

## ■ Future time

Often the same future event can be described in different ways:

- ✓ The shop **closes** at 3 pm tomorrow.
- ✓ The shop **is closing** at 3 pm tomorrow.
- ✓ The shop **will close** at 3 pm tomorrow.
- ✓ The shop **is going to close** at 3 pm tomorrow.

Which way you choose to describe something depends on a number of things:

- Function (For example do you want to express a request, a promise or an offer?)
- How you see the future event/situation. (For example, if you see a future event as a fixed event that cannot be changed, the present simple may be appropriate.)
- Level of formality (*will* is usually more formal than *be going to*)

In the tables below are the **main** uses of *will*, *be going to*, etc for the future.

## will

Predictions	<i>It looks as if Jake <b>will lose</b> his job.</i>
Future facts	<i>The factory <b>will open</b> in July.</i>
Decisions made at the moment of speaking	<i>I know! <b>I'll ask</b> for a pay rise tomorrow.</i>
Offers	<i><b>I'll help</b> you with the advertising campaign.</i>
Promises	<i>I promise you you <b>won't lose</b> your job.</i>
Requests	<i><b>Will you give</b> a presentation on the sales figures?</i>
Refusals ( <i>won't</i> )	<i>No, I <b>won't give</b> a presentation on the sales figures.</i>

## Watch out!

- For offers and suggestions in the question form, with *I* and *we*, we use *shall* not *will*.  
 ✓ **Shall I help** you with the advertising campaign? (offer)  
 ✓ **Shall we discuss** this in the morning? (suggestion)
- For requests, we can also use *would*, *could* or *can*. *Would* and *could* are more polite than *will* and *can*.  
 ✓ **Would/Could/Can you give** a presentation on the sales figures?
- For refusals, we can also use *couldn't* or *can't*. *Couldn't* is more polite than *won't* and *can't*.  
 ✓ No, I **couldn't/can't give** a presentation on the sales figures.



## vs Grammar

In British English, *shall* is sometimes used with *I* and *we* in place of *will*.

- ✓ **I shall** be in touch again soon.
- ✓ **I will** be in touch again soon.

## be going to

Predictions based on present evidence	<i>Look at that wall. It looks as if <b>it's going to</b> fall down.</i>
Intentions	<i><b>I'm going to get</b> my degree, then <b>get</b> a well-paid job.</i>

## Present continuous

Arrangements	<i><b>I'm meeting</b> Fiona on Friday to discuss the advertising campaign.</i>
Intentions	<i><b>I'm asking</b> for a pay rise tomorrow.</i>

## Watch out!

Both *be going to* and present continuous can be used for intentions. However, present continuous is **not** usually used for intentions in the distant future.

- ✓ **I'm going to work** for a really successful company one day.
- ✗ **I'm working** for a huge multinational one day.



### Present simple

Fixed future events  
(eg timetables and schedules)

The shop **closes** at 3 pm next Saturday.

### Future perfect simple

Completed situations before a certain time

It looks as if Jake **will have lost** his job by the end of the week.

Continuing situations up to a certain time

This time next month, **I'll have worked** at the company for exactly 25 years.

### Future perfect continuous

Continuing situations up to a certain time  
(emphasises duration)

This time next month, **I'll have been working** at the company for exactly 25 years.

### Future continuous

Situations in progress at a certain time  
in the future

This time next week **I'll be travelling** round Russia on business.

Situations which will happen in the future  
in the normal course of events

The company Chairperson **will be arriving** on Thursday.

Habits or repeated actions at a point  
in the future

I think that, in the future, more and more people **will be commuting** to work by plane.

### Time clauses

After many time words and phrases, such as *when, while, once, as soon as*, etc, we do **not** use *will* or *be going to*.  
We use:

present simple ✓ I'll give you a pay rise when you **start** working harder!

present continuous ✓ I'll give you a pay rise once you're **bringing in** three new customers a week.

present perfect simple ✓ I'll give you a pay rise as soon as you've **proved** you're a hard worker.

present perfect continuous ✓ I won't give you a pay rise until you've **been working** here for three years.

### Other ways to express the future

<i>be (just) about to</i>	for the (very) near future	<b>I'm just about to ask</b> for my pay rise.
<i>be (just) on the point/verge of</i>	for the (very) near future	<b>I'm just on the point/verge of asking</b> for my pay rise.
<i>be due to</i>	for formal arrangements	<b>I'm due to meet</b> my boss at eleven o'clock.
<i>be to do</i>	for obligations for formal announcements	<b>You're to get</b> those reports written before Friday! <b>The factory is to open</b> in July.
other modals (see Unit 9 for more information)	to express certainty, possibility, etc	<b>I might ask</b> for a pay rise tomorrow.

### Future in the past

When we look back at what was the future once, we usually make the future verb forms past. *Will* becomes *would*, *is going to* become *was going to*, etc. Tenses such as present simple also change, by going back one tense.

will → would

Then: I think the factory **will open** in September.  
Now: I thought the factory **would open** in September.

present simple → past simple

Then: I'm in a rush because the train **leaves** at 4.  
Now: I was in a rush because the train **left** at 4.



**A Circle the correct word or phrase. If both are correct, circle both.**

- Sonia looks like she's **falling** / **going to fall** asleep any minute!
- When I leave school, I'm **being** / **going to be** a journalist.
- When Jake's got his degree, he's **going** / **going to go** to drama school for a year.
- Watch out or you're **getting** / **going to get** into trouble!
- When are they **realising** / **going to realise** that they have to improve their customer service?
- When are you **opening** / **going to open** a branch in Littlehampton?
- It sounds like we're not **having** / **going to have** a sales conference this year.
- I think house prices are **falling** / **going to fall** in about six months.
- Why is Tony **applying** / **going to apply** for that position? He's not qualified at all.
- We're **discussing** / **going to discuss** this in detail in the next meeting.
- I'm pretty sure that building's **being** / **going to be** knocked down next week.
- There's no doubt the events of the last few days are **being** / **going to be** written about by future historians.
- You're not **handing** / **going to hand** in your resignation tomorrow, are you?
- Fiona and Jerry aren't **becoming** / **going to become** arrogant when they release their CD, are they?
- The airline industry's **having** / **going to have** to cut costs in the near future.

**B Circle the correct word or phrase. If both are correct, circle both.**

- I can't come to the beach this weekend, I'm afraid, as **we'll visit** / **we're visiting** my grandparents.
- The Prime Minister **will answer** / **is answering** all of your questions in due course.
- What time **does your plane arrive** / **is your plane arriving**?
- I'll look** / **I'm looking** after the neighbours' kids tomorrow evening so I can't come bowling.
- Shall** / **Will** we move on to the next item on the agenda now?
- 'I don't feel well at all.'  
'**Are you going to** / **Will you** be sick?'
- The last bus **leaves** / **is leaving** at midnight.
- Karen, **shall** / **will** I give you a hand with that report?
- I'm afraid **I'm not having** / **I won't have** time to finish all this work today.
- When **does she** / **is she going to** get round to having new business cards printed?

**C Write a short phrase using will, be going to, present simple or present continuous on the line to complete each sentence. If more than one form is correct, write all possibilities.**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 (I / come) into the office on Saturday morning if you like, Pete. ....      | 8 (Jenny / find) a job easily when she graduates? .....          |
| 2 Carol, (you / show) Harry how to use the photocopier, please? .....         | 9 No, I'm afraid (I / be) at the meeting tomorrow. ....          |
| 3 From the look of things, (it / snow) later today. ....                      | 10 (The new version / launch) in the spring. ....                |
| 4 Hurry up! (We / miss) the ferry! .....                                      | 11 (I / order) a pizza, shall I? .....                           |
| 5 (The winner / announce) on 14 <sup>th</sup> January. ....                   | 12 It looks like (some people / make) redundant quite soon. .... |
| 6 I can't come in to work this morning because (I / go) to the doctor's. .... | 13 What time (the train / leave) on Saturday? .....              |
| 7 Don't worry! (They / sack) anyone for at least six months. ....             |  |



**D** If the phrase in bold is correct, put a tick. If it is incorrect, write the correct form on the line so that the sentence is in the future perfect.

- 1 I think **we'll have sold out** of these by the end of the day. ....
- 2 On Tuesday, Toby **will have been being** with the company for exactly 35 years. ....
- 3 **We'll have been becoming** the market leader by the end of the summer. ....
- 4 At the end of the summer, **I'll have taking** the same train to work every morning for 15 years.  
.....
- 5 When we meet tomorrow afternoon, **will you already have** a chance to look at the sales figures?  
.....
- 6 **You'll have driven** for hours without a break when we get there, so you'll need a rest before we go out.  
.....
- 7 A Managing Director **will have appointed** by the end of the month. ....
- 8 Sandra **won't have been finished** the reports by then, but she should at least have started.  
.....
- 9 Ron's going to be very surprised when he hears the news. He definitely **will have been expecting** it.  
.....
- 10 **Will you have managed** to put something down in writing by the end of the day? .....
- 11 Why **will they have been waiting** for hours? I thought you'd told them we were going to leave later.  
.....
- 12 It sounds like the invitations **won't all have delivering** by next Friday. ....

**E** Write the verb in brackets in the correct form (future perfect simple, future perfect continuous or future continuous) in each gap. If more than one form is correct, write all the possibilities.

- 1 By the end of today ..... (**Ed / apply**) for over 17 jobs!
- 2 This time next year ..... (**I / hopefully / run**) my own business.
- 3 In three days' time ..... (**we / live**) here for exactly two years.
- 4 ..... (**Gemma / already / arrive**) by the time we get there?
- 5 ..... (**you / travel**) all day, will you? Surely  
..... (**you / have**) several stops on the way, won't you?
- 6 ..... (**we / wait**) for you at reception when you arrive.
- 7 At the end of this sponsored jumpathon, ..... (**1,000 people / jump**)  
up and down on the spot non-stop for 48 hours!
- 8 ..... (**the boys / sign**) autographs all morning, so they'll need a  
couple of hours' break before the recording session.
- 9 How many people ..... (**you / interview**) for the position tomorrow?
- 10 ..... (**Terry / see**) the e-mail as he's only just got here so we'd better  
discuss that first.
- 11 What ..... (**you / do**) this time next week?
- 12 ..... (**we / see**) Ken and Tricia when we go to the States as they'll be  
away at the time, unfortunately.

**F** Complete each second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence.

- 1 The bell will ring and then you can all go home.  
You can all go home when .....
- 2 Ahmed will ask the questions and I'll take notes.  
I'll take notes while .....
- 3 You're a trainee for three months and then you become a junior employee.  
You become a junior employee once .....