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Our API's error codes: what each one means, and which ones are worth retrying

WhatsApp & APIs

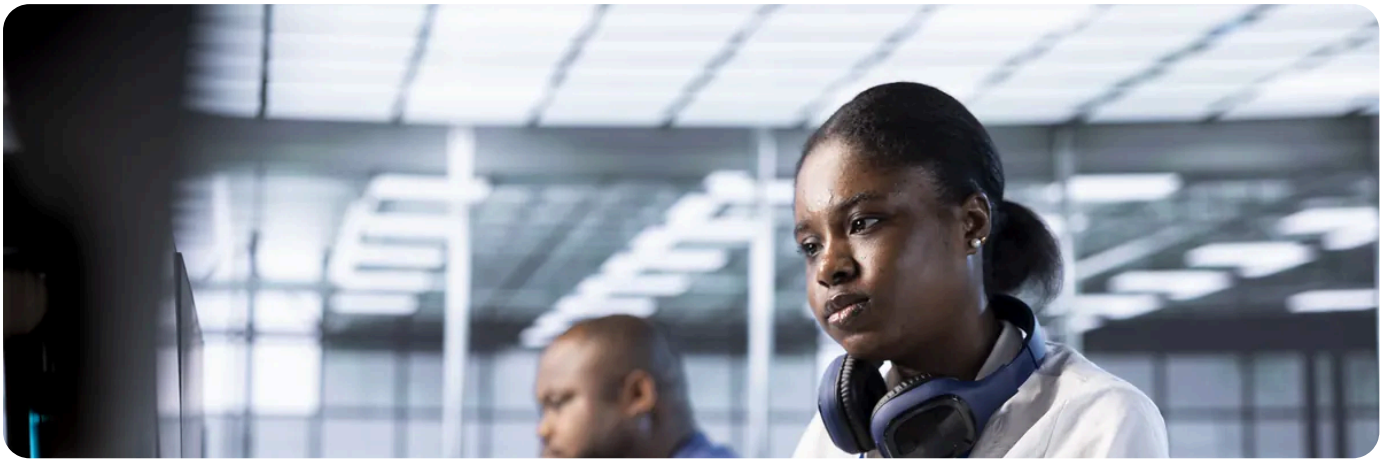
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Our API's error codes: what each one means, and which ones are worth retrying

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The short answer: every error has the same shape, with a stable `code` in English, which is what your program should compare. Only `429`, `500`, `502` and `503` are worth retrying, with a wait. The others are not fixed by retrying: something has to change.

The shape of an error

```
{
"error": {
"code": "rate_limited",
"message": "Too many requests. Try again shortly.",
"correlation_id": "0f8fad5b-d9cb-469f-a165-70867728950e",
"details": { "retry_after": 42 }
}
}
```

Field	What it is
`code`	A stable code, in English. Use this field in your programs: it never changes with the language.
`message`	Text for people, in the `Accept-Language` language (`pt` or `en`; without the header, English). It can change: do not compare it.
`correlation_id`	The request identifier, the same as the `X-Correlation-ID` header.
`details`	Extra data about the error, such as the invalid field or the reason for a `409`. It may be empty.

The codes, one by one

Status and code	What it means	What to do
`400 invalid_request`	The request is not valid: the body is not JSON, the connection is not HTTPS, or the mode in `X-API-Mode` does not match the key.	Fix the request.
`401 unauthorized`	The key is missing, invalid, revoked or expired, or its creator no longer has access to the account.	Check the key or create another.
`402 insufficient_credit`	The account does not have enough credit. Nothing was charged.	Top up your credit and try again.
`403 forbidden`	The account cannot use the API right now.	Contact support.
`403 insufficient_scope`	The key lacks the required permission.	Create a key with that permission.
`403 ip_not_allowed`	The source IP is not on the key's list.	Use an IP from the list or create another key.
`403 spending_limit_exceeded`	The operation goes over the key's spending limit. Nothing was charged.	Create a key with a higher limit.
`404 not_found`	The resource does not exist or is not yours.	Check the address and the identifier.
`405 method_not_allowed`	The method is not accepted on this path.	See the `Allow` header.
`409 conflict`	It cannot be done in the current state. The reason is in `details.reason`.	Read the reason and fix it.
`409 account_email_domain`	The request touches the mail of the account e-mail's domain, or that of one of its users.	Make the change in Meu MozOut.
`409 idempotency_conflict`	The `Idempotency-Key` was used on another request, or the first one is still running.	**See retries**.
`422 validation_failed`	Some data is not valid.	Fix it, with help from `details`.
`429 rate_limited`	You went over the request limit.	Wait for the `Retry-After` time.

Status and code	What it means	What to do
`500 internal_error`	A failure on our side.	Try later and give the `correlation_id` to support.
`502 upstream_error`	The service behind the API did not answer as expected.	Try later and give the `correlation_id` to support.
`503 disabled`	The API is switched off right now.	Try later.

There is also an SMS-specific code, `403 sms_reseller_required`, when the account has no active SMS reseller program. Each area also has its own reasons inside `409` and `422`, such as `cname_conflict` in DNS or `action_in_progress` for servers: they are in each area's article.

Retry or not

1. **Retry, with a wait:** `429`, `500`, `502` and `503`. On a `429`, wait at least the `Retry-After` time; if it repeats, wait longer each time.

2. **Do not retry without changing something:** all the others. A `422` keeps coming back as long as the data is wrong.

3. **On a `POST`, always send `Idempotency-Key`** from the first attempt and retry with the same value. That way, retrying after a `500` never does the same thing twice: see **the Idempotency-Key**.

A `502` on hosting may mean the change was made. If the request had already gone on to the server, retrying with the same `Idempotency-Key` returns the same `502` without running it again. Check the result with a read first and, to try again, use a new idempotency key.

Reporting a problem to support

Give the `correlation_id` (or the `X-Correlation-ID` header), the time of the request and the operation. **Never send the key**: support does not need it to find the request.

For your code:
Decide by the HTTP status (retry or not) and by the `code` (what to show or do), and always log the `correlation_id`. Never compare the `message`: it changes with the language and its wording may change.

NEED A HAND?

Got an error you cannot make sense of? Open a support ticket with the correlation_id, the time and the operation, but never the key.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- API request limits: per key, per account and per task, the headers and what to do after a 429 →
- Idempotency-Key in our API: repeating a purchase, payment or ticket without doing it twice →
- Looking after your API keys: one per program, expiry, revoking and replacing a key →
- API permissions by area: read or write, and which permission each task needs →
- API Sandbox or Production: what each key really does, and moving your program to production →
- Timeouts, retries and idempotency: how not to charge a customer twice →

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