

---

## **Differences between Services and Products**

---

1. **Products are tangible** – they are physical in nature such that they can be touched, smelled, felt and even seen. Services are intangible and they can only be felt not seen.
2. **Need vs. Relationship**– a product is specifically designed to satisfy the needs and wants of the customers and can be carried away. However, with a service, satisfaction is obtained but nothing is carried away. Essentially, marketing of a service is primarily concerned with creation of customer relationship.
3. **Perishability**- services cannot be stored for later use or sale since they can only be used during that particular time when they are offered. On the other hand, it can be seen that products are perishable. For example, fresh farm and other food products are perishable and these can also be stored for later use or sale.
4. **Quantity**- products can be numerically quantified and they come in different forms, shapes and sizes. However, services cannot be numerically quantified. Whilst you can choose different service providers, the concept remains the same.
5. **Inseparability**- services cannot be separated from their providers since they can be consumed at the same time they are offered. On the other hand, a product can be separated from the owner once the purchase has been completed.
6. **Quality**- quality of products can be compared since these are physical features that can be held. However, it may be difficult to compare the quality of the services rendered by different service providers.
7. **Returnability**- it is easier to return a product to the seller if the customer is not satisfied about it. In turn, the customer will get a replacement of the returned product. However, a service cannot be returned to the service provider since it is something that is intangible.

8. **Value perspective-** the value of a service is offered by the service provider while the value of the product is derived from using it by the customer. Value of a service cannot be separated from the provider while the value of a product can be taken or created by the final user of the product offered on the market.
9. **Shelf line-** a service has a shorter shelf line compared to a product. A product can be sold at a later date if it fails to sell on a given period. This is different with regard to a service that has a short shelf line and should be sold earlier.

---

## Differences between a product and service

---

### **Product**

A product is tangible, it is physical and can be held, seen and movable

Product value is derived by the customer

Customer care of the product is limited

A product can be stored for future use

A product can be owned

The quality of a product depends its nature

A product can be returned to the seller

The billing process of a service is a once off transaction

It is easy to compare quality of products

Though the terms product and service are often used interchangeably, it can be observed that they significantly differ. The major difference noted between the two is that a product is physical in nature and it is tangible. On the other hand, it can be seen that a service is intangible and it cannot be held therefore cannot be separated from the provider. Quality of the product is determined by the customer while the quality of a service is determined by the provider. A product can be stored for future use or sale and it can be returned to the buyer if the need arises. However, a service can be consumed the moment it is offered and cannot be stored for future use. A service cannot be returned to the service provider for any reason since it is not tangible.