

GRAMMAR REFERENCE

will

Use *will* + infinitive

- to make predictions or talk about future facts
It looks as if the economy will slow down next year.
- to make decisions at the moment of speaking
A *I'm sorry – I'm really busy at the moment.*
B *Don't worry – I'll call back later.*
For decisions made earlier, when you mean 'I've decided to', use *going to*, not *will*.
I should be back in an hour. I'm going to get my hair cut. (NOT: *I will get ...*)

be going to

Use *be going to* + infinitive

- to talk about a plan or intention where the decision has already been made
A *I've asked the contractors to meet with us.*
B *I see. What are you going to say to them?*
- to make a very definite prediction based on evidence that you can see or know about
My manager likes to start meetings on time, so he's going to be annoyed when I arrive late.

Often either *will* or *going to* can be used to make predictions.

When interest rates go up, people will / are going to start spending less.

Present continuous

Use the present continuous to talk about arrangements, appointments, social events and anything you would put in a diary, particularly when the time, place or purpose is mentioned.

I'm seeing Bill in Paris tomorrow to discuss the project.

Going to can almost always be used in these situations, but use of the present continuous is very common in everyday spoken English.

Present simple

Use the present simple to refer to future events that are in a timetable.

Do you know when the last train leaves?

The verb *be* is often used in the present simple when talking about personal schedules.

I'm in Madrid on Friday and I'm away for a couple of days next week as well.

Language at work

- Read the situations and the responses 1–7. ~~Cross out~~ one option in *italics* that is incorrect.
 - You come to an office to see either Mr Peters or Miss Winston. The receptionist tells you that Mr Peters is away for the day.
That's OK. *I'll see* / *I see* / *I am seeing* Miss Winston.
 - A colleague asks you if you are free this afternoon. You have arranged to take Ben to the airport.
No, *I'm taking* / *I will take* / *I'm going to take* Ben to the airport.
 - A colleague asks if you have any plans for the weekend.
Yes, *I'm meeting* / *I will meet* / *I'm going to meet* Jack for a meal this evening.
 - A friend asks you what the future holds for property prices.
Most people seem to think *they are falling* / *they are going to fall* / *they will fall* next year.
 - You are at a football match. Your team is 3–0 down and there are only 2 minutes to go. A friend asks why the manager doesn't bring on some new players.
It's too late. *We will lose* / *We are going to lose*.
 - A colleague wants to arrange a meeting for Tuesday.
Sorry, that's no good – *I'm* / *I'm being* / *I'll be* in Paris on Tuesday.
 - A colleague tells you that she can't give you a lift to the station as originally planned and she apologizes.
Don't worry – *I'll get* / *I'm going to get* a taxi.
- Complete these dialogues with the best form of the verbs in brackets (sometimes more than one form is possible).
 - Where are you going?
 - I ¹ _____ (pick up) the new catalogues from Amanda today.
 - Do you think Bill ² _____ (be) there?
 - Yes, I ³ _____ (see) him after Amanda – why?
 - I've got a new price list for him ...
 - OK, I ⁴ _____ (take) it with me if you like. I ⁵ _____ (make sure) he gets it.
 - Have you decided on your holiday yet?
 - Yes – we ⁶ _____ (go back) to Spain. I booked everything a few weeks ago.
 - ⁷ _____ (you / stay) in the same place as last year?
 - Yes, it's much easier. But we ⁸ _____ (not / fly) this time.
 - How ⁹ _____ (you / get) there?
 - Ferry and car. There's a ferry that ¹⁰ _____ (leave) at 8 p.m. every night. The whole journey ¹¹ _____ (only / take) 24 hours, and it means we ¹² _____ (have) our own transport when we're there.