

Java Archive (JAR)

Definition - What does *Java Archive (JAR)* mean?

Java archive (JAR) is a file format that contains bundled Java class files along with associated image/sound files, resources and metadata. It is usually a single, compressed file mostly used for supplying the necessary Java libraries and application software on a Java programming platform.

The JAR file format is similar to the tape archive (TAR) file format used in Unix.

Techopedia explains *Java Archive (JAR)*

A JAR file also may be used in the following ways:

- As a building block in Java applications
- As a deployment unit for Java plug-ins, applets or components For packaging Java components and dependent resources

JAR file features include the following:

- Mostly compressed into a ZIP file format and identified with the file .jar file extension
- Can be executable
- One can sign in on JAR file contents for more security.
- Have a lower download time, especially those related to applets and Java Web Start
- Highly compressed and provide efficient storage for the bundled Java files
- Support package versioning and package version consistency
- Support portability
- Java Development Kit (JDK) provides a JAR tool that helps perform basic JAR file tasks.
- In a JDK, a utility program with a JAR is provided. A programmer can use this to create, extract or perform any permitted operations on the JAR file.
- Date and time stamp are stored during the creation of a JAR file.
- Using JAR files, a Java application can be initiated in an enterprise.
- When used on the Web, a JAR file may contain an applet and accompany a Web page.

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