

Expressing future in English

1. Will x Will not (Won't)

We use will/ won't:

→ **when we decide to do something at the moment of speaking:**

"I'm going out shopping." "Oh, I'll go with you if you don't mind it?"

"I'm sorry but I can't lift that big luggage." "O.K., I'll help you."

→ **with anything that is uncertain using the expressions – probably, maybe, I think, I expect, I hope etc.**

I think I'll help her with that heavy suitcase.

I probably won't be able to come on time.

→ **when something in the future doesn't depend on a decision by the speaker:**

There'll be a tide the day after tomorrow..

She'll be 18 next month..

2. Be going to

We use be going to:

→ **to talk about what we intend to do in the future, we have already decided to do it but we haven't arranged when exactly.**

I'm going to clean the windows. (= I decided to clean the windows but I haven't arranged when exactly – in five minutes, in the afternoon, tomorrow...?)

→ **to predict something, when we already see evidence for our prediction:**

Look at those black clouds in the sky. It's going to rain. (= the speaker knows it's going to rain because he can see the clouds)

Look out! That ladder is going to fall!

→ **it is often used in spoken language as "gonna"**

I'm gonna do it tomorrow

3. Present continuous

We use the present continuous to **talk about something that we have already arranged or planned to do in the future:**

She is taking that exam tomorrow morning.

"What are you doing on Saturday evening?" "I'm meeting my old friend."

We're visiting some friends in Prague next weekend.

4. Present simple

We use the present simple for **scheduled events with a future meaning**:

→ **for timetables (planes, buses, trains etc. leaving and arriving)**

My plane leaves Prague on Monday at 5 p.m.

Her train arrives at Ostrava at 3.50 p.m.

→ **for programmes (when a conference, film, match etc. starts/finishes)**

The conference starts on Thursday at 9.00 a.m. in the conference hall.

Future clauses beginning with when, while, if, until, before, after, as soon as – we use present simple after these expressions!

I'll buy a newspaper when I go out.

We won't go out until it stops raining.

We'll probably go to the beach if the weather is nice.

Exercise:

1. "Why are you filling that bucket with water?" "I (wash) the car."
2. "Jim, the phone is ringing!" "Ok, I (answer) it."
3. I made up my mind I (change) my job.
4. "I don't know how to use this camera." "It's quite easy. I (show) you."
5. The match (start) at 3 and (finish) at 5 p.m.
6. When I(be) fifty, I'm going to move to my summer house.
7. "The ceiling in this room doesn't look very safe, does it?" "No, it looks as if it (fall down).
8. I'm tired, I think I (go) to bed early tonight.
9. I (buy) a new car when I (save) enough money.
10. We'll have dinner as soon as she (come) home.
11. What (do) on Wednesday afternoon?
12. "Did you post that letter for me?" "Oh, I'm sorry. I completely forgot. I (do) it now."
13. Do you think that Sarah (like) we present we bought her?
14. I haven't seen Carol today. I expect she (phone) in the evening.
15. I can't meet you tomorrow afternoon. I (take) one of my driving lesson at 3.