

Future

1 We can talk about future time with different verb forms, for example:

- will: *I'll come with you.*
- be going to: *He's going to come with us.*
- Present Continuous: *We're coming tomorrow.*
- Present Simple: *When he arrives, we'll have dinner.*

2 When we talk about events in the future that we expect to happen but that are not in our control, we can use will or be going to:

Ann will be (OR is going to be) 12 next week.

We won't see (OR aren't going to see) those birds again until next spring.

Will they finish (OR Are they going to finish) the building soon?

3 When we talk about events in the future that are in our control (i.e. we can decide what will happen), we use will differently from be going to. We use will at the time we decide what to do; we use be going to after we have decided what to do. Look at these examples:

John: *Can somebody help me, please?*

Helen: *Yes, I'll help you.*

(Here Helen decided after John asked.)

Now compare:

Carol: *John needs some help.*

Helen: *I know. I'm going to help him.*

(Here Helen had decided before Carol spoke.)

4 Look at these examples:

If it rains, they'll stay (OR they're going to stay) at home.

We'll have (OR we're going to have) lunch after the programme finishes.

When a sentence has two parts that refer to the future, we use the Present Simple after if, when, before, after, as soon as and until, and in the other part of the sentence we use will or be going to:

When/	SIMPLE	will/		
after etc.	+	PRESENT	+	be going to
After		it finishes		we'll have lunch.

5 We use the Present Continuous to talk about a future arrangement that we have made with someone else:

A: *Can you come and see us this evening?*
B: *I can't. I'm playing squash with Sam.*

Peter can't come to the cinema with us tonight because he's meeting Jane for dinner.

Practice

A Liz has come back to London from Holland. Her brother Tom has just met her at Liverpool Street Station. In the sentences below, think about when the person decides to do something. Put a tick if you think the phrase underlined is correct. Otherwise write in the correct form of *will* or *be going to*.

Tom: Hi Liz. Do you want some tea or coffee after your journey?

Liz: Thanks. I'll (►) have a tea.

Tom: I'm going to (►) I'll carry your bag – you look tired. We'll (1) go to that café, over there. Here we are. So, welcome back to England. How was Holland?

Liz: Well, it was great to have some time to think, and I've made some decisions. I'll (2) talk to the boss tomorrow, and I'll (3) ask him if I can move to another department.

Tom: Good. I'm sure he'll (4) give you what you want. Now, would you like something to eat?

Liz: Um, yes. I'm going to (5) have a sandwich. Thanks. What about you?

Tom: No, thanks, I don't want to spoil my appetite. I've reserved a table for this evening at the Mexican restaurant in Leicester Square. I'll (6) take Jill. What are you going to do this evening?

Liz: I haven't thought about it. I'll (7) probably cook something. Oh, and I must ring Dad. Did you remember that it's his birthday tomorrow?

Tom: Yes, I remembered. He'll (8) be fifty. Promise me you'll relax a bit?

Liz: Sure.

Tom: OK. I'll (9) get you a taxi. Call me tomorrow. You won't (10) forget, will you?

B Use the words in brackets () to write sentences using *will* and the Present Simple.

- (Tom/help/us/when/he/come/home) Tom will help us when he comes home.

- 1 (I/buy/the tickets/before/I/go/to work)
- 2 (As soon as/Henry/arrive/, we/have/something to eat)
- 3 (The play/start/after/the music/stop)
- 4 (He/not/stop/until/he/finish/the job)
- 5 (When John/get/here, we/go/to the beach)

C Look at Ann's diary for next week.

	MORNING	AFTERNOON/EVENING
Monday	10.00 take Tim to the airport	wash the car
Tuesday	buy some stamps	write some letters
Wednesday	11.00 take the dog to the vet	tidy my flat
Thursday	12.30 cook lunch for mother	buy a new squash racket
Friday	9.00 play squash with Mary	do the shopping
Saturday	wash my hair	6.00 meet Tim at the airport

If Ann has an arrangement with someone else, use the Present Continuous, but if she does not, use *be going to*.

- Ann is taking Tim to the airport on Monday morning
- On Monday evening Ann is going to wash the car.

- 1 On Tuesday she some stamps because in the evening she some letters.
- 2 She can't see anyone on Wednesday morning because she the dog to the vet.
- 3 On Wednesday evening she her flat.
- 4 On Thursday afternoon she a new squash racket because squash with Mary on Friday morning.
- 5 On Friday afternoon she the shopping
- 6 She her hair on Saturday morning because she Tim at the airport at six o'clock.