

be·fore¹

S1 W1

/bɪ'fɔː \$ -'fɔːr/

conjunction

1 BEFORE earlier than a particular event or action

OPP

Say goodbye before you go.

I saw her a few days before she died.

2 PREVENT so that something does not or cannot happen:

Put that money somewhere safe before it gets stolen.

That dog ought to be destroyed before it attacks any more children.

Before I could say anything more, Holmes had rushed off towards the station.

3 used to say that something happens after a period of time:

It was several minutes before we realised what was happening.

It will be a while before we know the results.

4 used to say that something must happen in order for something else to be possible:

You have to pass a test before you can get a licence.

5 THREATEN (spoken) used to warn someone that something bad will happen to them if they do not do something:

Get out before I call the police!

6 BEFORE used to emphasize that someone does not want to do something:

She would die before she would admit she was wrong.

Grammar

In a clause beginning with **before** that refers to the future, use the present tense

or present perfect, not 'will':

I want to get home before it rains (NOT before it will rain).

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

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