

Difference between Hard Copy and Soft Copy

<i>Details</i>	<i>Soft Copy</i>	<i>Hard Copy</i>
<i>Storage Space</i>	<i>Soft copies do not require any physical space, even with large files. Instead, it's only needed virtual spaces and memory.</i>	<i>Hard copies require enough space for storing the hardcopy files.</i>
<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>It is a virtual copy intangible but easy to look at on a screen. However, we cannot touch a soft copy because it is not in a physical form.</i>	<i>We can touch and feel the hard copy because it is a physical document- received on any tangible medium like paper or other printable forms</i>
<i>Weight</i>	<i>Soft copies, in any amount, do not carry any weight with them in a physical form. Decimal units such as kilobytes (KB), megabytes (MB), and gigabytes (GB) are commonly used to express the size of soft copy data.</i>	<i>Hard copies of files carry some weight in physical form.</i>
<i>Quality</i>	<i>The quality of a soft copy of a document/file depends purely based on the storage device and software.</i>	<i>The quality of a document or files hard copy depends significantly on a few factors. The medium (paper or plastic.), type of ink, colors used, and printer make all the difference—the file storage place conditions.</i>
<i>Software</i>	<i>Soft copies require specific tools and software for storing, displaying, accessing, and editing documents and files.</i>	<i>It is not required.</i>
<i>Electronic Medium</i>	<i>Require electronic medium for reading and displaying the electronically saved content.</i>	<i>It does not require any electronic medium for reading and displaying the content.</i>
<i>Interface</i>	<i>A soft copy requires some interface like a computer or a mobile to display and read information.</i>	<i>Hard copies do not require an interface like a computer, mobile, tab, or any other device for reading and displaying information.</i>
<i>Sharing</i>	<i>Can be shared through any digital medium like hard disk, USB, Email, WhatsApp, etc.</i>	<i>can be shared through any digital medium like hard disk, USB, Email, WhatsApp, etc.</i>
<i>Modification/updating</i>	<i>Soft copies can do modified using software and tools using any computer device.</i>	<i>Hard copy documents are not easy to do any modification. But, even if you do, the changes are most visible.</i>

<i>Movability</i>	<i>Soft copies are easily movable on USB drives or any other device.</i>	<i>Soft copies are easily movable on USB drives or any other device.</i>
<i>Type of Copies</i>	<i>Soft copies are in a digital form, electronically saved documents.</i>	<i>Hard copies are physically written or printed copies on paper.</i>
<i>Store/Preserve</i>	<i>Soft copy preserved for as long as you want. Placing it in an exemplary hardware structure keeps it permanently safe. But choosing the right long-term storage media is part of your data loss or degradation.</i>	<i>Store paper documents long-term, organizing them in physical filing cabinets, fireproof safes, and lockboxes</i>
<i>Information Storage</i>	<i>A soft copy has data and information in virtual files saved on a computer or a drive.</i>	<i>A hard copy stores data and information in physical files- it may be images, texts, photographs, and more.</i>
<i>Medium of Writing</i>	<i>A computer or any other device is used to write and generate soft copies.</i>	<i>A computer or any other device is used to write and generate soft copies.</i>
<i>Environmental</i>	<i>Soft copies are more environment-friendly as they require less paper. But on the other side, the E-waste generated from computers can be harmful and non-biodegradable.</i>	<i>The manufacturing process of papers requires natural resources like trees for creating hardcopy files.</i>
<i>Type of documents</i>	<i>Soft copies are mainly preferred for personal and reference purposes.</i>	<i>Hard copies are mainly preferred for official record purposes.</i>
<i>Spending time on copies</i>	<i>Creating multiple copies is very easy. Easily can copy and paste the soft documents.</i>	<i>It may take some time to generate multiple copies.</i>
<i>Examples of document</i>	<i>Soft copies include eBooks, pdf files, excel files, word documents, scanned copies, etc.</i>	<i>Hard copies example, includes various documents like official records, correspondences, books, newspapers, magazines, etc.</i>
<i>Operated or controlled by electrical energy</i>	<i>Requires a power-driven medium for reading a soft copy.</i>	<i>Not require a power-driven medium for reading a hard copy.</i>
<i>Conversion/Reproduce</i>	<i>Possible to convert a soft copy into a hard copy by printing it.</i>	<i>Possible to convert a hard copy into a soft copy by scanning it.</i>
<i>Cost</i>	<i>No cost to generate and share soft copies.</i>	<i>Generating hard copies on paper can be expensive. Likewise, printing and materials cost, especially for colored photocopies and photographs.</i>
<i>Cyber attack</i>	<i>High-risk cases of Cyber-attack data stealing.</i>	<i>No high-risk cases of Cyber-attacks.</i>