Text Files

Text files are the most basic file type. Virtually any programming language can read and write data in text files, and many applications that data analysts use can work with comma- and tab-delimited text files. They are also human-readable. Values are represented as plain text strings, so you can simply open a text editor and view the data. This is useful when you're investigating a problem.

However, there are downsides to using text files. When used to store large amounts of data, text files are inefficient. Representing numeric values as strings wastes a great deal of storage space. It's difficult to represent binary data like images in a text file; this requires using techniques like Base64 encoding. Converting data between text representations and their native data types requires serialization and deserialization, which slows performance.

Overall, text files offer excellent interoperability but poor performance.