All ready or already?

Although very similar in spelling and sound, all ready and already are distinct terms. They have very different meanings and functions.

Separately, all and ready can modify countless nouns and pronouns. When used together, however, they have a specific meaning: to be fully prepared. Although ready alone will suffice in most cases, all is used for emphasis.

**Examples:**

The mice are all ready for their treatment.

The students smiled, all ready for their group portrait.

Already has a different meaning: before or by a specified or implied time, which may be past, present, or future. Some examples may help clarify its usage.
Examples:

We already obtained permission to use these figures in our paper. (already = before now)

By the time we found the room, the meeting was already over. (already = before a time in the past)

The study has already met its recruitment goal, even though enrollment is open for another two months. (already = before an expected time in the future)

In U.S. English, already is also used in some slang expressions to intensify a statement or convey mild impatience.

Examples:

All right, already!

Enough, already!

Just give me the bad news, already!

If you are uncertain about whether to use all ready or already, try saying the sentence without the all. If the sentence makes sense without all, then all ready is the correct choice. If it does not make sense without all, already is the correct choice.

Bibliography


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