

## Ways of expressing the future in English

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### Future tense simple

Affirmative: S+will+V

Ex: I will eat; You will eat; He will eat; She will eat; It will eat; We will eat; You will eat; They will eat.

Interrogative: Will+S+V

Ex: Will I eat? Will you eat? Will he eat? Will she eat? Will it eat? Will we eat? Will you eat? Will they eat?

Negative: S+will+not+V

Ex: I will not eat; You will eat; He will eat; She will eat; It will eat; We will eat; You will eat; They will eat.

Future simple generally refers to:

- 1) predictions about a future event:  
-It will rain tomorrow.
- 2) a spontaneous decision (especially with the pronouns *I* or *we*):  
-I'll pay for the tickets by credit card.
- 3) willingness:

-I'll do the washing-up.

-He'll carry your bag for you.

In the negative form, it is used to express unwillingness.

-The baby won't eat his soup.

-I won't leave until I've seen the manager!

4) an offer (with *I* in the interrogative form using “*shall*”):

-Shall I open the window?

5) a suggestion (with *we* in the interrogative form using “*shall*”):

-Shall we go to the cinema tonight?

6) requests for advice or instructions (with *I* in the interrogative form using using “*shall*”):

-What shall I tell the boss about this money?

7) orders:

-You will do exactly as I say.

8) an invitation (in the interrogative):

-Will you come to the dance with me?

-Will you marry me?

### **Future continuous tense**

Affirmative: S+will+be+V-ing

Ex: I will be eating; You will be eating; He will be eating; She will be eating; It will be eating;  
We will be eating; You will be eating; They will be eating.

Interrogative: Will+S+be+V-ing

Ex: Will I be eating? Will you be eating? Will he be eating? Will she be eating? Will it be eating?  
Will we be eating? Will you be eating? Will they be eating?

Negative: S+will+not+be+V-ing

Ex: I will not be eating; You will not be eating; He will not be eating; She will not be eating; It will not be eating; We will not be eating; You will not be eating; They will not be eating.

Future continuous tense generally refers to:

1) an action or event that will be in progress at a certain time in the future.

-This time next week I will be sun-bathing in Bali.

-By Christmas I will be skiing like a pro.

-Just think, next Monday you will be working in your new job.

2) predictions about future events

-He'll be coming to the meeting, I expect.

-I guess you'll be feeling thirsty after working in the sun.

-You'll be missing the sunshine once you're back in England.

3) polite requests for information about the future (in the interrogative form).

-Will you be bringing your friend to the pub tonight?

-Will Jim be coming with us?

-Will she be going to the party tonight?

-Will I be sleeping in this room?

4) continuous events that we expect to happen in the future.

-I'll be seeing Jim at the conference next week.

-When he is in Australia he will be staying with friends.

-I'll be eating with Jane this evening so I can tell her.

5) events that are already happening now and that we expect to continue some time into the future (especially when combined with the adverb *still*).

-In an hour I'll still be ironing my clothes.

-Tomorrow he'll still be suffering from his cold.

-Next year will she still be wearing a size six?

-Won't stock prices still be falling in the morning?

-Unfortunately, sea levels will still be rising in 20 years.

## Future perfect tense

Affirmative: S+will+have+V<sub>III</sub>

Ex: I will have eaten; You will have eaten; He will have eaten; She will have eaten; It will have eaten; We will have eaten; You will have eaten; They will have eaten.

Interrogative: Will+S+have+ V<sub>III</sub>

Ex: Will I have eaten? Will you have eaten? Will he have eaten? Will she have eaten? Will it have eaten? Will we have eaten? Will you have eaten? Will they have eaten?

Negative: S+will+not+have+ V<sub>III</sub>

Ex: I will not have eaten; You will not have eaten; He will not have eaten; She will not have eaten; It will not have eaten; We will not have eaten; You will not have eaten; They will not have eaten.

Future perfect tense generally refers to an action in the future before another action in the future

-I will have been here for six months on June 23rd.

-By the time you read this I will have left.

-You will have finished your report by this time next week.

-Won't they have arrived by 5:00?

-Will you have eaten when I pick you up?

## Future perfect continuous tense

Affirmative: S+will+have+been+V-ing

Ex: I will have been eating; You will have been eating; He will have been eating; She will have been eating; It will have been eating; We will have been eating; You will have been eating; They will have been eating.

Interrogative: Will+S+have+been+V-ing

Ex: Will I have been eating? Will you have been eating? Will he have been eating? Will she have been eating? Will it have been eating? Will we have been eating? Will you have been eating? Will they have been eating?

Negative: S+will+not+have+been+V-ing

Ex: I will not have been eating; You will not have been eating; He will not have been eating; She will not have been eating; It will not have been eating; We will not have been eating; You will not have been eating; They will not have been eating.

Future perfect continuous tense generally refers to an action in progress in the future before another action in the future.

- I will have been waiting here for three hours by six o'clock.
- By 2001 I will have been living in London for sixteen years.
- When I finish this course; I will have been learning English for twenty years.
- Next year I will have been working here for four years.
- When I come at 6:00, will you have been practicing long?

## Other ways of expressing the future

### I. The present continuous

It 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 (Jim and I have discussed this.)

-I am leaving tomorrow. (I've already bought my train ticket.)

-We're having a staff meeting next Monday. (All members of staff have been told about it.)

### II. The simple present

It is used:

1) to make statements about events at a time later than now, when the statements are based on present facts and when these facts are something fixed like a time-table, schedule or calendar.

-The plane arrives at 18.00 tomorrow.

-She has a yoga class tomorrow morning.

-The restaurant opens at 19.30 tonight.

-Next Thursday at 14.00 there is an English exam.

-The plane leaves in ten minutes.

2) in **time clauses** with words like *when*, *after* and *until*

-I'll come home when I finish work.

-You must wait here until your father comes.

### III. The "going to" future

Affirmative: S+am/are/is+going to+V
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Ex: I am going to eat; You are going to eat; He is going to eat; She is going to eat; It is going to eat; We are going to eat; You are going to eat; They are going to eat.

Interrogative: Am/are/is+S+going to+V

Ex: Am I going to eat? Are you going to eat? Is he going to eat? Is she going to eat? Is it going to eat? Are we going to eat? Are you going to eat? Are they going to eat?

Negative: S+am/are/is+not+V

Ex: I will not eat; You will eat; He will eat; She will eat; It will eat; We will eat; You will eat; They will eat.

The “going to” future generally refers to:

1) plans and intentions for the future

-Is Freddy going to buy a new car soon?

-Are John and Pam going to visit Milan when they are in Italy?

-I think Nigel and Mary are going to have a party next week.

-We are going to have dinner together tomorrow.

-Aren't you going to stay at the library until your report is finished?

2) predictions based on present evidence

-Look at the sky! I think it is going to rain.

#### **IV. Be to**

The “be to” future generally refers to an obligation or requirement that we do something at a time later than now. It is similar in meaning to must, but there is a suggestion that something has been arranged or organized for us. It is not normally used in spoken English.

-You are to leave this room at once; and you are to travel by train to London.

-In London you are to pick up your ticket from Mr. Smith, and you are to fly to your destination alone.

- When you arrive, you are to meet our agent, Mr. X, who will give you further information.
- You are to destroy this message now.

## V. Be about to

The “be to” future generally refers to refer to a time immediately after the moment of speaking, and emphasizes that the event or action will happen very soon. We often add the word just before the word about, which emphasizes the immediacy of the action.

- She is about to cry.
- You are about to see something very unusual.
- I am about to go to a meeting.
- We are just about to go inside.
- Sally is just about to jump off that diving board.

### Practice

- I. Fill in the blanks with the correct future forms: (Will / Going to / Present Continuous / Simple Present)

1. A: Have you got any plans for the summer? B: Yes, we ..... (go) to Italy in June.
2. Don't play with those matches; you ..... burn yourself.
3. A: Whose is that night dress?  
B : It's mine. I ..... (wear) it at John's graduation party.
4. A: Why did you call your grandma?  
B: I ..... (visit) her at the weekend.
5. If your passport isn't valid any more; you..... (not / be able to) go abroad this month.
- 6.A: What are you doing with that brush?  
B: I ..... (paint) my room.



7.A: Why are you wearing your anorak?

B: I ..... (go) out.

8.I don't know the meaning of this word so I..... (look) it up in the dictionary.

9.Look out! You ..... (hurt) yourself with that knife.

10.A: I've got a terrible headache.

B: Have you? Wait there and I ..... (get) an aspirin for you.

11.Mother: Your face is dirty.

Child : All right. I ..... (wash) it.

12.A: What time ..... (the next bus / arrive)?

B: 13 minutes later.

13..... (you / open) the door for me; please?

14.We're early. The film ..... (start) at 2:30. Why don't we go and have something to drink?

15.He ..... (call) the police as soon as he gets home.

16.A: What ..... (you / do) with that dress?

B: I ..... (shorten) it.

II. Fill in the blanks with the correct future forms: (Will / Going to / Present Continuous / Simple Present)

1. A: Tea or coffee?

B: I ..... (have) coffee, please.

2. There isn't any cloud in the sky. It ..... (be) a lovely day.

3. We ..... (win) the match. We're playing really well.

4. The festival ..... (last) for ten days.

5. I ..... (have) a meal with a few friends. There ..... (be) about ten of us.

6. Phil ..... (come) round us tomorrow. We ..... (be) at the airport at 9:30.

7. Why don't you come with us? I'm sure you ..... (enjoy) the show.
8. That ..... (not / cost) more than \$50.
9. I ..... (pay) it back to you as soon as I get my salary.
10. The manager said: "We ..... (have) the meeting on Thursday."

III. Fill in the blanks with the following tenses: future tense simple; future tense continuous; future perfect simple; future perfect continuous; present tense simple; present tense continuous; the "going to" future and with the "be about to" and "be to" future forms.

1. In twenty-four hours' time I ..... (relax) in my backyard.
2. By the time you get back Harry ..... (leave).
3. It's only a short trip. I ..... (be) back in an hour.
4. What ..... (you/do) this Saturday evening? Would you like to go out?
5. By the end of the week we ..... (decide) what to do.
6. It ..... (not/be) long before Doctor Smith is here.
7. We'll go to the park when you ..... (finish) your tea.
8. It's very hot in here. I think I ..... (faint).
9. What ..... (you/give) Ann for her birthday? Have you decided yet?
10. I think he ..... (leave). His hand is already on the door knob.
11. Audrey and Jimmy ..... (be married) in June.
12. When the bus finally arrives I ..... (wait) for it in the station for two hours.
13. The train ..... (arrive) at 6.30 in the morning.
14. My in-laws ..... (come) to see us tomorrow.
15. I ..... (work) at 8.30 tomorrow morning. Can you come later?

#### KEY

- I. 1. are going 2. will burn/are going to burn 3. am going to wear 4. am visiting 5. will not be able 6. am going to paint 7. am going to go 8. am going to look 9. are going to hurt 10. will get

11.will wash 12.does the next bus arrive 13.will you open 14.starts 15.will call 16.are you going to do, am going to shorten

I. 1.will have 2.is going to be 3.are going to win 4.will last 5.am going to have, will be 6.is coming, will be 7.will enjoy 8.will not cost 9.will pay 10.are having

II. 1.will be relaxing 2.will have left 3.will be 4.are you doing/are you going to do 5.will have decided 6.won't be 7.finish 8.am going to faint 9.are you giving / are you going to give 10.is about to leave 11.are to be married 12.will have been waiting 13.arrives 14.are coming 15.will be working