

Future

Adapted from “First Certificate Language Practice” by Michael Vince

Explanations

Prediction

- **Will**

Will is used to make predictions. It is often preceded by *I think* or by opinion words like *perhaps*. A time expression is also necessary.

I think it'll rain tomorrow. Perhaps she'll be late.

In speech, *will* is contracted to *'ll*.

See also Grammar 18 and 19 for functional uses of *will*.

- **Going to**

Going to is also used for predictions. It is especially common when we can see the cause of the event.

Look out! There's a bus coming! It's going to hit us!

I can see you're going to have a baby. When is it due? You're going to fall!

Going to is also common in impersonal statements.

Liverpool are going to win the Cup.

But *will* can also be used for most examples like this, with no change of meaning.

- **Future continuous**

The future continuous is used to describe a situation in progress at a particular time in the future.

This time next week I expect I'll be living in London. And I'll probably be cycling to work.

- **Future perfect**

The future perfect looks back from a point in the future.

By the time we get there, the film will have started.

It refers to indefinite time up to that point. This means that when we get to the future point we can say:

The film has started.

Intention

- **Going to**

Going to is used to describe a present intention or plan. This is something we have already decided to do.

I'm going to fix the television tomorrow.

- **Will**

Will is used for instant decisions made at the time of speaking.

I know, I'll get him a wallet for his birthday.

**Fixed arrangements
and timetables**

- **Present continuous**

The present continuous is used to describe definite, fixed arrangements.

Sorry, I can't help you, I'm leaving in the morning.

The arrangements are often social arrangements or appointments and may be written in a diary.

- **Present simple**

The present simple is used to describe future events which are based on a timetable, programme or calendar.

*My train **leaves** at 11.30 tomorrow morning.*

**When, until, as
soon as**

After the time expressions *when, until* and *as soon as* a present tense form is used, although this refers to future time.

*I'll wait for you here **until** you **get** back.*

The present perfect is often used in cases like this to emphasize the completion of an event.

*I'll wait here **until** you **have finished**.*