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GRAMMAR

Future 1

We can refer to the future in English by using *will*, *be going to* or by using present tenses. Sometimes there is little difference between *will* and *be going to*, but at other times we use them in different ways.

Will

- **Form**

Form *will* future using *will* + infinitive without *to*. The negative of *will* is *won't*. The short form of *will* in speech and informal writing is *'ll*.

*What do you think **will happen**? I'll tell you later.*

*There **won't** be any lessons tomorrow.*

In formal English we also use *shall* with *I* and *we* to refer to the future. This is becoming rare.

- **Meaning**

Use *will* to talk generally about future beliefs, opinions, hopes and predictions. There is usually a time expression. Add *perhaps*, *probably* or *definitely* to show how certain or uncertain we are about our predictions.

*In the next century, most people **will probably** live in big cities.*

***Perhaps** it'll rain tomorrow.*

*United **will definitely** win tonight.*

*Probably and definitely come after *will* but before *won't*.*

*She'll **probably** come with us tonight.*

*She **probably won't** come with us tonight.*

Be going to

- **Form**

Form *be going to* future with the verb *be* + *going* + the infinitive.

*Jean **is going to learn** to drive.*

*Tim and Ann **are going to travel** abroad next year.*

- **Meaning**

1 Use *be going to* for plans and intentions. The plan may be in the near future, or more distant.

*I'm **going to do** lots of work this evening.*

*After I finish university I'm **going to travel** all over Europe by InterRail.*

2 Use *be going to* for prediction when we can see in the present situation that something is going to happen.

*Look out! You're **going to drop** the plates!*

Present continuous

● Form

See Grammar 2 for the form of the present continuous.

I'm meeting my mother for lunch at one.

● Meaning

Use the present continuous future to talk about things we have arranged to do, such as social arrangements and appointments. There is usually a time expression.

A: **Are you doing** anything on Friday evening?

B: Not really. Why?

A: **I'm having** a party. Would you like to come?

State verbs (e.g. *be, know*) are not usually used in a continuous form (see Grammar 2), so we use *will* or *going to* with these verbs.

I'll be back on Friday.

I'm going to be back on Friday.

Will or going to?

We can make predictions with *will* and *going to*, and on most occasions either is possible.

I think it's going to/it'll probably rain tomorrow.

If there is strong evidence in the present situation, then we generally use *going to*:

I think it's going to rain this afternoon. (looking up at black clouds in the sky)

Going to or present continuous?

We use *going to* and the present continuous for plans and arrangements, and either is usually possible.

I'm going to have/I'm having a party on Friday.

Going to suggests that the details are not yet finalized – it's still just a plan.

Jean is going to have another driving lesson soon. (a plan, with no specific time)

The present continuous suggests that the arrangement is more fixed, with a time and a place.

Jean is having her driving lesson this afternoon. (it's fixed, in her diary)

Other meanings of will and shall

Will and *shall* have other meanings. See Grammar 9 and Grammar 22.

Is that the phone ringing? I'll answer it. (a spontaneous decision)

I'll do the best that I can to help you. (a promise)

Shall I help you? (offer/suggestion)

INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE PRACTICE

1 Underline the correct sentence, a) or b), in each mini-dialogue.

- 1 A: Can you come dancing tomorrow night?
B: a) Sorry, I'll play basketball.
b) Sorry, I'm playing basketball.
- 2 A: What are your plans for the summer?
B: a) I'll spend a month in the mountains.
b) I'm going to spend a month in the mountains.
- 3 A: What do you think about the weather?
B: a) It'll probably rain tomorrow.
b) It's raining tomorrow.
- 4 A: What about tomorrow at about 5.30?
B: a) OK, I'll see you then.
b) OK, I'm seeing you then.
- 5 A: Mary is getting a dog in July for her birthday present.
B: a) Really? What is she calling it?
b) Really? What is she going to call it?
- 6 A: It would be nice to see you next week.
B: a) Are you doing anything on Wednesday?
b) Will you do anything on Wednesday?

2 Put each verb in brackets into a form of *will*, *going to* or present continuous. More than one answer may be possible.

- 1 Have you heard the news? Harry (join) is joining/is going to join the Army!
- 2 Sorry to keep you waiting. I (not be) long.
- 3 According to the weather forecast, it (snow) tomorrow.
- 4 I'm sorry I can't meet you tonight. I (go out) with my parents.
- 5 Careful! You (knock) that jug off the table!
- 6 In 50 years' time, most people (probably ride) bicycles to work.
- 7 Our teacher (give) us a test tomorrow.
- 8 I (go) to Manchester at the end of next week.
- 9 Look out! You (hit) that tree!
- 10 I think our team (probably win)

3 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence.

- 1 My party is on Thursday.
I 'm having a party on Thursday.
- 2 Tomorrow's weather forecast is for rain.
It's tomorrow.
- 3 I predict a victory for our team.
I think win.
- 4 Tomorrow I'll be absent, Mrs Jones.
I here tomorrow, Mrs Jones.
- 5 Terry intends to finish painting the kitchen this evening.
Terry painting the kitchen this evening.
- 6 Meet me outside the station at 5.30.
I outside the station at 5.30.
- 7 What's our arrangement for lunch?
Where for lunch?
- 8 Everyone expects lots of tourism in this country next summer.
Everyone thinks a large number of tourists this country next summer.

4 Rewrite the sentences which are incorrect. If the sentence is correct, put a tick (✓).

- 1 I go swimming next Saturday. Would you like to come?
...I'm going swimming next Saturday. Would you like to come?.....
- 2 What are you going to discuss at the next meeting?
.....
- 3 The boat is turning over! I think it will sink!
.....
- 4 Sue is going to lend me her skates.
.....
- 5 The weather forecast says it's definitely sunny tomorrow.
.....
- 6 There is a lot to do. Is anyone going to help you?
.....
- 7 Sorry, I'm not seeing you tomorrow. I have to go to London.
.....
- 8 Bye for now. I see you later this evening.
.....

INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE PRACTICE

5 Rewrite each sentence so that it contains *will* or *going to*.

1 I plan to study engineering in France.

.....I'm going to study engineering in France.....

2 I've arranged a party for next Friday.

.....

3 We've got an appointment at the doctor's, so we can't come.

.....

4 Kelly is likely to get the job.

.....

5 Martin's wife is pregnant again.

.....

6 Sarah is usually late and I expect her to be late tonight.

.....

7 I predict a score of 3-0.

.....

8 There's a possibility of snow tomorrow.

.....

6 Put one suitable word in each space.

1 I've got a test tomorrow, so I'mgetting..... up early to do some revision.

2 That suitcase looks heavy. I carry it for you?

3 Sorry, but I be here tomorrow. I have to go to the doctor's.

4 Which team do you think win the match?

5 Bye for now. I'll see you next week, but I'm not sure.

6 We're skating this afternoon. Do you want to come?

7 The weather isn't very good, so there be many people at the beach today.

8 Where do you want me to put these books? I leave them here?

→ SEE ALSO

Grammar 2: Present time 1

Grammar 9: Future 2

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GRAMMAR

Future 2



Future continuous

- **Form**

Form the future continuous with *will + be + the -ing form of the verb*.

This time tomorrow I'll be eating lunch on the plane.

- **Meaning**

1 Use future continuous to imagine an activity in progress in the future. We often do this when we compare what we are doing now with what we will be doing in the future. There is nearly always a time expression.

Where will you be living in five years' time?

2 Use the future continuous to say that we are sure something will happen.

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

Future perfect

- **Form**

Form the future perfect with *will + have + the past participle*.

By the time we get to the cinema, the film will have begun.

- **Meaning**

Use the future perfect to look back from one point in the future to an earlier event.

We often use *by* or *by the time* with the future perfect.

By next week I'll have collected over 1000 euros for charity.

The situation has not happened yet, but at a certain time in the future it will happen.

Present simple

- We often use the present simple to talk about events in the future which are part of a timetable, programme or calendar.

Jim's plane leaves at 12.00.

Our head teacher retires next year.

- **Time clauses**

In some *will* sentences there is a time clause, with a time word followed by the present simple. These time words are always followed by the present simple to talk about the future: *when, after, before, unless, in case, as soon as, until, by the time, the next time*.

When I see her again, I'll tell her your news.

Let's run home before it rains.

Take an umbrella, in case it rains.

As soon as we're ready, we'll phone you.

Please wait here until Mrs Hall comes back.

INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE PRACTICE

We can also use the present perfect with these words to emphasize that an action is complete.

*Hand in your paper **as soon as you have finished**.*

Functions using **will** and **shall**

When we say that a verb form has a 'function', we mean that we use it for a purpose like 'promising' or 'suggesting' rather than to refer to time. Many uses of *will* and *shall* are more easily described in this way.

- **Promise**

I'll try as hard as I can.

- **Refusal**

*I **won't** tell you!*

- **Threat**

*Stop doing that, or I'll **tell** my dad.*

- **Decision made at the moment of speaking.**

A: 'Which one do you want?'

B: 'I'll **take** the blue silk one.' (in a shop)

- **Offer**

I'll give you a lift in my car.

*Will you **have** some more coffee?*

*Shall I **open** the door for you?*

- **Request**

*Will you **carry** this bag for me?*

- **Suggestion**

*Shall we **play** tennis?*

- **Parting remark**

*I'll **see** you tomorrow.*

1 Underline the correct word or phrase in each sentence.

- 1 This time next week Billy will lie/will be lying on the beach.
- 2 Please stay in your seats until the bell rings/will ring.
- 3 We'll have moved/We'll be moving to our new house on Tuesday.
- 4 What time does your train leave/will your train leave?
- 5 Don't forget to turn off the lights before you're leaving/you leave.
- 6 Where will you work/will you be working in ten years' time?
- 7 Wait for me. I'll be/I'll have been ready in a moment.
- 8 John won't stop/won't have stopped talking all the time!

2 Complete each sentence (1–6) with one of the endings (a–f).**More than one answer may be possible.**

- 1 As soon as I hear from Helen,e.....
 - 2 By the time Mary arrives,
 - 3 Please take a seat
 - 4 This time next week
 - 5 The next time you see me
 - 6 We'll have time to have some lunch
- a until the dentist is ready.
 - b the match will be over.
 - c I'll have had my hair cut and you won't recognize me.
 - d before the train leaves.
 - e I'll ask her to phone you.
 - f we'll be enjoying ourselves on holiday.

3 Underline the inappropriate verb forms and write the correct form in the space.**If the sentence is correct, put a tick (✓).**

- 1 By the time the police get here, the burglars will have vanished.✓.....
- 2 When you'll grow older, you'll change your mind about this.
- 3 The bus leaves at 1.00, so we'll leave the house at 11.30.
- 4 I won't leave until you will give me the money.
- 5 As soon as the taxi will arrive, I'll be letting you know.
- 6 Will you have been using the computer next lesson?
- 7 By the time we get to Emma's house, she'll leave.
- 8 'Do you want me to carry this?' 'No that's all right, I'm doing it.'

INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE PRACTICE

4 Rewrite each sentence so that it contains *will/shall* or *going to*, and the verb underlined.

1 How about playing tennis?

.....Shall we play tennis?.....

2 I've decided to study Arabic in Cairo.

.....

3 I promise to be home by midnight.

.....

4 I hope to meet you later.

.....

5 I'd like you to go to the shops for me.

.....

6 We promise not to make too much noise.

.....

7 Would you like me to help you with those bags?

.....

8 We could come back later if you like.

.....

5 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence.

1 The work won't take us longer than an hour.

We ll have finished..... the work in an hour.

2 I promise to phone you before our next meeting.

Before we you.

3 Would you like me to check the spelling for you?

Shall for you?

4 Sheila refuses to let me share her book.

Sheila won't book.

5 How about having a game of chess?

Shall a game of chess?

6 Please stay here until I come back.

Please don't come back.

7 After the lesson we'll meet and play tennis.

When, we'll meet and play tennis.

8 What job will you have in 20 years' time?

What will in 20 years' time?