

Future forms review

English Grammar · B1

will vs be going to

Future forms

will	going to	pres. cont.
decide / predict	a plan	arrangement
<i>I'll help</i>	<i>we're going to move</i>	<i>I'm meeting Tom at 3</i>

Future forms: reference card grid

When talking about the future, **will** and **be going to** each have specific focuses:

- **will**: spontaneous decisions, predictions, promises.
- **be going to**: existing plans, predictions based on evidence.

I think it will be cold.

I think it's going to be cold. (Prediction → will)

We are going to move house.

We are going to move house. (Plan → be going to)

Note Spontaneous decisions made at the moment always take will: *The bag is heavy — I'll carry it.*

Present Continuous for Arrangements

The **present continuous** can express future arrangements that have already been booked/confirmed (often with specific times or locations):

I am meeting the doctor at three.

I'm seeing the doctor at three o'clock. (Appointment confirmed)

Note be going to emphasizes “intention,” while the present continuous emphasizes “already arranged.” They are often interchangeable.

Time Adverbial Clauses

In time clauses introduced by **when, as soon as, before, after, until**, even when referring to the future, use the **simple present tense**:

I will call you when I arrive.

I'll call you as soon as I arrive.

Wait here until the rain stops.

Wait here until the rain stops.

Note Do **not** use will in time clauses: ~~when I will arrive~~ × → when I arrive ✓.

Common Errors

- × ~~I will meeting him tomorrow.~~ → ✓ I **will meet** him. / I **am meeting** him. — will + base verb, be + -ing; these two structures cannot be combined.
- × ~~What will you do tonight?~~ (asking about someone else's arrangement) → ✓ What **are you doing** tonight? — For asking about established arrangements, the present continuous sounds more natural.
- × ~~I'll go to the dentist tomorrow — I booked it last week.~~ → ✓ I **am going** to the dentist tomorrow. — For things already scheduled, do not use the spontaneous decision marker will.
- Use **Shall** for suggestions in questions: *Shall we go?* (Shall we go?) *Shall I open the window?* (Shall I open the window?)