

Future 1

A Will

- 1 We can use *will* + the infinitive (without *to*) to refer to the future. *Will* is usually shortened in speech and informal writing to *'ll*. The negative of *will* is *won't*.
He won't be late.
- 2 We use *will* to talk about future events that we see as facts:
In June we will bring out two new models.
Next year I'll be 45.
The government will soon impose an obligation on all electricity supply companies to buy a specified percentage of their power from renewable sources. (Guardian website)
- 3 We use *will* to talk about future beliefs:
Lynch believes that globalisation and consolidation in the technology sector will create a greater demand for large and powerful bourses. 'Stock markets will have to cover a lot more market capitalisation and smaller markets will have less of a role' says Lynch. (Observer website)
- 4 We can add *perhaps/maybe* or *probably* to make the belief less certain:
The first wave of job losses resulting from the mergers in German banking will probably be in the City of London. (BusinessWeek website)
Notice that *probably* comes after *will* but before *won't*:
He'll probably agree with you.
He probably won't agree with you.
- 5 We can use *will* with an introductory phrase to give other meanings. For example, a personal opinion (*I think*) or a hope (*I hope*):
I think we'll probably open a subsidiary in Russia next year.
I hope he'll agree with you.
- 6 *Will* can be used for instant decisions and thoughts that come into our head at the moment of speaking.
I'll wait for you outside.
I'll phone you tomorrow.
I think I'll stop now.

B Going to

- 1 We use the verb *be* + *going to* + the infinitive to make a connection between the present and the future.
She's going to get married next year.
- 2 We use *going to* for plans and intentions. These are things we have already decided to do.
I believe that Greenspan is going to lower rates. There are some signs of liquidity problems in the credit markets at this point in time, and a smart central bank responds by easing credit. (New York Times website)
The time in the future can be near or distant:
I'm going to call Fiona Clarke this afternoon.
We're going to open a factory in Hungary next year.
- 3 We use *going to* to make predictions when there is some evidence in the present situation:
Be careful! It's going to fall. (I can see it)
I think we're going to lose this deal. (I've just heard some news)

C Present continuous

- 1 We can use the present continuous tense to talk about things we have arranged to do in the future. There is nearly always a time expression.
Ann is leaving tomorrow morning.
HSBC are moving to new premises next year.
The arrangements are often social arrangements or appointments.
What are you doing on Tuesday afternoon?
I'm seeing Jack at two, and after that I'm meeting my bank manager.

D Will or going to?

- 1 *Will* is used for instant decisions. *Going to* is used for plans and intentions.
Compare:
OK, I know what to do. I'll call Jane. (an instant decision)
Do you have the information for Jane? I'm going to call her this afternoon. (an intention)
- 2 *Will* is used for general beliefs, opinions, hopes and things the speaker sees as facts.
I'm sure they'll like the new design.
In the future, more people will work from home.
- 3 When *will* is used with a phrase like *I think* and/or words like *probably* then the belief/opinion becomes less certain, like a prediction.
I think you'll like this idea.
The world will probably end in about five billion years.
But if there is strong evidence in the present situation then *going to* is usually used for predictions:
I think it's going to rain. (I can see black clouds)
We're going to make a loss on this project. (I have the figures in front of me)
- 4 There are occasions when we can use either form:
In my presentation I'll talk/I'm going to talk about three main areas. First, ...
Here the speaker could see it as a fact (*will*) or an intention (*going to*).
- 5 *Will* is more usual in writing. *'ll* and *going to* are more usual in speech.

E Going to or present continuous?

- 1 For future plans and arrangements there is often little difference between *going to* and the present continuous.
I'm going to give/I'm giving my presentation on Friday.
- 2 *Going to* can suggest that the details of the arrangement have not been finalised. The present continuous can suggest that the arrangement is more fixed, with a time and a place.
I'm going to meet him next week. (just a plan – time and place are still unknown)
I'm meeting him at ten in my office. (a definite, fixed arrangement)

F Time expressions

- 1 Common time expressions for the future include: *tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, on Friday, at the weekend, next week, in a few days' time.*

7 Practice

Exercise 1 A B C

Match sentences 1–6 with their uses a)–f).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| a) a future fact | d) a future plan or intention |
| b) an opinion about the future | e) a prediction with evidence in the present situation |
| c) an instant decision | f) a future arrangement |

- 1 I'm going to ask my boss for a pay rise next week. d
- 2 I'm sorry to hear that. I'll find out what the problem is right now.
- 3 I'm sorry, but I won't be here tomorrow. I'll be in Paris.
- 4 I'm meeting Angela for lunch. Do you want to join us?
- 5 Their share price will probably rise when the market recovers.
- 6 With so much competition it's going to be difficult to increase sales.

Exercise 2 D E

13 Underline the correct words in each mini-dialogue.

- 1 A: Are you free next Tuesday morning?
B: Sorry, I'll have/I'm having a meeting with Sue.
A: Oh, right. Well, what about Thursday?
- 2 A: What are your plans for next year?
B: We'll open/We're going to open a new factory in Hungary.
A: That sounds interesting.
- 3 A: What do you think about their new marketing campaign?
B: I think it'll probably succeed/it's probably succeeding.
A: Do you really?
- 4 A: What about tomorrow at around five thirty?
B: OK, I'll see you then. I'm seeing you then.
A: Bye.
- 5 A: So as you can see, I've been thinking about this problem quite a lot.
B: Yes, I see. So, what are you going to do?/what are you doing?
A: Resign!
- 6 A: It would be nice to see you next week.
B: Yes, it would. Are you doing anything/Will you do anything on Wednesday?
A: No, I'm free.

Exercise 3 A B C D E

Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into the most appropriate future form. Choose between *will*, *going to* and the present continuous.

- 1 Have you heard the news? Vivendi is going to buy (buy) Seagram.
- 2 I (meet) Andrea at nine next Thursday morning outside the station.
- 3 I've just had a call from Richard – he (be) late.
- 4 Next year (be) the company's centenary year.
- 5 This taxi driver is terrible. He (have) an accident.
- 6 In the future video-conferences (probably replace) many international meetings.
- 7 We (test) the new machine sometime next week.
- 8 I (go) to Manchester on Friday.
- 9 Would you mind waiting for a moment? I (not be) long.

Exercise 4 A B D

14 Complete this dialogue by putting each of the verbs in brackets into the future. Choose between *will* and *going to*. Sometimes either answer may be possible, but decide which form is the most natural. Use contractions where possible.

- JOANNA: Please, come in, have a seat. Would you like a drink? Coffee? Mineral water?
GREG: Oh, I (1) ll have (have) a coffee please.
JOANNA: Lucy ... could you make two coffees? (sighs) Well, thanks for coming this morning. I (2) (tell) you why I asked you here. Um, as you know, there (3) (be) some big changes in the company. In fact, we (4) (restructure) the whole department.
GREG: Yes, I know. When (5) (it/happen)?
JOANNA: Everything (6) (be) finished by the summer. Um, the thing is, under the new structure your job (7) (probably/ disappear).
GREG: Really? Is that certain?
JOANNA: Well, we (8) (have) a meeting next week to finalise all the plans, and of course I (9) (let) you know what we decide. Anyway, you don't have to worry.
GREG: Oh?
(coffee arrives)
JOANNA: Well, as I was saying, you don't have to worry. We (10) (offer) you a new job. You (11) (have) more responsibility, and the salary (12) (be) much better.
GREG: That's wonderful, thank you very much. What exactly (13) (the new job/involve)?
JOANNA: Well, we (14) (expand) the whole customer services area. If you accept the job, you (15) (be) responsible for the new team. Um, it (16) (mean) a lot more work, of course. What do you think?
GREG: It sounds great, but I (17) (need) a day or two to think about it.
JOANNA: Of course, no problem. Look, I (18) (not/be) in the office for the next few days – I (19) (visit) our subsidiary in Hungary. (20) (you/have) an answer for me by next week?
GREG: Yes, I (21) (give) you my decision on Monday.

Exercise 5 A C

Complete this email from a PA to her boss by putting the verbs in brackets into the future. Choose between *will* and the present continuous. Use contractions where possible.

From:	Mira Melisse	To:	Pierre Gaudard, Technical Director	Sent:	14 March ...
Subject:	Visit to Slovenia	Cc:			
Message:	<p>I've booked your flight to Slovenia. You (1) <u>re leaving</u> (leave) on Tuesday 3rd at 8.45 in the morning, so you (2) (arrive) in Ljubljana before lunch. Someone (3) (be) at the airport to meet you. Your first meeting is with Aleksander Presekar, and you (4) (see) him at 1 pm at our local office. He (5) (probably/take) you out to lunch. After lunch you (6) (not/do) anything until 4 pm, so you (7) (have) time to go to the hotel. You (8) (stay) at the Intercontinental, which is in a very central location. I (9) (go) to the travel agents to pick up the tickets this afternoon, so I (10) (give) them to you tomorrow.</p>				

Future 2

A Future: time expressions

We use the present simple or the present perfect (not *will*) to refer to the future after these words: *when, after, before, unless, in case, as soon as, until, by the time, the next time*:

When I see her, I'll tell her you called.

We'll discuss it again after you get back.

As soon as I've finished the report, I'll email it to you.

You can wait here until she comes back.

Notice that a future form (*will, can*) is used in the other part of the sentence.

B Present simple/continuous

We often use the present simple (or present continuous) when we talk about events in the future based on a fixed timetable, programme or calendar:

Jim's plane leaves (is leaving) at 12.15.

Our boss retires (is retiring) next year.

C Future continuous

The future continuous is formed with *will + be + the -ing* form of the verb:

One thing that is clear is that more and larger Taiwanese companies will be investing in China and that the new government will allow them to. (Asiaweek website)

The future continuous describes an activity in progress in the future.

We often use it when we compare what we are doing now with what we will be doing in the future. There is nearly always a time expression.

Next year I'll be working in our São Paulo office.

Where will you be working in six months' time?

The future continuous is often used to say that something will definitely happen:

We'll be holding a meeting soon, so we can make a decision then.

D Future perfect

The future perfect is formed with *will + have + past participle*:

By the time I retire, I'll have been in banking for over thirty years.

By the year 2020 the volume of goods produced by traditional manufacturing worldwide will probably be at least twice what it is today. But in the US, the share of manufacturing in GDP, which is still around 15% or so, will have shrunk to 5%. (IndustryWeek website)

We use the future perfect to look back from one point in the future to an earlier event or period of time. We often use *by* or *by the time* with the future perfect:

By the time we prepare our proposal they'll have found another supplier.

By the end of the year we'll have sold around 1,000 units.

It is common to use a simple *will* form in place of the future perfect, although some people think this is not grammatically correct:

By the time we've prepared our proposal they'll find another supplier.

By the end of the year we'll sell around 1,000 units.

We use the continuous form of the future perfect to look back from one point in the future at an activity in progress:

Next year we'll have been manufacturing the same model for ten years.

E Was going to

Was/were going to is not a future form. We use it to refer to something that we planned in the past but did not do:

I'm sorry, I was going to phone you this morning, but I had to see one of our clients.

F Other ways to talk about the future

We often use modals and related verbs like *should, be likely to, could, may, might* to refer to the future. See unit 13.

We use the verbs *expect, hope, intend, would like, plan, want* followed by an infinitive (*to do*) to refer to the future:

German automaker BMW is planning to build a production plant in Central or Eastern Europe by the middle of 2001 – and the Czech Republic is hoping to get the contract. (praguepost website)

Notice the negative forms:

I expect/hope I won't ...

We don't intend/plan/want to ...

I wouldn't like to ...

We can use the verb *think* followed by *'ll*:

I think/don't think I'll change my Internet Service Provider.

We can use *be due to* for things that we expect to happen:

Mr Welch, who hits GE's mandatory retirement age of 65 next month, has built GE into America's No. 1 company in stock market valuation. He is due to name the next chairman and chief executive of GE in the next few days. (Wall Street Journal Europe website)

We can use *be about to* for things that will (will not) happen very soon:

A look at the stock-market valuations of big software houses such as Cisco and Oracle show that the pace of development in new technology is not about to slow. (Forbes.com website)

In modern English *Shall I/we ...?* are used to make suggestions, not to refer to the future.

Shall I open the window?

Shall we meet again next week?

Shall is still used for the future in formal situations, for example legal documents.

8 Practice

Exercise 1 A B C D E F

Underline the correct words.

- 1 Tomorrow I'll interview/I'll be interviewing candidates all morning.
- 2 We will have moved/I will be moving to our new premises in August.
- 3 We will have moved/I will be moving to our new premises by August.
- 4 What time does your train/will your train leave?
- 5 Don't forget to turn off the lights before you are leaving/you leave.
- 6 We can't send the goods until we've received/we will receive a firm order.
- 7 We will be repaying/I will have repaid the bank loan by December.
- 8 Unless they're/they'll be more reasonable, we'll have to break off negotiations.
- 9 I was going to write/was writing to them, but I forgot.
- 10 I hope/I will hope to be able to speak at the press conference myself.
- 11 Our visitors are due to arrive/due arriving at 10.30.
- 12 I hope I won't/I don't hope I'll be late for the meeting.
- 13 I think I won't/I don't think I'll be late for the meeting.
- 14 When the contract is/will be ready, I'll let you know.
- 15 Will we/Should we break for coffee now?
- 16 Sorry, I can't speak now, I'll just have/I'm just about to have a meeting.

Exercise 2 A C D

Complete each sentence 1–8. with an ending a)–h).

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Please take a seat until | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a) you leave. |
| 2 They won't accept our order unless | <input type="checkbox"/> | b) Dr Rihal is ready to see you. |
| 3 Helen wants to see you before | <input type="checkbox"/> | c) you'll have left. |
| 4 You won't see Helen. By the time she arrives | <input type="checkbox"/> | d) we give a bank guarantee. |
| 5 As soon as Helen arrives | <input type="checkbox"/> | e) have finished and we can talk. |
| 6 I can't wait! This time next week I'll | <input type="checkbox"/> | f) I'll ask her to phone you. |
| 7 I'll have a suntan next time we meet! I'll | <input type="checkbox"/> | g) have just come back from Greece. |
| 8 Sorry about this. In a few moments I'll | <input type="checkbox"/> | h) be lying on a beach in Greece. |

Exercise 3 A B C D

Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets into the right tense. Choose between the present simple (*I do*), future continuous (*I'll be doing*) and future perfect (*I'll have done*).

- 1 By the time all the papers are ready, the deadline will have passed (pass).
- 2 The flight (leave) at 1 pm and (arrive) at 3.45.
- 3 I (see) Nick tomorrow, so I can give him your message.
- 4 This taxi is so slow. By the time we get there the meeting (finish).
- 5 Sorry, I can't see you on the 15th – I (play) golf with a client.
- 6 I won't do anything until I (hear) from you.
- 7 Hurry up! By the time we arrive, the play (start).
- 8 What (you/learn) by the end of your course?
- 9 (you/use) the conference room next Tuesday?
- 10 When I (see) him, I'll ask him.

Exercise 4 A C D F

An economist has prepared a short report about his country next year. Read it, then choose the correct alternative from A, B, C or D below to complete the report.

12 month economic forecast

The Central Bank (1) keep interest rates low next year in order to stimulate economic growth, and so we (2) the economy to continue growing at about 4%. This means that unemployment (3) in most sectors of the economy next year. Exchange rates are very difficult to predict, but the currency (4) remain stable.

Some important events are (5) take place in the political field. The president (6) call elections within the next twelve months, and so by the middle of next year the election campaign (7) The government (8) on a platform of honesty and competence, and it (9) introduce reforms to the legal system so that judges can investigate the misuse of public funds more easily. When that (10) , international investor confidence should increase rapidly.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 A is wanting to | B is liking to | C would like to | D due to |
| 2 A predict | B expect | C believe | D hope |
| 3 A will be fallen | B will be falling | C will fall | D will fall |
| 4 A probably will | B will probably | C probably is | D is probably |
| 5 A about to | B soon | C being | D expecting |
| 6 A dues to | B due to | C is due to | D is doing to |
| 7 A will have begun | B will be begun | C has begun | D will begin |
| 8 A will be fought | B will be fighting | C will fighting | D will have fight |
| 9 A is planning | B planning to | C is planned to | D is planning to |
| 10 A happening | B will happen | C happens | D happen |

Exercise 5 A C D E

- 15 The Human Resources Manager of a large company is explaining the appraisal system to a group of new employees. Complete his talk by putting the verbs in brackets into the right tense. Choose between the present simple (*I do*), future continuous (*I'll be doing*), future perfect (*I'll have done*) and *was going to*.

'Your appraisal interviews (1) ~~are~~ (be) in March. Er, I'm sorry, they (2) (be) in February but we had to postpone them. Sorry about that. Um, during February your line managers (3) (collect) all the information they need from you, and by the time you meet for the interview, they (4) (produce) a checklist of points for discussion.

Right. Um, in the interview you (5) (discuss) your performance during the past year and any issues relating to your future needs, er, such as training. By the end of the meeting I hope that you and your line managers (6) (agree) on your personal objectives for next year, both in terms of sales targets and professional development. Is that clear? Yep, OK, good. Of course there is some flexibility in the targets, in case anything (7) (happen) to the market that we cannot predict. We may also have a budget for you to do some training, after you (8) (come) back from your summer holidays but before work (9) (get) really busy in September. Is that OK? Yeah. Good.

After that, the next time that we all (10) (meet) again will be in October, when I'd like some feedback on your training, as by then any courses that you do (11) (finish). Is that OK? Yeah. I (12) (send) you feedback forms nearer the time. Well, er, unless you (13) (have) any questions, I think that's all. Oh, no. Er, yes – I (14) (have) a word with you about your holiday plans, but you probably don't know them yet. Could you email me with your request as soon as you know them.'