

# Expressing the Future With 'Will' and 'Going to'

- There are two future forms used in most conversations: the future with "will" and the future with "going to." The main difference between the two forms is that "going to" is used for plans and intentions made before the moment of speaking, and the "will" to speak about the future at the moment of speaking

# The Future With 'Going to' and 'Will'

## Planned Events & Intentions

I am going to attend college.

We are going to the movies

next week.

## Recent Decisions, Promises

### Predictions

- I think I'll go to that party next week.
- The economy will get better soon.
- Yes, I will marry you.



## Future With 'Will' Structure:

**positive:** Subject + will + verb

(I, You, He, She, We, They) *will come to the party.*

**Negative:** Subject + will + not (won't) + verb

(I, You, He, She, We, They) *won't have time tomorrow.*

**Questions:** Question word + will + subject + verb

*What will (he, she, you, we) they do?*

## When to use WILL:

In other cases, where there is no implicit or explicit connection to the present, use **WILL**:

### 1. For things that we decide to do now. (Rapid Decisions)

This is when you make a decision at that moment, in a spontaneous way.

- I'll buy one for you too.
- I think I'll try one of those. (I just decided this right now)

### 2. When we think or believe something about the future. (Prediction)

- My team will not win the league this season.
- I think it will rain later so take an umbrella with you.

Note: You can use both **Will** and **Going to** for making future predictions.

### 3. To make an offer, a promise or a threat.

I'll give you a disc

- I told him to take out the trash but he **won't** do it.
- My kids **won't** listen to anything I say.
- My car **won't** start.
- Count if you buy it right now.
- I promise I will behave next time.
- I'll take you to the movies if you'd like.

### 4. You use **WON'T** when someone refuses to do something.

# When to use GOING TO

The structure **BE GOING TO** is normally used to indicate the future but with some type of connection to the present. We use it in the following situations:

## 1. When we have already decided or we **INTEND** to do something in the future. (Prior Plan)

The decision has been made before the moment of speaking.

They're **going to** retire to the beach - in fact they have already bought a little beach house.

I'm **going to** accept the job offer.

## 2. When there are definite signs that something is going to happen. (Evidence)

Something is likely to happen based on the evidence or experience you have.

I think it **is going to** rain - I just felt a drop.

I don't feel well. I think I'm **going to** throw up. (throw up = vomit)

## 3. When something is about to happen:

Get back! The bomb **is going to** explode.

# Future With "Going to" Structure

**positive:** Subject + to be + going to + verb

*I am going to attend the meeting.*

*(He, She) is going to attend the meeting.*

*(You, We, They) are going to attend the meeting.*

**Negative:** Subject + to be + not + going to + verb

*I'm not going to visit Rome next year.*

*(He, She) isn't going to visit Rome next year.*

*(You, We, They) aren't going to visit Rome next year.*

**Questions:** (Question word) + to be + subject + going to + verb

*Where am I going to stay?*

*Where is (she, he) going to stay?*

*Where are (you, we, they) going to stay?*

## WILL

## Instant Decision

- I'm thirsty. I think I **will** buy a drink.

## Offer

- That looks heavy. I **will** help you with it.

## Promise

- Don't worry, I **won't** tell anyone.

## Threat

- If you don't stop, I **will** tell your mother.

## Refusal

*won't = will not*

- She **won't** listen to anything I say.

## GOING TO

## Prior Plan

= The decision was made **before** the moment of speaking.

- They're **going to** get married next year.

## Evidence / Signs

= When there are signs that **something is likely to happen.**

- I don't feel well. I think I am **going to** throw up.

- It's 70-0. They're **going to** win.

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You can use both **Will** and **Going to** for making predictions.

- I think it **will** rain tomorrow. = - I think it is **going to** rain tomorrow.

COMPARE: **Are you busy this evening?**

- *I haven't made any plans.*

*I think I **will** probably watch TV.*

OR

*I'm probably **going to** watch TV.*

- *Yes, I'm **going to** visit my parents.*

Only **Going to** is possible because this is a prior plan.

**Will** and **going to** are both possible here. We are "predicting" what will happen because nothing is planned.

In spoken English **Going to** is often pronounced as "**gonna**"