your client (a SPA, a mobile native app, another application) will render all HTML pages the user will see

✔ Your Rails API has the solo responsibility to serve JSON resources to your client

How different is it from a Rails app?

rails new my_api -- api	rails new my_app
/channels /controllers* /jobs /mailers /models /views /layouts/mailer	/assets /channels /controllers /helpers /jobs /mailers /models /views

*no new & edit actions, render :json only

Rails API-only structure:

- ✖ no views
- ✖ no view helpers
- ✖ no assets
- ✖ no new & edit actions
- ✖ layouts and templates rendering
- ✖ no sessions & cookies
- ✖ no HTTP method overriding

Turn a Rails API-only into a normal app

1. Change the config.rb file;
2. Inherit ActionController from ActionController::Base
3. Generate default directories for assets, views, view helpers;
4. Add back new & edit action;
5. Add back necessary middleware (sessions, cookies, etc.)
6. Add all the modules you might need from ActionController::Base
7. Add back CSRF protection
8. Learn from this experience :)

Avoid at all costs:

✋ storing any sensitive credentials on the browser's localstorage 😵
✋ handling session management on your own
✋ not following API standards (openAPI, HTTP requests)

Coming soon:

Authentication strategy
Standards
Best practices...

stefannibrasil.me | @stefannibrasil

Slides + Cheat Sheet:

stefannibrasil.me/railsconf

Thank You 

stefannibrasil.me/railsconf

@stefannibrasil