**00 FUTURE FORMS**

There are a number of different ways of referring to the future in English. It is important to remember that we are expressing more than simply the **time** of the action or event. Obviously, any 'future' form or tense will always refer to a time 'later than now', but it may also express our **attitude** to the future event.

All of the following ideas can be expressed using different future forms. Match the ideas in the first list with the examples of the forms in the second one:

1. simple prediction: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. arrangements: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. plans and intentions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. time-tabled events: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. prediction based on present evidence: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. willingness: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. an action in progress in the future: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. an action or event that is a matter of routine: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
9. obligation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
10. an action or event that will take place immediately or very soon: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
11. projecting ourselves into the future and looking back at a completed action: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
12. a sudden decision: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
13. a promise (an offer): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
14. Look at the sky! **It's going to rain**!
15. You **are to travel** directly to London.
16. **You'll be seeing** John in the office tomorrow, won't you?
17. A month from now he **will have finished** all his exams.
18. **I'm meeting** Jim at the airport.
19. **I’ll help** you with the dishes.
20. The train **is about to leave**.
21. The plane **takes off** at 3 a.m.

The plane **will take off** at 3 a.m.

1. **We'll give you** a lift to the cinema.
2. There **will be** snow in many areas tomorrow.
3. There’s the phone. **I’ll get** it.
4. **We're going to spend** the summer abroad.
5. This time next week **I'll be sun-bathing**.

It is clear from these examples that several forms and tenses are used to express the future.

NOTES:

* ‘Going to’ or ‘-ing’ are often both correct for planned events. ‘Going to’ should be used for ***distant future intentions*** (for example: He’s going to study Chemistry.)
* We can often use more than one structure to talk about the same future event. **Present forms** emphasize present ideas like **intention**, **certainty** and **plans**. We prefer ***will****/****shall*** when we are **not** emphasizing **present ideas**. Compare:

*Next year* ***is going to be*** *different – I promise.* (present intention) *Next year* ***will*** *probably be different.*

*What* ***are*** *you* ***doing*** *next year? You haven’t told me your plans. What* ***will*** *you* ***do*** *next year – do you know?*

* We prefer **present forms** when we are talking about **future events** that have some **present reality**. Compare:

***I’m seeing*** *Pete on Tuesday.* (There is an arrangement now.) *I wonder if he****’ll recognize*** *me.* (No present idea.)

* In **predictions**, we prefer **present forms** when there is **outside evidence** for what will happen – when we can see something coming. We prefer **will** when we are talking more about what is **inside our heads**, our beliefs, guesses, knowledge, etc.

*Look out – we****’re going to*** *crash!* (I can see it coming.) *Don’t lend him your car – he****’ll crash*** *it.* (I know him.)

* We can use the **future progressive** to say that something will be **going on at a certain time in the future**.

*This time tomorrow I****’ll be skiing****. Good luck with the exam. We****’ll be thinking*** *of you.*

* The **future progressive** is also used for **planned or expected future events**, ones that are **routine**.

*He* ***will be giving*** *another lecture at the same time next week. I****’ll be seeing*** *you one of these days, I expect.*

* In polite enquiries the **future progressive** suggests ‘What have you already decided?’ giving the idea that we are not trying to influence people. Compare:

***Will*** *you* ***be staying*** *in this evening?* (just asking about plans) ***Are*** *you* ***going to stay*** *in this evening?* (perhaps pressing for a decision) ***Will*** *you* ***stay*** *in this evening?* (a request or order)

**Understanding Will and Going to**

**Meaning and Usage**

In the future we often use will and the structure (be) going to (+infinitive) to make decisions, arrangements and plans.

Will is preferred when a decision is being made when we are speaking:

A: “The flight arrives at 9:20 tomorrow evening.”

B: “**I’ll pick you up** from the airport, if you like.”

Going to is preferred when a decision has been made before now:

A: “When does he get back?”

B: “Tomorrow evening. **I’m going to pick him up** from the airport.”

Will is also preferred with certain verbs expressing promises, speculation, uncertainty, guarantees, and with adverbs such as *probably*, *possibly*, *definitely*.

It is often preferred after *think* for this reason.

I promise **I’ll phone you** tomorrow. **I’ll definitely have** an answer by then.

Going to is preferred to express a personal intention.

**I’m going to have** a long hot bath when I get home tonight.

Going to is also quite common when we can see, hear or feel that something is going to happen.

To pregnant woman: “When **are you going to have** the baby?”

Be going to is used to predict the future when we have already got some evidence that something is certain or likely to happen. When this evidence is not present, or at least is not as concrete, we prefer to use will.

**It's going to rain** later (I can see the clouds building up)

I think **it will rain** later (It often does at this time of year)

**Form**

Will is often contracted in speaking: I’ll; He’ll; They’ll etc.

If we use going to + go we usually omit the second verb to avoid repeating it.

I’m going to ~~go to~~ the pub tonight.

**Going to: Pronunciation**

Going to is often pronounced like “gonna” in spoken English.

We’re gonna be on our way now. See you tomorrow.

Although some speakers consider this pronunciation to be incorrect, it is extremely widespread and natural in all English speaking countries.

**Both forms are often possible**

There are many future situations where the choice is not clear, for example if the future event is not the result of individual planning or decision making.

What time **will the party start**?

What time **is the party going to start**?

Or if a general prediction is being made with no emphasis on any of the above categories.

The supermarket**’s** **going to be** busy tomorrow.

The supermarket **will be** busy tomorrow.

**Present continuous for the future**

**Meaning and Usage**

The present continuous is used to talk about **arrangements** for events at a time later than now. There is a suggestion that more than one person is aware of the event, and that some preparation has already happened.

* **I'm meeting** Jim at the airport = and both Jim and I have discussed this.
* **I am leaving** tomorrow. = and I've already bought my train ticket.
* **We're having** a staff meeting next Monday = and all members of staff have been told about it.

More examples:

* **Is she seeing** him tomorrow?
* **He isn't working** next week.
* **They aren't leaving** until the end of next year.
* **We are staying** with friends when we get to Boston.

**Note**: In the first example, “seeing” is used in a continuous form because it means

meeting.

**BE CAREFUL!** The **simple present** is used when a future event is part of a programme or time-table. Notice the difference between:

* **We're having** a staff meeting next Monday.
* We **have** a staff meeting next Monday.(= we have a meeting every Monday, it's on the time-table.)

**be going to and the present continuous**

The use of **be going to** and the **present continuous** tense to speak about the future is similar. We use them to talk about things that are already planned or decided.

What **are you doing** this weekend? (= What are your plans?)

**I'm spending** the weekend at home. (= I've planned it already/I've already decided)

**I'm going to spend** the weekend at home. (= I've already decided/I've planned it already)

The **present continuous** is usually used to speak about personal arrangements, when the time and/or place have already been decided.

We'**re meeting** Jim at the pub at 6 o'clock.

The taxi**'s** **picking** us up at 3 o'clock.

**Be going to** is used to talk about our intentions, even if they are some way in the future.

I**'m** **going to study** law when I finish school.

We'**re going to** Hawaii for our holidays next summer.

**Practice**

**1. Choose the correct answer: going to, present continuous, will / shall**

1. You \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Ben's new house.

**‘ll love**

**shall love**

**are loving**

2. I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ study French next year.

**‘ll**

**going to**

**‘m going to**

3. I promise I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ late.

**‘m not being**

**won’t be**

**not be**

4. When \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on holiday?

**you going**

**will you go**

**are you going**

5. You look tired. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you to make dinner?

**Shall I help**

**Will I help**

**Am I Helping**

6. It sounds as if you’re busy. I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ back later.

**call**

**‘ll call**

**going to call**

**2. Match the sentences.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| \_\_ 1 We’re having a party on Saturday.  \_\_ 2 Kim’s going to study medicine.  \_\_ 3 I’m going to look for a new flat.  \_\_ 4 Jo’s English is fantastic.  \_\_ 5 Sue’s getting married in the spring.  \_\_ 6 Ron’s going to give up smoking. | a I hate living in the town centre.  b He decided to stop this morning.  c She’s really good at languages.  d She’s invited me to the wedding.  e She wants to be a doctor.  f Would you like to come? |

**3. Insert (be) going to or will into each gap. If you think both are fine, write both.**

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have a cup of tea when I get home.

2 To waiter: “I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have the Chicken Kiev, please.”

3 Nobody \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ help you when you finish university.

4 “Any plans for your holiday?”

“We \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Umbria in Italy.”

5 Look at that traffic jam. We \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ be late.

6 Can you guarantee that this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (negative) happen again?

7 “I’m feeling quite cold. Can you close the window?”

“Sure. I\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ turn the heat up as well, if you like.”

8 I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the shop. Is there anything you want?

9 “Have you got my book?”

“Sorry. I forgot it. I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ give it to you tomorrow.

10 I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ probably be about 40 minutes late tomorrow. I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_the

dentist in the morning.

11 What \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ do with the profits?

12 The plumber \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ put a new bath in this summer.

13 “That man’s just dropped something.”

“I\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ stop him.”

14 The weather forecast said it \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ rain tomorrow.

15 She \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ dye her hair blonde, but I don’t think it \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ suit

her.

**4. Put the words in the correct order.**

1. new buy a not car. going to I'm

2. on to the we Shall Saturday? beach go

3. secret. your anyone I tell won't

4. getting My August. is married in cousin

5. stop Paul is to smoking. going

6. don't tomorrow. it think I will rain

**5. Choose the correct answer**

1. I'm convinced he'll be a success in the job.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

2 I'm seeing him later this afternoon.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

3 No, you're my guest. I'll pay.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

4 It's late. I think I'll come in early tomorrow to finish this.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. Something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

5 The boss looks very angry. I think he's going to shout at us.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

6 I'm starting work there next Monday.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

7 That train always gets in late. They won't be early.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

8 There must be someone at the door. Don't worry. I'll get it.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

9 I'll help, if you want.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

10 We're having lunch together on Friday.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

11 Look at those clouds. It's going to rain.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

12 I'm sure he'll come. He's probably just been held up in traffic.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

13 I'm not going to put up with these working conditions any longer.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

14 Look at the weather forecast. It's going to be a really cold day tomorrow.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision

15 I'm going to go to bed early. I'm shattered.

1. There is evidence now for the future event
2. The speaker has already made an arrangement.
3. This is something the speaker thinks is certain to happen
4. The speaker's decision is made at the moment of speaking
5. The speaker has already made a decision