

Talking about the future

1. We use the **present simple** for something scheduled:

We have a lesson next Monday.

The train arrives at 6.30 in the morning.

The holidays start next week.

It's my birthday tomorrow.

2. We can use the **present continuous** for plans or arrangements, fixed future:

I'm playing football tomorrow.

They are coming to see us tomorrow.

We're having a party at Christmas.

3. We use **will**:

when we express **beliefs** about the future:

It will be a nice day tomorrow.

I think Brazil will win the World Cup.

I'm sure you will enjoy the film.

to mean want to or **be willing** to:

I hope you will come to my party.

George says he will help us.

to make **offers** and **promises** :

I'll see you tomorrow.

We'll send you an email.

to **talk** about **offers** and **promises**:

Tim will be at the meeting.

Mary will help with the cooking.

4. We use **be going to**:

to talk about **plans** or **intentions**:

I'm going to drive to work today.

They are going to move to Manchester.

to make **predictions** based on **evidence** we can see:

Be careful! You are going to fall. (= I can see that you might fall.)

Look at those black clouds. I think it's going to rain. (= I can see that it will rain.)

5. We use **will be with an -ing** form for something that will be in progress **specific time** in the future:

I'll be working at eight o'clock. Can you come later?

They'll be waiting for you when you arrive.

When you come out of school tomorrow, I'll be boarding a plane.

Try to call before 8 o'clock. After that, we'll be watching the match.

You can visit us during the first week of July. I won't be working then.

For something we see as **new, different** or **temporary**:

Today we're taking the bus but next week we'll be taking the train.

He'll be staying with his parents for several months while his father is in recovery.

Will you be starting work earlier with your new job?

6. We can use **will be with an -ing** form instead of the **present continuous** or **be going to** when we are talking about **plans, arrangements** and intentions:

They'll be coming to see us next week.

I'll be driving to work tomorrow.

7. We use **will/won't have + past participle** to talk about something that will be completed before a specific time in the future.

The guests are coming at 8 p.m. I'll have finished cooking by then.

On 9 October we'll have been married for 50 years.

Will you have gone to bed when I get back?

We can use phrases like **by or by the time** (meaning 'at some point before') and **in or in a day's time / in two months' time / in five years' time** etc. (meaning 'at the end of this period') to give the time period in which the action will be completed.

I won't have written all the reports by next week.

By the time we arrive, the kids will have gone to bed.

I'll have finished in an hour and then we can watch a film.

In three years' time, I'll have graduated from university.

8. We use **will/won't + have + been + -ing** to describe actions that will continue up until a point in the future.

In November, I will have been working at my company for three years.

At five o'clock, I will have been waiting for thirty minutes.

When I turn thirty, I will have been playing piano for twenty-one years.

9. We often use verbs like would like, plan, want, mean, hope, expect to talk about the future:

What are you going to do next year? I'd like to go to university.

We plan to go to France for our holidays.

George wants to buy a new car.

10. We use modals may, might and could when we are not sure about the future:

I might stay at home tonight or I might go to the cinema.

We could see Mary at the meeting. She sometimes goes.

11. We can use should if we think there's a good chance of something happening:

We should be home in time for tea.

The game should be over by eight o'clock.