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Not paying twice for a generation: the Idempotency-Key header

Using the AI API

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Not paying twice for a generation: the Idempotency-Key header

Using the AI API Created on **November 28, 2026** 3 min read



In short: if the connection drops in the middle of a generation request, you do not know whether the image or the video was started. Repeating carelessly can give you two generations, and you pay for both. With the `Idempotency-Key` header, you repeat the request without that risk: the API recognises the value and returns the saved answer, without generating again.

How to use it

1. Generate a unique value for each generation. A UUID works well.
2. Send it in the `Idempotency-Key` header of `POST /v1/media/generations`, from the first attempt.
3. If you get no answer, repeat with the **same value** and the **same body**.

In Python, with the value generated once and reused in the attempts:

```
import os, time, uuid, requests

API = "https://api.interweb.ao/v1"
headers = {
    "Authorization": "Bearer " + os.environ["INTERWEB_API_KEY"],
    "Idempotency-Key": str(uuid.uuid4()),
}
body = {"model": "openai/gpt-image-2/text-to-image",
              "input": {"prompt": "A bright, modern office with plants", "size":
"1024x1024"}}
```

```
for attempt in range(3):
    try:
            r = requests.post(API + "/media/generations", headers=headers, json=body,
timeout=30)
        print(r.status_code, r.headers.get("Idempotent-Replayed"), r.json())
        break
    except requests.RequestException:
        time.sleep(5)
```

With curl, on Linux and macOS, keep the value in a variable and repeat the same command until you get an answer:

```
IDEM=$(uuidgen)
curl "https://api.interweb.ao/v1/media/generations" \
  -H "Authorization: Bearer $INTERWEB_API_KEY" \
  -H "Idempotency-Key: $IDEM" \
  -H "Content-Type: application/json" \
   -d '{"model": "openai/gpt-image-2/text-to-image", "input": {"prompt": "A bright,
modern office with plants", "size": "1024x1024"}}'
```

What the API answers

Situation	Answer
First request with this value	The generation runs normally.
Same value and same body	The saved answer comes back, with the `Idempotent-Replayed: true` header. Nothing is generated or charged again.
Same value and a different body	`409` with the code `idempotency_conflict`.
Same value, with the first request still in progress	`409` with the code `idempotency_conflict`. Wait a little and repeat.

The rules

The value can have up to 255 visible characters and stays reserved for 24 hours, per key. Use the same value only to repeat the same operation: a new image gets a new value. If you got an error and fixed the request, use a new value too. The header is accepted in chat (`POST /v1/chat/completions`, `POST /v1/messages` and `POST /v1/responses`) and it is required when you buy credits through the API.

> **The OpenAI SDKs do not have the generation operations.**
> Use plain HTTP requests, as in the examples. In a batch of images, each image has its own value. See **creating many images at once**.

The same rules apply to purchases, payments and support tickets through the API: see **Idempotency-Key in our API**.

RECOMMENDED

Before a batch of generations, check your balance and the prices in All in One AI.

See All in One AI →

SEE ALSO

- **Idempotency-Key in our API: repeating a purchase, payment or ticket without doing it twice** →
- **Timeouts, retries and idempotency: how not to charge a customer twice** →
- **Creating many AI images at once: the balance, the price and the request limit** →
- **Creating AI images through the API: the request, the status and saving the file** →
- **All in One AI** →

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