

Upset vs Angry

The English words "upset" and "angry" describe similar emotions but they are not quite the same. You cannot always use "upset" to mean "angry," or vice versa. In general, "angry" is a stronger feeling, so you should use this word only in extreme situations.

"Upset" can be applied to smaller, less intense emotions.

Upset is defined as "unhappy or disappointed because of something unpleasant that has happened." In other words, "upset" is a somewhat sad feeling you get if something not nice happens.

Angry, is defined as "having strong feelings about something that you dislike very much or about an unfair situation."

Though both are negative emotions, there are a few key differences:

- Being angry is a stronger, more aggressive emotion. When you are angry, you might want to yell, fight, or throw something.
- Being upset is a sadder, gentler emotion that we show. When you are upset, you may want to cry or curl up in bed until you feel better.
- Being angry is associated with annoyance and dislike; being upset is associated with disappointment and hurt.

If you are angry you are probably also upset, but you are not necessarily angry if you are upset. Being very upset can lead to becoming angry. For example, if you have some personal disappointment, such as not saying goodbye to a friend or doing poorly on a test, you probably get upset. You feel bad and down for a little while.

In contrast, being angry is more reactive: something happens and you have very strong feelings about it that make you want to do something to fix the situation.

In general, you can use "upset" to describe most situations. Stay away from saying "angry" unless you are extremely upset.

Resources:

Anger – Mind

How to be a good listener if someone is upset

How to Calm Down when You're Upset

<https://www.wikihow.com/Calm-Down-when-You%27re-Upset>

How to respond when someone is upset

<https://www.developmentcounts.com/how-to-respond-when-someone-is-upset/>

Emotionally Upset? 20 Ways to Defeat Negative Feelings

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/evolution-the-self/201610/emotionally-upset-20-ways-defeat-negative-feelings>