# Linking Files

**Links** are pointers to files. **Hard links** point to the **inode** which holds the metadata about a file in memory. More than one file can point to the same **inode**. In essence, all of the filenames are just pointers to these **inodes** in memory.
If you use the **ls -l** command, you will see the number after the file permissions. This number tells you how many filenames are pointing to the same **inode** in memory. To see this **inode** number, you can use the **i** option with **ls**.

```
$ ln file hard_link_file
```

This command will create a hard_link_file which is the link file to the same **inode** that the original file points to.
**Soft (symbolic) links** are less permanent because they just hold the name of the file they point to.
You can create them by addint the **s** option. These kind of links are useful if you are pointing to a file on a different filesystem or if you are trying to create links to a directory.
If you want to see the contents (the files) of the directory this link points to, add the **L** option to the **ls** command.