

Future tense

There are several different ways in English that you can talk about the future. This page is an introduction to the most important ones:

- Predictions/statements of fact
- Intentions
- Arrangements
- Scheduled events

Predictions/statements of fact

The auxiliary verb **will** is used in making predictions or simple statements of fact about the future.

- The sun **will** rise at 6.30 tomorrow.
- Lunch break today **will** be 10 minutes longer than usual.
- In the year 2050 all students **will** have their own computers in school.
- If you help me, I **will** help you.
- Do you think she **will** come soon?
- You **won't** pass your exams if you don't start working harder.
- I know my parents **won't** let me go to the party.
- **Will** it snow for Christmas?
- I know she's sick, but **will** she be back in school tomorrow?

Intentions

The auxiliary verb **going to** is used in talking about intentions. (An intention is a plan for the future that you have already thought about.)

- We're **going to** buy a new car next month.
- I'm **going to** work in a bank when I leave school.
- In the new year I'm **going to** stop eating so much junk.
- He's not **going to** go to the dance. He's got too much work.
- I'm not **going to** watch TV until my science project is finished.
- Are you **going to** play basketball after school?
- What are you **going to** have for lunch today?

Note: **going to** is often used in the past tense to talk about an unfulfilled intention. Examples: *I was going to study for my grammar test, but I had no time. / He was going to call you, but he couldn't find his mobile phone. / My grandmother was going to visit us, but she fell and broke her arm.*

Arrangements

The *present continuous* tense is used in talking about arrangements. (An arrangement is a plan for the future that you have already thought about *and discussed with someone else.*)

- I'm **meeting** my mother at the airport tomorrow.

- Our grandparents **are visiting** us this Christmas.
- Sorry, I can't stay after school today; **I'm playing** tennis with Jun-Sik.
- My sister's **going** to the dentist tomorrow.
- **I'm not returning** home for the holidays, so I can come to your party after all!
- **Are** you **doing** anything on Sunday morning?
- Do you know if he **is going** to the dance with Maiko next week?

Scheduled events

The *present simple* tense is usually used to refer to future events that are scheduled (and outside of our control).

- Hurry up! The train **departs** in 10 minutes.
- I **leave** Frankfurt at 5 o'clock in the morning and **arrive** in New York at midnight the next day.
- She **has** an appointment with the headmaster after school today.
- There's no need to hurry. The train **doesn't leave** for another 30 minutes.
- When **does** the meeting **begin**?

[More future tenses.](#)

This is a very difficult aspect of English grammar. Learners who want a deeper understanding should

consult a good grammar reference such as *Swan's Practical English Usage*.