

UNIT 5

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 30 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.

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 Labour will win the next election.

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.

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 phones 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 ballet dancer.

We're going to get married in the spring.

Other uses of *will* and *shall*

I-Will as a prediction is an **auxiliary verb** that simply shows future time. The word itself 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 marry me? (= willingness)

Will you open the window? (= request)

My car won't start. (= refusal)

I'll love you for ever. (= promise)

The phones 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.)

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 TV)

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.