

## Introduction to future forms

There is no one future tense in English. Instead, there are several verb forms that can refer to future time. Sometimes, several forms are possible to express a similar meaning, but not always.

### will for prediction

- 1 The most common use of *will* is as an auxiliary verb to show future time. It expresses a future fact or prediction – at some time in the

future this event will happen. This use is uncoloured by ideas such as intention, decision, arrangement, willingness, etc.

*I'll be thirty in a few days' time.*

*It will be cold and wet tomorrow, I'm afraid.*

*Who do you think will win the match?*

*You'll feel better if you take this medicine.*

*I'll see you later.*

This is the nearest English has to a neutral, pure future tense.

- 2 *Will* for a prediction can be based more on an opinion than a fact or evidence. It is often found with expressions such as *I think ...*, *I hope ...*, *I'm sure ...*.

*I think United will win the cup this year.*

*I hope you'll come and visit me.*

*I'm sure you'll pass your exams.*

- 3 *Will* is common in the main clause when there is a subordinate clause with *if*, *when*, *before*, etc. Note that we don't use *will* in the subordinate clause.

*You'll break the glass if you aren't careful.*

*When you're ready, we'll start the meeting.*

*I won't go until you arrive.*

*As soon as Peter comes, we'll have lunch.*

### going to for prediction

*Going to* can express a prediction based on a present fact. There is evidence now that something is sure to happen. We can see the future from the present.

*Careful! That glass is going to fall over. Too late!*

*Look at that blue sky! It's going to be a lovely day.*

### Notes

- Sometimes there is little or no difference between *will* and *going to*.

*We'll*  
*We're going to* | run out of money if we aren't careful.

- We use *going to* when we have physical evidence to support our prediction.

*It's going to rain.* (Look at those black clouds.)

*Liverpool are going to win.* (It's 4-0, and there are only five minutes left.)

*That glass is going to fall.* (It's rolling to the edge of the table.)

- We can use *will* when there is no such outside evidence. Our prediction is based on our own personal opinion. It can be more theoretical and abstract.

*I'm sure you'll have a good time at the restaurant.* (This is my opinion.)

*I reckon Liverpool will win.* (Said the day before the match.)

*The glass will break if it falls.* (This is what happens to glasses that fall.)

- Compare the sentences.

*I bet John will be late home. The traffic is always bad at this time.*  
(= my opinion)

*John's going to be late home. He left a message on the answerphone.*  
(= a fact)

*Don't lend Keith your car. He'll crash it.* (= a theoretical prediction)

*Look out! We're going to crash!* (= a prediction based on evidence)

### Decisions and intentions – will and going to

- 1 *Will* is used to express a decision or intention made at the moment of speaking.

*I'll phone you back in a minute.*

*Give me a ring some time. We'll go out together.*

*'The phone's ringing.' 'I'll get it.'*

- 2 *Going to* is used to express a future plan, decision, or intention made before the moment of speaking.

*When she grows up, she's going to be a doctor.*

*We're going to get married in the spring.*

### Other uses of will and shall

- 1 *Will* as a prediction is an auxiliary verb that simply shows future time. It has no real meaning.

*Tomorrow will be cold and windy.*

- 2 *Will* is also a modal auxiliary verb, and so it can express a variety of meanings. The meaning often depends on the meaning of the main verb.

*I'll help you carry those bags.* (= offer)

*Will you help me?* (= willingness)

*Will you open the window?* (= request)

*My car won't start.* (= refusal)

*I'll remember you for ever.* (= promise)

*'The phone's ringing.' 'It'll be for me.'* (= prediction about the present)

- 3 *Shall* is found mainly in questions. It is used with *I* and *we*.

*Where shall I put your tea?* (I'm asking for instructions.)

*What shall we do tonight?* (I'm asking for a decision.)

*Shall I cook supper tonight?* (I'm offering to help.)

*Shall we eat out tonight?* (I'm making a suggestion.)

### Present Continuous for arrangements

- 1 The Present Continuous is used to express personal arrangements and fixed plans, especially when the time and place have been decided. A present tense is used because there is some reality in the present. The event is planned or decided, and we can see it coming. The event is usually in the near future.

*I'm having lunch with Brian tomorrow.*

*What time are you meeting him?*

*Where are you having lunch?*

*What are you doing tonight?*

- 2 The Present Continuous for future is often used with verbs of movement and activity.

*Are you coming to the conference?*

*I'm meeting the director tomorrow.*

*I'm just taking the kids for a walk.*

*We're playing tennis this afternoon.*

- 3 The Present Continuous is used to refer to arrangements between people. It is not used to refer to events that people can't control.

*It's going to rain this afternoon.* \*It's raining this afternoon.

*The sun rises at 5.30 tomorrow.* \*The sun is rising...

### Notes

- Sometimes there is little or no difference between the Present Continuous and *going to* to refer to the future.

*We're seeing*  
*We're going to see* | Hamlet at the theatre tonight.

- When there is a difference, the Present Continuous emphasizes an arrangement with some reality in the present; *going to* expresses a person's intentions.

*I'm seeing my old schoolfriends tonight.*

*I'm going to ask her to help me.* \*I'm asking...

*What are you doing this weekend?*

*What are you going to do about the broken toilet?* (= What have you decided to do?)

### Present Simple for timetables

- 1 The Present Simple refers to a future event that is seen as unalterable because it is based on a timetable or calendar.

*My flight leaves at 10.00.*

*Term starts on 4 April.*

*What time does the film start?*

*It's my birthday tomorrow.*

- 2 It is used in subordinate clauses introduced by conjunctions such as *if*, *when*, *before*, *as soon as*, *unless*, etc.

*We'll have a picnic if the weather stays fine.*

*When I get home, I'll cook the dinner.*

*I'll leave as soon as it stops raining.*

## **Future Continuous**

- 1 The Future Continuous expresses an activity that will be in progress before and after a time in the future.

*Don't phone at 8.00. We'll be having supper.*

*This time tomorrow I'll be flying to New York.*

- 2 The Future Continuous is used to refer to a future event that will happen in the natural course of events. This use is uncoloured by ideas such as intention, decision, arrangement, or willingness. As time goes by, this event will occur.

*Don't worry about our guests. They'll be arriving any minute now.*

*We'll be going right back to the football after the break. (said on television)*

## **Future Perfect**

The Future Perfect refers to an action that will be completed before a definite time in the future. It is not a very common verb form.

*I'll have done all my work by this evening.*



# 5 An eye to the future

Future forms · Hot verbs – *take, put* · Telephoning



## TEST YOUR GRAMMAR

1 Which future form expresses ...?

3                      1                      2                      4                      6                      5  
an intention   a prediction   a future fact based on a timetable   an arrangement between people   a spontaneous decision   a suggestion

- 1 Tomorrow's weather will be warm and sunny.
- 2 The flight to Doha leaves at ten past ten.
- 3 I'm going to be a racing driver when I grow up.

- 4 We're seeing Sue for lunch on Thursday.
- 5 Shall we have a break now?
- 6 I'll make some coffee.

2 Name the different future forms.

# PRACTICE

## Discussing grammar

1 Choose the correct form in the pairs of sentences.

1 'll see / 'm going to see

I'm very excited. I am going to see all my family this weekend.

I don't know if I have time to come this evening.

I will see.

2 are you going to do / will you do

So you're off to the States for a year! What

are you going to do there?

I'm sure you will pass your exams, but what

will you do if you don't?

3 'll come / 'm coming

I will come with you if you like.

I am coming with you whether you like it or not.

4 are you doing / are you going to do

Your school report is terrible. What are you going to do about it?

What are you doing this evening?

5 'm giving / 'm going to give

I've had enough of her lazy attitude. I am going to give her a good talking to.

I am giving a presentation at 3.00 this afternoon.

I'm scared stiff.

6 leaves / is leaving

John! Peter is leaving now. Come and say goodbye.

The coach leaves at 8.00, so don't be late.

7 'll see / 'll be seeing

I will see you outside the cinema at 8.00.

I will be seeing Peter this afternoon, so I'll tell him your news.

8 'll see / 'll have seen

You will have seen enough of me by the end of this holiday.

I'm going to make a success of my life. You will see

**T 5.4** Listen and check.



# VOCABULARY

## Hot verbs – take, put

- 1 There are many expressions with *take* and *put*. Look at these examples from the texts on pages 48–49 and the quiz on pages 50 and 157.

I make sure Mum has **taken her pills**.

Do you **take credit** yourself for most of the findings?

You and a colleague are both **put forward** for promotion.

You must **put yourself first** sometimes.

- 2 Put the words in the right box.

Take	Put	T	P	T	T
offence	a stop to sth	place	your arm round sb	(no) notice	part
sb in charge of sth	sb/sth for granted	my advice	a plan into practice		
a task	your work first	responsibility for sth	pressure on sb	ages	

TAKE	PUT

- 3 Complete the sentences with expressions from exercise 2 in the correct form.

1 The wedding took place in a small village. It was lovely, but it was miles away. It took ages to get there.

2 My son's buying cigarettes, but I'll soon put a stop to that. I won't give him any more pocket money.

3 Please don't take offence but I don't think your work has been up to your usual standard recently.

4 I told you that restaurant was awful. You should have taken my advice and gone somewhere else.

5 The older you get, the more you have to learn to take responsibility for your own life.

6 My boss is putting pressure on me to resign, but I won't go.

7 I tried to get the teacher's attention but she took no notice of me at all.

8 Children never say 'Thank you' or 'How are you?' to their parents. They just take them for granted.

**157** Listen and check.

- 4 Match a line in A with a line in B. Underline the expressions with *take* or *put*.

A	B
1 Take your time.	2 Put it in your diary.
2 The exam's on the 21st.	6 What would you do?
3 Their marriage will be a happy one.	7 Calm down. There's no need to panic.
4 'I told her a joke about the French, and it turned out she was French.'	1 There's no need to hurry.
5 Take it easy.	5 No one's out to get you.
6 Put yourself in my shoes.	3 Take my word for it. I know these things.
7 You always take things too personally.	4 'Whoops! You really put your foot in it, didn't you?'