

Future Tenses

Grammar – future simple (will + inf)

Affirmative: I will play / You will play / He/she/it will play / We will play / You will play (pl.) / They will play

Negative: I will not play / You will not play / He/she/it will not play / We will not play / You will not play / They will not play

Question: Will I play? / Will you play? / Will he/she/it play? / Will we play? / Will you play? / Will they play?

Some people have been taught that 'will' is 'the future' in English. This is not correct. Sometimes when we talk about the future we cannot use 'will'. Sometimes when we use 'will' we are not talking about the future.

We can use 'will' to talk about future events we believe to be certain.

- The sun will rise over there tomorrow morning.
- Next year, I'll be 50.
- That plane will be late. It always is.
- There won't be any snow. I'm certain. It's too warm.

Often we add 'perhaps', 'maybe', 'probably', 'possibly' to make the belief less certain.

- I'll probably come back later.
- He'll possibly find out when he sees Jenny.
- Maybe it will be OK.
- Perhaps we'll meet again some day.

We often use 'will' with 'I think' or 'I hope'.

- I think I'll go to bed now.
- I think she'll do well in the job.
- I hope you'll enjoy your stay.
- I hope you won't make too much noise.

We use 'will' at the moment we make a new decision or plan. The thought has just come into our head.

- Bye. I'll phone you when I get there.
- I'll answer that.
- I won't tell him. I promise.

Grammar – future simple (be (is, am are) going to + inf)

Affirmative: I am going to play / You are going to play / He/she/it is going to play / We are going to play / You are going to play / They are going to play

Negative: I am not going to play / You are not going to play / He/she/it is not going to play / We are not going to play / You are not going to play / They are not going to play

Question: Am I going to play? / Are you going to play? / Is he/she/it going to play? / Are we going to play? / Are you going to play? / Are they going to play?

The one which is used most often in spoken English is 'going to', not 'will'.

We use 'going to' when we want to talk about a plan for the future.

- I'm going to see him later today.
- They're going to launch it next month.
- We're going to have lunch first.
- She's going to see what she can do.
- I'm not going to talk for very long.

Notice that this plan does not have to be for the near future.

- When I retire, I'm going to go back to Barbados to live.
- In ten years' time, I'm going to be boss of my own successful company.

We use 'going to' when we want to make a prediction based on evidence we can see now.

- Look out! That cup is going to fall off.
- Look at those black clouds. It's going to rain soon.
- These figures are really bad. We're going to make a loss.
- You look very tired. You're going to need to stop soon.

We can replace 'going to go' by 'going'.

- I'm going out later.
- She's going to the exhibition tomorrow.

Grammar – future continuous (will +be + ing)

Affirmative: I will be doing / You will be doing / He/she/it will be doing / We will be doing /
You will be doing (*plural*) / They will be doing

Negative: I will not be doing / You will not be doing / He/she will not be doing / We will not
be doing / You will not be doing / They will not be doing

Question: Will I be doing? / Will you be doing? / Will he/she/it be doing? / Will we be doing?
/ Will you be doing? / Will they be doing?

We can use 'future continuous' to talk about something that will be in progress at a particular moment in the future.

- This time next week, I'll be sitting on the beach in Barbados.
- I'll be thinking about you all back in the office – and I'll be laughing.
- We'll be enjoying ourselves too, boss. We won't be doing any work while you are not here.

To talk about future events that are fixed or decided.

- I'll be visiting your country on a regular basis. In fact, I'm going to be coming next month.
- He'll be looking after the factory until we can appoint a new manager.
- They'll be thinking about this very carefully over the next few months.

To predict what is happening now.

- Try phoning his hotel. He'll probably still be having breakfast.
- They'll be deciding who gets the contract at this very moment. I'm very nervous.
- She's not in her office. She'll be having lunch in the canteen.

To ask extremely politely, and with no pressure, about future plans.

- Will you be eating with us this evening?
- Will you be needing anything else?

Will they be joining us for dinner?

Grammar – future perfect simple (will + have + p/p)

Affirmative: I will have done / You will have done / He/she/it will have done / We will have done / You will have done (*plural*) / They will have done

Negative: I will not have done / You will not have done / He/she/it will not have done / We will not have done / You will not have done / They will not have done

Question: Will I have done? / Will you have done? / Will he/she/it have done? / Will we have done? / Will you have done? / Will they have done?

We can use 'future perfect simple' to talk about what will have been achieved by a certain moment in time.

- We'll have been in these offices for eight years next month.
- She'll have visited ten countries in twelve days by the time she gets back.
- I'll have finished this project by Friday.

If we want to emphasise the continuity of the activity, we can use the continuous form.

- I'll have been working here for 35 years by the time I retire.
- She'll have been driving for more than fifteen hours straight by the time she gets here.
- They'll have been working with us for 15 years by the end of this year.

We can also use 'future perfect simple' to predict what we think has already happened at present.

- He'll have already read the report by now. Too late to change it.
 - She'll have boarded her plane. It's too late to contact her.
- They'll have decided by now. We should hear the result today or tomorrow

Future Forms Exercise 1

(Intermediate level)

Fill in the correct form of the Future Tense. In some sentences several forms are possible.

1. They _____ driving to New York tomorrow evening. (DRIVE)
2. I offered him a job last week and I think he _____ it. (TAKE)
3. I hope the weather _____ nice when you get to Sardinia. (BE)
4. We _____ married on June 25th . (GET)
5. I suppose real estate prices _____ up again next year. (GO)
6. What _____ when you grow up? – I _____ a pilot. (YOU DO, BE)
7. I am _____ football this afternoon so I can't make it to the party. (PLAY)
8. Put your wallet away. I _____ for the tickets. (PAY)
9. I _____ John at the airport tomorrow at 5.30. (MEET)
10. Take the umbrella with you. I think it _____ in the afternoon. (RAIN)
11. I think I _____ a cup of tea after all. (HAVE)
12. Ask Mary. She _____ the answer (PROBABLY KNOW)
13. Which car _____ to buy? (YOU PLAN)
14. Jack missed the train. He _____ late again. (BE)
15. All our stores _____ next Monday at 10.00 a.m. (OPEN)
16. We _____ our holidays in France next year. (SPEND)
17. What do you want to eat? – I think I _____ a sandwich. (HAVE)
18. We have to go now. It _____ late. (GET)
19. I can't talk about it now, but I _____ you a mail next week. (SEND)
20. The Jacksons _____ a party tomorrow afternoon, but they haven't invited us. (HAVE)

Adapted from: www.english-grammar.at

Future Forms Exercise 2

(Advanced level)

Complete the sentences using a form of the future, future progressive or future perfect.

1. We _____ the room by the time you get back. (FINISH)
2. The phone is ringing. – I _____ and answer it. (GO)
3. I _____ tomorrow so we can go to the beach. (NOT WORK)
4. If you touch the stove, you _____ yourself. (BURN)
5. She _____ for the job that was advertised in the newspaper. (APPLY)
6. Next week at this time we _____ in the sun in Spain (LIE)
7. My sister _____ in the USA next year. (STUDY)
8. The Pope _____ Turkey in November. (VISIT)
9. I _____ lunch with Mary at 12. (HAVE)
10. I don't think the exam _____ very difficult. (BE)
11. Jane _____ on her thesis for the next three months. (WORK)
12. By the time I arrive home, the workers _____ repairing my TV set.
(FINISH)
13. During the next century the climate _____ (GET)
14. The guided tour _____ the hotel at 8.25 tomorrow morning. (LEAVE)
15. I think I _____ to bed early tonight. - I'm tired. (GO)
16. At this time next year, we _____ in our new house (LIVE)
17. What _____ if the firm gets reorganised? (HAPPEN)
18. We _____ to her whenever we get a chance (SPEAK).
19. They _____ married in June. (GET)
20. The headmaster _____ a new classroom next term. (OPEN)

Adapted from: www.english-grammar.at

Answer Key Exercise 1

1. They **are driving/are going to drive/will be driving** to New York tomorrow evening. (DRIVE)
2. I offered him a job last week and I think he **will take** it. (TAKE)
3. I hope the weather **will be** nice when you get to Sardinia. (BE)
4. We **are getting** married on June 25th. (GET)
5. I suppose real estate prices **will go** up again next year. (GO)
6. What **are you going to do** when you grow up? – I **am going to be** a pilot. (YOU DO, BE)
7. I **am going to play/ am playing/will be playing** football this afternoon so I can't make it to the party. (PLAY)
8. Put your wallet away. I **will pay** for the tickets. (PAY)
9. I **am meeting** John at the airport tomorrow at 5.30. (MEET)
10. Take the umbrella with you. I think it **will rain/ is going to rain** in the afternoon. (RAIN)
11. I think I **will have** a cup of tea after all. (HAVE)
12. Ask Mary. She **will probably know** the answer (PROBABLY KNOW)
13. Which car **are you planning to** buy? (YOU PLAN)
14. Jack missed the train. He **is going to be** late again. (BE)
15. All our stores **are opening/will open** next Monday at 10.00 a.m. (OPEN)
16. We **are going to spend** our holidays in France next year. (SPEND)
17. What do you want to eat? – I think I **will have** a sandwich. (HAVE)
18. We have to go now. It **is getting** late. (GET)
19. I can't talk about it now, but I **will send** you a mail next week. (SEND)
20. The Jacksons **are having** a party tomorrow afternoon, but they haven't invited us. (HAVE)

Answer Key Exercise 2

1. We **will have finished** the room by the time you get back. (FINISH)
2. The phone is ringing. – **I'll go** and answer it. (GO)
3. I **am not working tomorrow** so we can go to the beach. (NOT WORK)
4. If you touch the stove, you **will burn** yourself. (BURN)
5. She **is going to apply** for the job that was advertised in the newspaper. (APPLY)
6. Next week at this time we **will be lying** in the sun in Spain (LIE)
7. My sister **is going to** study in the USA next year. (STUDY)
8. The Pope **is visiting** Turkey in November. (VISIT)
9. I **am having** lunch with Mary at 12. (HAVE)
10. I don't think the exam **will be** very difficult. (BE)
11. Jane **is going to be working/will be working** on her thesis for the next three months. (WORK)
12. By the time I arrive home, the workers **will have finished** repairing my TV set. (FINISH)
13. During the next century the climate **will get / will be getting** warmer (GET)
14. The guided tour **is leaving** the hotel at 8.25 tomorrow morning. (LEAVE)
15. I think **I will go** to bed early tonight. - I'm tired. (GO)
16. At this time next year, we **will be living** in our new house (LIVE)
17. What **will happen** if the firm gets reorganised? (HAPPEN)
18. We **are going to speak** to her whenever we get a chance (SPEAK).
19. They **are getting** married in June. (GET)
20. The headmaster **is going to open** a new classroom next term. (OPEN)