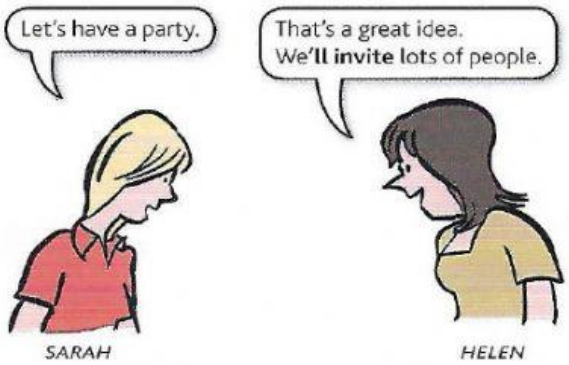
FUTURE TENSES

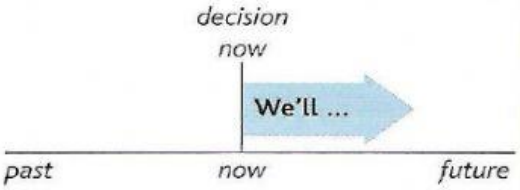
A Future actions

Study the difference between **will** and **(be) going to**:

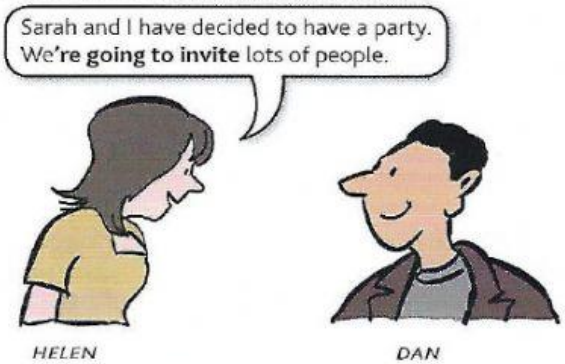
Sarah is talking to Helen:



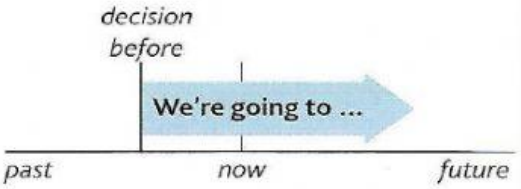
will ('ll): We use **will** to announce a new decision. The party is a new idea.



Later that day, Helen meets Dan:



(be) going to: We use **(be) going to** when we have *already decided* to do something. Helen had already decided to invite lots of people *before* she spoke to Dan.



Compare:

- 'Gary phoned while you were out.' 'OK. **I'll call** him back.'
  'Gary **phoned** while you were out.' 'Yes, I know. **I'm going to call** him back.'
- 'Anna is in hospital.' 'Oh really? I didn't know. **I'll go** and visit her.'
  'Anna is in hospital.' 'Yes, I know. **I'm going to visit** her this evening.'

B Future happenings and situations (predicting the future)

We use both **will** and **going to** to predict future happenings and situations. So you can say:

- I think **the weather will be** nice later. *or*
  I think **the weather is going to be** nice later.
- Those shoes are well-made. **They'll last** a long time. *or*
  Those shoes are well-made. **They're going to last** a long time.

When we say something **is going to** happen, we know this from the situation *now*. What is happening *now* shows that something **is going to** happen in the future. For example:

- Look at those black clouds. **It's going to rain**. (*not* It will rain)
  (We can see that it **is going to rain** from the clouds that are in the sky *now*.)
- I feel terrible. I think **I'm going to be** sick. (*not* I think I'll be sick)
  (I think **I'm going to be** sick because I feel terrible *now*.)

Do not use **will** in this type of situation.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercises

23.1 **Complete the sentences using will ('ll) or going to.**

1 A: Why are you turning on the TV?
B: I'm going to watch the news. (I / watch)

2 A: Oh, I've just realised. I haven't got any money.
B: Haven't you? Well, don't worry. ..... you some. (I / lend)

3 A: I've got a headache.
B: Have you? Wait a second and ..... an aspirin for you. (I / get)

4 A: Why are you filling that bucket with water?
B: ..... the car. (I / wash)

5 A: I've decided to repaint this room.
B: Oh, have you? What colour ..... it? (you / paint)

6 A: Where are you going? Are you going shopping?
B: Yes, ... some things for dinner. (I / buy)

7 A: I don't know how to use the washing machine.
B: It's easy. ..... you. (I / show)

8 A: What would you like to eat?
B: ..... a pizza, please. (I / have)

9 A: Did you call Lisa?
B: Oh, no. I completely forgot. ..... her now. (I / call)

10 A: Has Dan decided what to do when he leaves school?
B: Yes. Everything is planned. ..... a holiday for a few weeks. (he / have) Then ..... a management training course. (he / do)

23.2 **Read the situations and complete the sentences using will ('ll) or going to.**

1 The phone rings and you answer. Somebody wants to speak to John.
CALLER: Hello. Can I speak to John, please?
YOU: Just a moment. I'll get him. (I / get)

2 It's a nice day, so you have decided to take a walk. Just before you go, you tell your friend.
YOU: The weather's too nice to stay in. ..... a walk. (I / take)
FRIEND: Good idea! I think ..... you. (I / join)

3 Your friend is worried because she has lost her driving licence.
YOU: Don't worry. I'm sure ..... it. (you / find)
FRIEND: I hope so.

4 There was a job advertised in the paper recently. At first you were interested, but then you decided not to apply.
FRIEND: Have you decided what to do about that job you were interested in?
YOU: Yes, ... for it. (I / not / apply)

5 You and a friend are stuck in traffic. You have to be in a meeting in five minutes and you need at least another 20 minutes to get there.
YOU: The meeting begins in five minutes. ..... . (we / be late)

6 Ann and Sam are staying at a hotel. Their room is in very bad condition, especially the ceiling.
ANN: The ceiling doesn't look very safe, does it?
SAM: No, it looks as if ..... . (it / fall down)

7 Paul has to go to the airport to catch a plane tomorrow morning.
PAUL: Kate, I need somebody to take me to the airport tomorrow morning.
KATE: That's no problem. ..... you. (I / take) What time is your flight?
PAUL: 10.30.
KATE: OK, ... you up at your house at about 8 o'clock then. (I / pick)
Later that day, Joe offers to take Paul to the airport.
JOE: Paul, do you want me to take you to the airport?
PAUL: No thanks, Joe. ..... me. (Kate / take)

LIVEWORKSHEETS