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Especially vs. Specially - Know the Difference

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Most of the times, we get confused between the usage of the words especially and specially and tend to use them interchangeably. However, there is a slight difference in the meaning of the two words. Although both means ‘particularly’, the use of especially is used in more of formal situations while the latter is used informally. Let us understand the difference between the two with the help of some examples.



Especially means exceptional

According to the Oxford Dictionary, especially means: to a great extent; very much

When something is noteworthy or exceptional, we use the term ‘especially’.

Example: He did especially remarkable in Science.

Special means distinguished or particular

According to the Oxford Dictionary, ‘specially’ means for a special purpose

Example: This program is specially designed for web application developers.

When something is designed for a particular purpose, we make use of the word ‘specially’.

Especially and specially are basically adverbs and hence,are the modified version of the words ‘special’ and ‘especial’. One key difference between the two is that specially is used in the context of bringing out the distinct purpose, whereas especially is used while singling out a person or situation.

While speaking or writing English, you would come across situations where you will find it hard to understand the right word to use. So, keep the basic rule in mind. When you want to refer something is done for a particular reason, use specially. On the other hand, when you want to single out someone or something, or emphasize on something, make use of especially.

Here are some more examples to clear the concept on the usage of especially.

This book is quite interesting to read, especially, if you love history.

She loved the dessert, especially the cake.

You should not drink at all, especially when you are the only one in the group who knows how to drive.

Traveling, especially abroad, is her passion.

He is especially good at public speaking

She loves watching moves, especially comedy.

He wrote a speech especially for his wedding anniversary

Here are some more examples to clear the concept on the usage of specially.

This dress was specially designed for your wedding

This house was specially built for disabled individuals

The new gear was specially designed to help faster construction

I don't like to be treated specially

To conclude

English can be a tricky language at times due to the presence of homophones. It's only practice that will help you learn the correct usage of similar sounding words with different meanings. Join our online spoken English program and improve your knowledge of the language.

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- By Chander Madan

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