

## English Verbs – Future Simple

We can talk about future events using four different forms in English: "will", "be going to", the "Present Continuous" tense and the "Present Simple" tense.

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### 1. **"will"** [WILL] + [BARE INFINITIVE]

John will study law at Harvard.

Will John study law at Harvard?

John will not study law at Harvard.

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### 2. **"to be going to"** [AM / IS / ARE] + [GOING TO] + [BARE INFINITIVE]

He is going to build a house next year.

Is he going to build a house next year?

He is not going to build a house next year.

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### 3. **Present Continuous** [AM / IS / ARE] + [PRESENT PARTICIPLE]

We are eating pizza tonight.

Are we eating pizza tonight?

We are not eating pizza tonight.

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### 4. **Present Simple**

The next train arrives at 8pm tonight.

Does the next train arrive at 8pm tonight?

The next train doesn't arrive at 8pm tonight.

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Note that some verbs and modal verbs also give a notion of future:

- We **intend** to travel to the USA next year.
- I **must** go to the dentist soon.
- I **have** to finish this report before Friday.
- He **needs** to study more.
- She **should** visit a doctor.

## Uses of the four forms

### 1. "will" is used for things that are out of your control:

20,000 students will graduate from NYU next year.

John Smith will not be the next president.

There will be many hurricanes in the USA next year.

#### and for facts:

One day I will die.

The weather will turn cold in December.

The sun will rise at 6am tomorrow.

#### and for reactions:

A: I'm really hungry. B: I'll make some sandwiches.

A: I'm very sleepy. B: I'll get some coffee for you.

A: The phone is ringing. B: I'll answer it.

#### and for promises:

I'll call you when I arrive.

When I am president, I will guarantee that everyone has access to good health care.

I will invite him to the party.

#### and for possibilities:

Maybe I'll go to the beach at the weekend.

It's possible that we'll be there.

At the weekend I'll stay at home or travel to Rio.

### 2. "be going to" (= "be planning to") is used for personal plans:

He is going to spend his vacation in Hawaii.

Senator Robinson is going to resign in June.

I am going to meet Susan tonight.

My parents are going to visit Paris next year.

Who is going to make John's birthday cake?

I'm going to fire Peter because he stole some money from the till.

#### **NB: Predictions**

Both "will" and "be going to" can be used for predictions about the future:

I think John Smith will be the next president.

I think John Smith is going to be the next president.

I think it will rain tomorrow.

I think it is going to rain tomorrow.

**3. The “Present Continuous” is used for personal plans in the near future (informal English):**

I'm seeing Sandra tonight.

We're meeting our friends at the shopping center on Friday.

He's taking his girlfriend to the beach tomorrow.

**4. The “Present Simple” is used for timetables and scheduled events:**

We have a geography lesson at 9am tomorrow.

She leaves hospital on Monday.

The train arrives at 6:10pm tonight.

**Exercise 1.** Complete the following sentences using “will” or “be going to”, conjugating as necessary:

1. We \_\_\_\_\_ a new TV tomorrow. (buy)

2. I \_\_\_\_\_ my car on Saturday. (wash)

3. He \_\_\_\_\_ a doctor, because he finished his medicine course. (be)

4. The sun \_\_\_\_\_ at 6pm tomorrow. (set)

5. A: What \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ tonight? (do)

B: I \_\_\_\_\_ for my English test. (study)

6. We \_\_\_\_\_ our house in the spring. (renovate)

7. I \_\_\_\_\_ your book next week. (return)

8. I think that it \_\_\_\_\_ a lot tomorrow. (rain)

**Exercise 2.** Complete the following using a suitable verb conjugation. Often there is more than one possibility.

1. A: Why are you holding a piece of paper?

B: I \_\_\_\_\_ (write) a letter to my friend in Texas.

2. A: I'm very sleepy. I need to wake up!

B: I \_\_\_\_\_ (get) a cup of coffee for you.

3. A: I can't hear the television!

B: I \_\_\_\_\_ (turn) it up.

4. I'm so excited! Paul \_\_\_\_\_ (take) me to the cinema tonight!
5. We are so excited about our trip to Europe. We \_\_\_\_\_ (visit) Paris, London and Rome.
6. Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ (come) to my party on Saturday.
7. A: It is so hot in here!  
B: I \_\_\_\_\_ (turn on) the air-conditioning.
8. Tom: What time \_\_\_\_\_ the train \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) ?  
Peter: It \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) at 6:30.
9. I think John \_\_\_\_\_ (be) promoted to manager next week.
10. My parents called me this morning. They told me that they \_\_\_\_\_ (visit) me on Saturday.
11. After I finish school, I \_\_\_\_\_ (study) medicine.
12. A: Excuse me, I have a complaint about our hotel room.  
B: I'm sorry to hear that. My colleague here \_\_\_\_\_ (help) you.
13. As soon as the sun appears, we \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to the beach.
14. The class \_\_\_\_\_ (start) at 8 o'clock and \_\_\_\_\_ (finish) at 9.