

## Difference Between WLAN and WI-FI

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### WLAN vs WI-FI

The attempts to improve data communications technology are more about ease and convenience. Whenever possible, we would always want less effort to connect with others. Current technological advancements allow us to transmit and receive digital information without the physical connection of wires or fiber optics. Certainly, for network administrators and

engineers, nothing presents more ease and comfort than the wireless means of connecting devices.

WLAN, short for Wireless Local Area Network and sometimes called Wireless LAN, is a network of computers over distances of a few hundred feet that uses high frequency radio signals to transmit and receive data. The network can also connect multiple computers to a central information system, a printer, or a scanner. This provides mobility in networking (internet) which also helps steer clear of utilizing unwieldy and awkward cables for interconnectivity. IEEE 802.11 is the foremost standard for wireless LANs.

Basically, WLAN allows peer-to-peer data communications and/or point-to-point, such as LAN-to-LAN, WLAN-to-LAN, or even WLAN-to-WLAN, within a relatively small area (a building or campus setting). Conventional LANs typically use twisted pair, coaxial wires or in some cases optical fibers. WLAN gets rid of these physical connections and uses electromagnetic wave signals instead to transmit and receive data within the network. Potentially, transmission is not as fast as the one provided by a conventional LAN but for most users, average and industry professionals alike, the slower transfer rate is a minor limitation.

WI-FI means Wireless Fidelity. The term is actually a trademark name used to brand products that belong to a category of WLAN devices. The devices or hardware branded with the WI-FI trademark is based on the standards stated by IEEE 802.11. In most cases, WI-FI is considered by the majority as synonymous to the actual standard itself.

An association of companies all around the globe called "The WI-FI Alliance" endorses WLAN technology and the products involved with it. This alliance also certifies various hardware and devices if they measure up to the standards of interoperability. It should be mentioned that there are numerous devices that indeed conform to the standards but are not certified by the WI-FI Alliance and therefore, do not sport the WI-FI logo. The reason for this is the cost and hassle of the certification procedure.

A WI-FI (ready) device effectively means that it is ready for use in a WLAN. Such devices range from desktop computers, laptops, notebooks, to smartphones, palm tops, and other small devices.

Summary:

1. WLAN is a type of computer network in a relatively small area that dismisses the use of physical means of interconnectivity.
2. WI-FI is a trademark name to brand devices compliant to IEEE 802.11 standards.
3. Devices in a WLAN essentially use WI-FI branded products.
4. A WI-FI ready device simply means that it is ready for network operation within a WLAN.

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**Jack**

July 5, 2011 • 1:45 pm

This post is the best for clarifying the difference between WiFi and WLAN. Thanks!

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**samsononyinye**

December 15, 2012 • 3:47 pm

Pls we need a software for java phones that support wlan and wifi . Many thanks onyinye.

[Reply](#)

**max**

June 20, 2013 • 5:21 am

Thank you.

[Reply](#)

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**jack**

May 6, 2014 • 9:56 pm

Thanks a lot. I finally got it!

*Reply*

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**gokul**

August 17, 2014 • 12:42 am

thank you for this.....i am a school student.. i am doing a project about wifi and wlan  
this helped me alot.....thank you

keep up the great work.....

*Reply*

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