

API Penetration Testing vs. Web Application Penetration Testing

API Penetration Testing and Web Application Penetration Testing are closely related but distinct areas of application pentesting. The main difference is that API Penetration Testing focuses on the backend of applications or server-to-server connections, while Web Application Penetration Testing focuses on an internet-facing asset.

API Penetration Testing can be part of Web Application Penetration Testing, but the scope of the test will be limited to specific calls the API uses for that application, instead of the entire functionality of the application. For this reason, it's important to prioritize API Penetration Testing separately from Web Application Penetration Testing to ensure comprehensive testing of API(s).

	API Penetration Testing	Web Application Penetration Testing
Testing Focus	API	Application
Manual Testing	✓	✓
Automated Scanning	✓	✓
Catalog or Sample File	✓	
API Architecture (REST, SOAP, GraphQL, etc.)	✓	
Authentication/Authorization Testing	✓	✓
Business Logic Testing	✓	✓
User Interface Vulnerabilities		✓
Dependency Vulnerabilities		✓
Resource Consumption Vulnerabilities	✓	
Inventory Management Vulnerabilities	✓	