So, what are the key differences between these two archive types?

The first and most obvious difference is the **file extension**. JARs have the .jar extension, whereas the WAR file has the .war extension.

The second main difference is **their purpose and the way they function**. JAR files allow us to package multiple files in order to use it as a library, plugin, or any kind of application. On the other hand, WAR files are used only for web applications.

**The structure of the archives is also different.** We can create a JAR with any desired structure. In contrast, WAR has a predefined structure with WEB-INF and META-INF directories.

Finally, we can **run a JAR from the command line** if we build it as an [executable JAR](https://www.baeldung.com/executable-jar-with-maven) without using additional software. Or, we can use it as a library. In contrast, we **need a server to execute a WAR**.