

Floppy Disk

What is it?

A Floppy Disk is a small, flexible, and easily removable rotating (or floppy) magnetic storage disk.

It is made of flexible plastic that is coated with magnetic oxide. The flexible disk is enclosed within a square plastic jacket (referred to as cartridge), which gives the protection to the disk surface. It is called as "Floppy" because it is soft having flexible physical property.



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Device

Floppy disks are read and written to by means of a Floppy Disk Drive, which has a slot in the front for inserting a floppy disk. A Floppy Drive stores and retrieves information on floppy disks. A computer can have more than one floppy drive. The first floppy drive is labeled as A, and if a second drive is present it is labeled B. The label C is reserved for the hard disk drive, a primary storage unit. The floppy stores information on disks or diskettes magnetically. The disks are removable and reusable.



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Formatting Floppy Disks

The Floppies must be formatted before they can be used to store information. By formatting the disk, it is then divided into tracks and sectors which organizes the disk for information storage and retrieval from the computer. Most disks now come formatted. If not, they need to go through a format process on your computer. Be sure and format them according to the labeled capacity of the disk.

Floppies can be protected so that information that has been stored on the floppy disk cannot be erased. By sliding a plastic tab located on the right punched out hole on the diskette, so that it is open, the diskette cannot be written to. The computer will prompt you with a message if you try to write to the diskette when it is protected in this manner.

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Types of Floppy Disks

Floppies come in a variety of sizes, but the most popular size is the 3.5 inch because of its compactness and its storage capacity as apposed to the 5.25 inch which has a rather large, clumsy size, and it doesn't have the capacity to hold the same as the 3.5 inch floppy.

Older floppy disks that were 5.25 inches in diameter containing 1.2 Mb of data, are now considered obsolete and are not commonly found anymore. Older Computers use them.

Today's Floppy Disks are 3.5 inches in diameter enclosed in a hard plastic square case that cannot be opened, with the storage capacity of 1.44 MB. The 3.5 Inch Floppy Disk are the most commonly used disk. Information is magnetically recorded onto this thin flexible round disk.

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Floppy Capacity:

The capacity of the diskettes varies depending on their size in diameter and type, i.e. the mode of data recording. Floppies can be found in two storage capacities. They are high density disks and double-density disks.

Double-Density Disks (720K capacity) store the least amount of information. They are still used, but not as common as the high density disks. It is referred to with the letters DD on the label. With only one hole at the top of the disk, it can store 720K of information.

High-Density Disks (1.44K capacity) store the most information. Having two holes at the top of the disk, it can store 1.44 MB of information. It usually has the letters HD written on it. This is the most commonly used floppy disk.

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Floppy Disk Applications

The floppy disk allows you to install new programs, increase hard drive space by saving information to the floppy, transfer data from one computer to another, and backup your files on them so your data will not be lost in case of computer failure.

The Floppy Disk can be used to:-

Install new Programs - When we want to install new program, it may be available in the media such as Floppy Disk. Hence, one of the applications of Floppy disks include installing or loading a new program.

Backing up Data - A Backup is keeping a copy of files in case original files are damaged or stolen.

Transferring Data - A Floppy can be used to transfer large number of files. Also can be used to share files with other users.

Sometimes, for **Increasing the Hard Disk Space** we may use a Floppy by copying old or rarely used files into it so that they can be removed from the hard disk.

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- How does a Floppy work?