How to use STILL, YET, and ALREADY?

English is usually referred as a funny and confusing language. The same holds true for grammar. Most of us are confused with the usage of the words, such as "because, as, since, for". In the same manner, many of you might be surely confused with some other set of words. Three adverbs that often cause difficulty are 'still, yet, and already'. They are used when actions are going to happen, or are expected to happen, or were unexpected around the present time.

Difference between still, yet, already

Here we go with the detailed difference between still, yet and already:

STILL

1. Situations that continue to the present time
   - It is **still** raining.   - I **still** live in London.
   - They've been married for 30 years and are **still** in love.
2. Action that is not expected because of something else
   - He was sick but he **still** went to work.
   - I studied a lot though I **still** didn't pass the test.

YET

1. To ask if something expected has happened.
   - Have the test results arrived yet?
   - I'm hungry. Is dinner ready yet?
2. To say something expected hasn't happened.
   - I haven't done my homework **yet**.
   - It's almost 11 o'clock and Steve hasn't woken up **yet**.

ALREADY

1. An action has happened sooner than expected.
   - I have just finished lunch but I'm **already** hungry.
   - I think John **already** knows about the surprise party.

STILL

Still is used to denote an action or situation which continues to the present because it has not finished. It often refers to something happening for longer than expected.

Example:

Look at the position of 'still' before the verb or adjective.

1. Do you still live with your friends?
2. Are you still angry with her?

If the verb has two parts, still goes between both the verbs:

1. Meena started her exam an hour ago and she is still answering the questions.
2. Is it still raining? (continues to rain)

3. When I went to bed, Vivek was still working.

But, if one of the two verbs is negative, still goes before that negative verb:

1. Rosy has stopped drinking alcohol but her brother still hasn't quit.
2. I took the clock to the repair shop, though it still isn't working.

YET

It is used to denote an action that is expected in the future or to ask if something expected has happened. It is usually placed at the end of the sentence or question.

Example:

1. Is the presentation ready yet?
2. Hasn't your mother told you yet? We are moving to Kolkata!

To say that something expected hasn't happened:

1. Manisha can't go home yet, she hasn't finished her homework.
2. They haven't paid me yet.

'Yet' is rarely used in affirmative sentences. This usage is more formal and not common. Generally, still and yet are together used to explain why an action is continuing.

1. I am still studying at the university because I haven't graduated yet.
2. I haven't decided yet if I'm going to quit my job for travel. I'm still thinking about it.

ALREADY

Already is used to refer to an action that happened sooner than expected. It is used in affirmative sentences in the present or past, but never future.

Example:

1. I already know what I'm going to buy you for your birthday.
2. They have already seen "Titanic" and don't want to see it again.

Now, look at the following examples and the placement of "already"

1. How does she already have the answers to tomorrow's test?
2. Have they already got their visas?

The above explanations will help you to clear your confusion and doubts and improve your [English speaking skills](). Practice them regularly with the help of an online English trainer.

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- By Chander Madan

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