

24 Be going to

A Intentions



We use **be going to** to talk about something we have decided to do (an intention). David intends to climb up the ladder.

Here are some more examples.

I'm going to watch the next programme.

Emma is going to do an experiment this afternoon.

Rachel and Vicky are going to spend six weeks in the State.

We can use **I'm not going to** for a refusal.

I'm sorry, but I'm not going to walk half a mile in the rain.

(= I don't want to/I'm not willing to walk.)

The present continuous can have a very similar meaning to **be going to**. We can often use either form (see Unit 26A).

I'm going to visit my friend at the weekend.

I'm visiting my friend at the weekend.

We do not use **will** here.

We can use **be going to** with the verb **go** (*We're going to go out this evening*), but the present continuous is more usual. *We're going out this evening.*

B Form

We use the present tense of **be + going to + a verb**.

They're going to move house. **Matthew is going to play** squash.

Vicky isn't going to have any lunch. **We aren't going to complain.**

Is Daniel going to apply for the job? ~ *I think he is.*

When are you going to pay this bill? ~ *I don't know. I can't at the moment.*



C Predictions

We also use **be going to** for a prediction based on the present situation, when we can see that something is going to happen. The ladder is moving, so David is going to fall.

Here are some more examples.

My sister is going to have a baby in March.

It's nearly nine now. We're going to be late.

Do you think it's going to rain?

24 Exercises

i Intentions (A-B)

Look at the pictures and say what is going to happen.

Use these verbs: *answer, catch, have, hit, light*

Use these objects: *the ball, a bath, a bus, the firework, the phone*



► *They're going to have a bath.*

1

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2 Form(B)

Put in the verbs with *be going to*.

Laura: What are you doing with that camera?

Trevor: (►) *I'm going to take* (I / take) it to work. (1)..... (I / lend) it to Phil.

(2) (he / take) a few photos with it.

Laura: Why can't he buy his own camera?

Trevor: He's got one, but it isn't working properly. (3)..... (it / be) a while before he can get it repaired.

Laura: Well, how long (4) (he / keep) ours? When

(5)..... (we / get) it back?

Trevor: (6)..... (he / have) it over the weekend.

(7) (we / get) it back on Monday.

Laura: Well, I hope (8)..... (it / not / get) damaged.

3 Predictions (B-C)

What would you say in these situations? Use these words: *be sick, crash, get wet, lose, not stop, rain*

► The sky is full of dark clouds.

(s going to rain.

1 Now it's starting to rain. There's nowhere to shelter, and you haven't got an umbrella.

2 You feel awful. There's a terrible feeling in your stomach.

3 You are playing Scrabble. The game is nearly over and you are 100 points behind.

4 You can see a plane coming down. It's out of control and falling to the ground.

5 You are waiting for a train. There's one coming, but you don't know if it's the one you want. It's travelling very fast.

25 Will and be going to

A Introduction

- Emma: *It's my birthday soon. I'll be twenty next Friday.*
Aunt Joan: *Oh, really? Are you going to have a party?*
Emma: *I'm going to have a meal in a restaurant with a few friends.*
Aunt Joan: *That'll be nice.*



WILL

Will has a neutral meaning. We use it to talk about facts in the future.

- I'll be twenty next Friday.*
The spacecraft will come down in the Pacific Ocean tomorrow morning.

Will does not express an intention.

*It's her birthday. She's going to have a meal with her friends, NOT ~~She'll have a meal.~~ But we often use **be going to** for an intention and **will** for the details and comments. *We're all going to have a meal. There'll be about ten of us. ~ Oh, that'll be nice.**

As well as **be going to**, we can use the present continuous (see Unit 26A).

- We're going to drive/We're driving down to the South of France. ~ That'll be a long journey. Yes, it'll take two days. We'll arrive on Sunday.*

BE GOING TO

We use **be going to** for an intention, something we have already decided to do.

- We're going to have a meal.*
Tom is going to sell his car.

B Decisions and intentions

WILL

We use **will** for an instant decision or agreement to do something.

- There's a postbox over there. I'll post these letters.*
You still haven't put those shelves up, Trevor. ~ OK, I'll do it tomorrow.
Trevor is deciding now.

BE GOING TO

Be going to means that we have already decided.

- I'm going out. I'm going to post these letters.*
You still haven't put those shelves up, Trevor. ~ I know. I'm going to do it tomorrow.
Trevor has already decided.

C Predictions

WILL

We can use **will** for a prediction about the future.

- I think United will win the game. One day people will travel to Mars.*

BE GOING TO

We use **be going to** for a prediction when we see from the present situation what is going to happen in the future.

- There isn't a cloud in the sky. It's going to be a lovely day.*
This bag isn't very strong. It's going to break.

It is often possible to use either form in a prediction. For example, we can also say *I think United are going to **win** the game.* Usually **be going to** is a little more informal and conversational than **will**.

25 Exercises

Will and be going to (A-B)

Complete the conversations. Put in *will* or *be going to* with the verbs.

- ? Vicky: Have you got a ticket for the play?
Daniel: Yes, *I'm going to see* (see) it on Thursday.
- ? Harriet: The alarm's going. It's making an awful noise.
Mike: OK, *I'll switch* (switch) it off.
- 1 Daniel: Did you buy this book?
Matthew: No, Emma did. She..... (read) it on holiday.
- 2 Laura: Would you like tea or coffee?
Sarah: Oh, I..... (have) coffee, please.
- 3 Trevor: I'm going to miss a good film on TV because I'll be out tonight.
Laura: I..... (video) it for you, if you like.
- 4 Rachel: I'm just going out to get a paper.
Emma: What newspaper..... (you / buy)?

2 Will and be going to (A-C)

What would you say? Use *will* or *be going to*.

- You want to express your intention to look round the museum.
Your friend: Do you have any plans for this afternoon?
You: Yes, *I'm going to look round the museum*.
- 1 You hate dogs. Dogs always attack you if they get the chance.
Your friend: That dog doesn't look very friendly.
You: It's coming towards us.....
- 2 You predict the landing of aliens on the earth in the next ten years.
Your friend: All this talk about aliens is complete nonsense, isn't it?
You: Is it? I think
- 3 You know that your friend's sister has decided to get married.
Your friend: Have you heard about my sister?
You: Well, I heard that
- 4 You suddenly decide you want to invite Ilona for a meal.
Your friend: Did you know Ilona will be in town next weekend?
You: No, I didn't.

3 Will and be going to (A-C)

Complete the news report about the village of Brickfield.

Use *will* or *be going to*. Sometimes either is possible.

We have learned this week that the local council has plans for Westside Park in Brickfield.

The council (►) *is going to sell* (sell) the land to a builder, Forbes and Son. The plans are all ready.

- (1)..... (we / build) fifty houses,' said Mr Forbes. 'In two years' time everything
(2)..... (be) finished. I'm sure people (3)..... (like) the
houses. Most of them (4)..... (be) for young families. And we intend to take care
of the environment. (5)..... (we / not / cut) down all the trees, only a few of them.'
But people living near the park are angry. 'This is a terrible idea. We're all against it,' said Mrs Mary Brent.
(6)..... (we / have) a protest march on Saturday. I expect everyone in Brickfield
(7)..... (be) there. We've reached our decision.
(8)..... (we / stop) this plan.'

26 Present tenses for the future

A The present continuous for arrangements

Tom: *Are you **doing** anything this evening?*

Nick: *Yes, **I'm going** to an ice hockey match.*

*The Tigers **are playing** the Kings.*

*I **bought** my ticket yesterday.*



We use the present continuous for what someone has arranged to do in the future. Here Nick has arranged to go to the match. (He has bought a ticket.) Here are some more examples.

***I'm meeting** Harriet at six o'clock. David **is coming** round later on.*

*We're **having** a party tomorrow. Sarah **is going** to Paris next week.*

We also use the present continuous to talk about things happening now (see Unit 4).

Present: *We're **having** a party **at the moment**.*

Future: *We're **having** a party **tomorrow**.*

Here the phrase of time shows whether we mean the present or the future. But sometimes there is no phrase of time, as when Nick says *The Tigers are playing the Kings*. Here it is clear from Tom's question that the conversation is about a future event.

The present continuous for the future and **be going to** (Unit 24A) have similar meanings.

*We're **having** a party next week. (We have made the arrangements.) We're **going to have** a party next week. (We intend / We have decided to have one.)*

Often we can use either form.

***I'm meeting/I'm going to meet** Harriet at six o'clock.*

B The present simple for a timetable

Mark: *What time **does** your train **leave** tomorrow?*

Sarah: *Seven twenty-three in the morning.*

*It **gets** into Paris at eleven twenty-three.*

We can use the present simple for the future when we are talking about a timetable, usually a public one such as a train timetable.

*The train **leaves** at seven twenty-three tomorrow morning.*

*The match **starts** at half past seven.*

*Next Friday **is** the thirteenth.*

*I've got the tour details here. We **spend** three days in Rome.*

Compare the present simple for repeated actions (see Unit 6A).

*The train **leaves** at seven twenty-three **every morning**.*



Be to and be about to

We use **be to** for a future event that is officially arranged. It is often used in news reports.

*The Queen **is to visit** Portugal in November.*

*The Student Games **are to take** place in Melbourne next year.*

We could also use the present continuous here.

*The Queen **is visiting** Portugal in November.*

We use **be about to** for the very near future.

*The plane **is at the end of the runway. It is about to take off.***

*Do you want to say goodbye to our visitors? They're **about to leave**.*

26 Exercises

1 The present continuous (A)

Read the conversation and say if the verb refers to the present or the future.

Mark: (▶) What are you reading, Claire?

Claire: Oh, it's a guidebook to Brazil. (1) I'm going there next month. (2) My sister and I are having a holiday there. (3) I am really looking forward to it. (4) We're spending three weeks in Rio. (5) So I'm finding out about all the things we can do there.

▶ present	3
1	4
2	5

2 The present continuous for arrangements (A)

For each situation write a sentence with the present continuous. Use the verbs in brackets.

▶ Mike and Harriet have accepted an invitation to Tom's party next week, (go)

They're going to Tom's party next week.

- Laura has agreed to be in the office on Saturday, (work)
- Claire has just bought a plane ticket to Cairo dated 15 May. (fly)
- Mark has arranged a meeting with his boss at four o'clock this afternoon, (see)
- Matthew and Daniel have booked a tennis court for tomorrow afternoon, (play)

3 Present tenses for the future (A-B)

Put the verbs into the present continuous or the present simple.

Emma: (▶) *Are you doing* (you / do) anything tonight?

Matthew: Yes, (1)..... (I / go) to the station to meet my friend Richard.

(2)..... (he / stay) here for the weekend, remember? His train

(3)..... (get) in at eight fifteen.

Emma: Oh, of course. I'd forgotten about that.

Matthew: Maybe we'll see you later. What (4)..... (you / do) tonight?

Emma: Oh, (5)..... (I / go) to the cinema with Vicky and Rachel and a couple of other people. The film (6)..... (finish) quite early, so

(7)..... (we / go) to a pizza place afterwards.

4 Be to and be about to (C)

Complete these sentences on the news. Some are spoken by the newsreader in the studio and some by reporters on the spot. Use *be to* or *be about to* with the verbs in brackets.

? The new museum is *to open* (open) in the autumn.

? The Prime Minister is at the microphone now. He *is about to start* (start) speaking.

1 The leading runner is nearly there now. She (win) the race.

2 Taxes..... (go) up from next April.

3 The US President (visit) Ireland in the new year.

4 The riot isn't over yet, but the police are here. They..... (move) in.

5 The talks on world trade (take) place later this year.

27 When I get there, before you leave, etc

A Introduction

Mark: *Did I tell you I've got a meeting in Glasgow at nine o'clock tomorrow morning? I'm driving up there overnight.* Sarah: *You're going to drive all through the night? You're crazy. You'll be exhausted **before you arrive**. Why don't you take a train?* Mark: *I'll be OK. I'll need the car **while I'm there**. I have to visit some companies in the area. I can sleep **when I get home**.*



Study these examples.

*You'll be exhausted **before** you **arrive**, NOT ~~before you'll arrive~~
I'll need the car **while I'm there**, NOT ~~while I'll be there~~
I can sleep **when I get home**, NOT ~~when I'll get home~~*

Each of the sentences has a linking word of time, e.g. **before, while** or **when**. The sentences are about the future, about Mark's trip to Glasgow. But after the linking words we use the present simple (**arrive, am, get**), not **will**

We can start the sentence with a linking word.

***When I get home**, I can sleep.*

B Linking words

We use the present simple for the future after these linking words of time: **after, as, as soon as, before, by the time, until, when, while**.

*I'm starting a job in sales **after I finish** college. **As soon as** you **hear** any news, will you let me know? I must get to the bank **before** it closes.*

*They'll have stopped serving meals **by the time** we **get** to the restaurant. We also use the present simple for the future after **if** (see Unit 144). **If you come** in late tonight, please don't make a noise.*

C Present perfect

After a linking word of time, we can often use the present perfect for the future.

*I'm starting a job in sales **after I've finished** college.
As soon as you've **heard** any news, will you let me know?*

Compare **after I finish** college (see B). The meaning is the same.

But sometimes there is a difference in meaning between the present simple and the present perfect.

***When I see** the report, I'll make some notes. (I'll do both at the same time.) **When I've seen** the report, I'll make some notes. (**I'll** see it and then make notes.)*

D Present continuous

We can also use the present continuous for the future, especially after **when** and **while**.

***When I'm boating** along the canal next week, I might be able to relax. Mark is going to listen to music **while he's driving** to Scotland.*

27 Exercises

1 When I get there, before you leave, etc (A-B)

Comment on the situations. Start each sentence with *when* and the present simple.

► Claire: I have to call at the travel agency. I'm going to get some holiday brochures.

When Claire calls at the travel agency, she's going to get some holiday brochures.

- 1 Mark: I want to see the boss. I'm going to discuss my problem.
- 2 Rachel: I'm going to use the computer later. I'm going to send an e-mail.
- 3 Tom: I'm visiting David in hospital. I'm going to tell him about United's win.
- 4 Matthew: I'll be in town tomorrow. I might buy some new trainers.

2 When I get there, before you leave, etc (A-B)

Mark and Sarah are continuing the conversation in 27A. Put in the verbs. Use *will* or the present simple.

Sarah: If (►) *you take* (you / take) a train, (►) *it'll be* (it / be) much more comfortable. If

(1) (you / need) a car, you can hire one when

(2).....(you / get) to Glasgow.

Mark: If (3)..... (I / hire) a car, (4)..... (it / be) too complicated. I'd rather take my own.

Sarah: It's too dangerous. You might fall asleep on the motorway.

Mark: I won't fall asleep. I can play loud music. Anyway, (5)..... (I / get) there much quicker when (6) (there / be) no traffic on the road. As soon as

(7)..... (I / arrive), (8)..... (I / ring) you, I promise.

Sarah: (9)..... (I / be) worried until (10)..... (I/hear) from you. But don't ring before (11)..... (I / be) awake in the morning.

Mark: (12).....(I / lie) down for a couple of hours before

(13).....(I/go).

Sarah: Good idea. (14)..... (you / be) exhausted tomorrow if

(15).....(you / not / get) some sleep this evening.

3 Present perfect and continuous (C-D)

Join each pair of sentences using the word in brackets.

? You can apply for a better job soon. But you need to have more experience first, (when)

You can apply for a better job when you've had more experience.

? I'm going to listen to this tape. I'll be travelling on the motorway tomorrow, (as)

I'm going to listen to this tape as I'm travelling on the motorway tomorrow.

- 1 You shouldn't decide now. You need to think about it first, (until)
- 2 I'll think of you next week. I'll be lying on the beach, (when)
- 3 We can leave in a minute. I need to pay the bill first, (as soon as)
- 4 We can discuss it later. We'll be sitting on the plane together, (while)
- 5 You can use the computer in a minute. I'll have finished with it soon, (when)