

## EXPRESSING THE FUTURE

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### The most common ways to express the future

We use “ **going to + infinitive** ” to tell about a plan we have already made.

*We are going to meet at the station.*

We use the **present continuous** to talk about arrangements for events at a time later than now.

*We are meeting at the station tomorrow.*

We use **will** to tell about something we know or we think will happen.

*You will be late if you don't hurry.*

*You won't pass this exam if you don't work hard.*

We use the **simple present** to tell about a future event that has already been scheduled.

*The train leaves at 8.30 tomorrow.*

### Going to + infinitive

- We use « going to + infinitive » for plans and intentions.

*Are you going to buy a new car soon?*

*Are you going to visit Rome when you are in Italy?*

*I think they are going to have a party next week.*

- We use « going to + infinitive » for predictions based on something we can see or hear.

*He's going to be a brilliant politician.*

*I'm going to have a hard time falling asleep.*

*They are going to win the match, they are playing really well.*

### Will + infinitive (simple future tense)

- We use **will** to predict a future event, based on an opinion or on something we think.

*They will win the match, they have got the best team.*

- We use **will** to express an instant decision.

*Somebody is coming. I will open the door.*

*Thanks for lending me the money. I'll pay you back on Thursday.*

- We use **will** to express a willingness / an unwillingness.

*He'll clean the floor / he won't help me clean the floor.*

- We use **will** to give orders.

*You will do exactly as you were told to do!*

## Will ? Would ? Shall ? Interrogative forms

*Will you please keep quiet?*

=>we use will to express a request, an order, instructions.

*Will you marry me?*

=>we use will to give an invitation.

*Would you please open the window?*

=>we use would to express a polite request.

*Shall I open the window?*

=>we use shall to make an offer.

*Shall we go out for a drink tonight?*

=>we use shall to make a suggestion.

*Shall I tell the boss about this issue?*

=>we use shall to ask for advice or instructions.

## Predictions : will vs be going to

- We use **be going to** for a prediction based on the present situation. What we can see or hear is going to happen.

*John has just called, his plane is delayed. He is going to be late.*

- We use **will** for a prediction based on what we think.

*I have heard that the flight from London is delayed. John will be late.*

- We also use **be going to** for an intention and **will** for the details and comments.

*I am going to organise a party for her birthday. There will be approximately twenty people.*

- We use **will** with I am sure, I think, I expect and probably.

*He will probably organise a party for her birthday.*

## Use of the present continuous to express the future

The present progressive is used to talk about arrangements of time, date, place for events at a future time. There is a suggestion that some preparation has already happened.

*He is meeting Jack at the airport; both of them have discussed this.*

*I am leaving tomorrow. I have already bought my ticket.*

*We're having a staff meeting next Monday. All members of staff have been told about it.*

## **Present simple with when, before, after, ...**

We use the present simple after when, as, before, after, as soon as, unless and until :

*When they arrive, we will have some tea.*

*Guys, if we arrive there early, we'll get the best chairs.*

*Will you let me know as soon as you hear of something?*

If it is important to show that the first action is completed before the second one begins, we use the present perfect.

*You won't drive after you have drunk so much.*

## **Future simple present vs present progressive**

*We're having a staff meeting next Monday.*

=>just that one.

*We have a staff meeting every Monday.*

=>this meeting is part of an agenda.

The simple present is used when a future event is part of a programme or timetable.

## **Other ways to express a future**

### **Will have + past participle (future perfect)**

We use the future perfect simple to refer to a completed action at a specific time in the future :

*I will have been here for six months on June 23rd.*

*We are late. The film will already have started by the time we get to the cinema.*

### **Will be + ing-form (future continuous)**

We use the future continuous to express that we will be in the middle of doing something :

*Don't phone me between 7 and 8. We'll be having dinner then.*