**Hard News Vs. Soft News**

News stories are basically divided into two types: hard news and soft news. Hard new generally refers to up-to-the-minute news and events that are reported immediately, while soft news is background information or human-interest stories.

Politics, war, economics and crime used to be considered hard news, while arts, entertainment and lifestyles were considered soft news.

But increasingly, the lines are beginning to blur. Is a story about the private life of a politician “politics” or “entertainment”? Is an article about the importance of investing early for retirement a “business” story or a “lifestyle” story? Judging solely on subject matter, it can be difficult to tell.

One difference between hard and soft news is the tone of presentation. A hard news story takes a factual approach: What happened? Who was involved? Where and when did it happen? Why?

A soft news story tries instead to entertain or advise the reader. You may have come across newspaper or TV stories that promise “news you can use.” Examples might be tips on how to stretch properly before exercising, or what to look for when buying a new computer.

Knowing the difference between hard and soft news helps you develop a sense of how news is covered, and what sorts of stories different news media tend to publish or broadcast. This can be important when you want to write articles or influence the media yourself.