

Present tense: when, before, after, until, etc.

1 Look at this sentence:

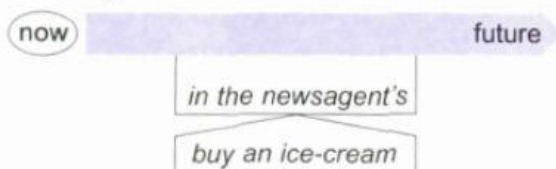
When the programme ends, I'll do the washing-up.

To talk about an event in the future, we usually use the Present Simple (e.g. **ends**) after **when, before, after, until** and **as soon as**. We do not use **will**:

*I'm going to finish this work before I go.
(NOT ... before I will go.)
Wait here until I get back.
I'll phone you as soon as I arrive.*

2 We can use **when** + Present Simple to refer to a time when something will happen:

I'll buy an ice-cream when I'm in the newsagent's.



When you see her, give her my message.

We use **until** + Present Simple to mean from now to a time in the future:

We'll sit outside until it gets dark. (= We'll sit outside from now to when it gets dark.)

We use **as soon as** + Present Simple with the meaning 'immediately after':

They'll start playing as soon as it stops raining. (= They will start playing immediately after the rain stops.)

3 We use **when** + Present Perfect (e.g. **I have done**) to talk about an action that must, or will, happen before the next action can happen:

When I've found a job, I'll look for a place to live. (= First I will find a job; then I will look for a place to live.)



When Simon has saved enough money, he'll buy a car. (= First Simon must save the money; then he can buy a car.)

4 With **after** we can use either the Present Simple or the Present Perfect with no difference in meaning:

After she takes/has taken the course, she'll be a qualified teacher. (= When she has done her course, she'll be a qualified teacher.)

Practice

A Complete the sentences by putting **when, before, after, as soon as** or **until** into the gaps. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

- ▶ I'll stay in this job until I find a better one.
- 1 I'm going to keep working I finish this.
- 2 Remember to buy some stamps you're in the post office.
- 3 I speak to him on the phone tonight, I'll ask him.
- 4 We can go for a meal we've seen the film.
- 5 I'll keep looking for it I find it.
- 6 I'll wait for them it gets dark, and then I'll leave.
- 7 Don't forget to lock the door you go out.
- 8 I've found the information, I'll phone you.
- 9 We'll wait it stops raining, and then we'll go out.
- 10 you see John, give him my regards.
- 11 Put in your application the closing date arrives.
- 12 You shouldn't wait. You should reply you receive the invitation.
- 13 Book a table you go to the restaurant. It's often full.

B Complete the dialogues, using the Present Simple or *will* forms of the verbs in brackets (). Sometimes you do not need to change the word in brackets.

- ▶ A: Could you post this letter for me today, please?
B: Yes, I will do (do) it when I go (go) to the shops.
- 1 A: I might be late tonight.
B: OK. I (wait) until you (arrive).
- 2 A: I'm leaving next week.
B: I (see) you before you (go), won't I?
- 3 A: Have you decided what you're going to do at the weekend yet?
B: No, but I (phone) you as soon as I (know) what I'm going to do.
- 4 A: Have you done that homework yet?
B: No, not yet. I (do) it when I (have) enough time.
- 5 A: I don't want to go to that party tonight.
B: Well, I'm sure you (enjoy) it when you (get) there.
- 6 A: Could you tell Tom to ring me, please?
B: Yes, I (tell) him when I (see) him tomorrow.
- 7 A: Mr Jackson isn't in at the moment.
B: I see. Well, I (wait) until he (come) back.
- 8 A: Have you booked a hotel in London yet?
B: No, but we (book) one before we (go) there.
- 9 A: Don't forget to write to Peter.
B: OK. I (do) it as soon as I (get) home.
- 10 A: (you/see) Jack when you (be) in Madrid?
B: Yes, I hope I will. I (phone) him when I (arrive) in Spain.

C Complete the sentences using the Present Perfect or *will* forms of the verbs in brackets ().

- ▶ When you have written (write) that letter, I will post (post) it for you.
- 1 I (pay) the bill when I have borrowed some money from somebody.
- 2 When I've found a car that I want to buy, I (ask) my bank to lend me the money to buy it.
- 3 After the plane (land), you may unfasten your safety belts.
- 4 When you (check) all your answers, hand in your question paper.
- 5 I (read) this book when I'm on holiday.
- 6 When I (read) this magazine, I'll start work.
- 7 You (feel) better when you have had something to eat.
- 8 When you (finish) your work, you can go home.
- 9 She (be) pleased when she hears the news.
- 10 Let's go for a walk after we (have) dinner.