

Word for Word

Altogether Useful Guidance on All Together vs. Altogether



Although they look almost exactly the same, the phrase *all together* and the word *altogether* have different meanings and should not be used interchangeably.¹

All together means "in one place" or "all at once."²

Examples:

Several specimens were collected and stored all together.

The colleagues arrived for the meeting all together.

In contrast, *altogether* means "in all (in total)," "entirely," or "on the whole."³

Examples:

The study had three treatment arms and 120 participants altogether.

To reduce the risk of cancer, one should avoid tobacco altogether.

Bibliography

1. Altogether," *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster; 2003: 37.
2. All together," *The Careful Writer: A Modern Guide to English Usage*. New York: Atheneum; 1965: 35.
3. Fowler HW. *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press; 1965: 20.

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