

A

Study this example:



'I'll phone you when I get home' is a sentence with two parts:

the main part: I'll phone you
and the **when-part**: **when I get home**

The time in the sentence is future (tomorrow), but we use a *present* tense (I **get**) in the **when-part** of the sentence.

We do *not* use **will** in the **when-part** of the sentence.

Some more examples:

- ☐ We'll go out **when** it **stops** raining. (*not* when it will stop)
- ☐ **When** you **are** in London again, come and see us. (*not* When you will be)
- ☐ (*said to a child*) What do you want to be **when** you **grow up**? (*not* will grow)

The same thing happens after **while** / **before** / **after** / **as soon as** / **until** or **till**:

- ☐ What are you going to do **while** I'm away? (*not* while I will be)
- ☐ I'll probably go back home on Sunday. **Before** I go, I'd like to visit the museum.
- ☐ Wait here **until** (or **till**) I **come** back.

B

You can also use the present perfect (**have done**) after **when** / **after** / **until** / **as soon as**:

- ☐ Can I borrow that book **when** you've **finished** with it?
- ☐ Don't say anything while Ian is here. Wait **until** he **has gone**.

If you use the present perfect, one thing must be complete *before* the other (so the two things do *not* happen together):

- ☐ **When I've phoned** Kate, we can have dinner.
(= First I'll phone Kate and *after that* we can have dinner.)

Do not use the present perfect if the two things happen together:

- ☐ **When I phone** Kate, I'll ask her about the party. (*not* When I've phoned)

It is often possible to use either the present simple or the present perfect:

- ☐ I'll come **as soon as I finish**. or I'll come **as soon as I've finished**.
- ☐ You'll feel better **after you have** something to eat. or You'll feel better **after you've had** something to eat.

C

After **if**, we normally use the present simple (**if I do** / **if I see** etc.) for the future:

- ☐ It's raining hard. We'll get wet **if we go** out. (*not* if we will go)
- ☐ I'll be angry **if it happens** again. (*not* if it will happen)
- ☐ Hurry up! **If we don't hurry**, we'll be late.

D

When and ifWe use **when** for things which are *sure* to happen:

- ☐ I'm going out later. (for sure) **When** I go out, I'll get some bread.

We use **if** (*not* when) for things that will *possibly* happen:

- ☐ I might go out later. (it's possible) **If** I go out, I'll get some bread.
- ☐ **If** it is raining this evening, I won't go out. (*not* When it is raining)
- ☐ Don't worry **if** I'm late tonight. (*not* when I'm late)
- ☐ **If** they don't come soon, I'm not going to wait. (*not* When they don't come)