

Czasy future / future tenses

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Remember: No amount of theory will replace exercises.

I. FUTURE SIMPLE "I WILL..."

a) We use it to make predictions based on our own guesses.

I think it will rain tomorrow.

I guess you will have an easy test.

b) Sometimes we make that guess, because we know that similar things usually happen, e.g. John stole 1 million dollars and went to prison. You say:

I'm sure John will be in prison for 2 years.

or, you are 24 today, but next year:

I will be 25 next year.

You use will because you know that this usually happens with these sorts of crimes.

BUT: If we have a strong indication that something is going to happen e.g. we see black clouds in the sky and we know that it's going to rain so we say:

It is going to rain. NOT It will rain. (See the section about "going to")

"will" does not include the strong indication, whereas by using "going to" something (black clouds) indicates that that event is going to happen. You can say:

"I think it will rain today",

but this means you are just guessing, there are no black clouds in the sky.

If you want you can use such words (adverbs) as: certainly, definitely, possibly, probably etc. to make your predictions weaker or stronger:

I believe John will certainly pass the exam.

c) We use "will" to inform about decisions to do something at the time of speaking. These decisions are spontaneous. So, if the phone rings you say:

"I'll get it."

or, in a different context you can make a spontaneous decision:

"You've worked hard today and you look tired, I'll deal with the kids."

Another example of a spontaneous decision:

"I need your help, can you help me?"

"No, I will definitely not help you with this simple exercise, I have to do my own first!"

d) We can use "will" to indicate that we really mean what we say or to stress our determination.

"No, I disagree, whatever you say I will go to the party!"

e) In a negation remember to use "will" in the following way:

Avoid: I think I won't pass the exam.

Yes: I don't think I will pass the exam.

f) After such expressions as: after, before, as soon as, once, until, till, when, do NOT use "will". Use present simple or present perfect instead.

No: When you ~~will~~ complete this exercise do another.

Yes: When you complete this exercise do another.

II. FUTURE CONTINUOUS "I WILL BE DOING"

a) We use this tense to say that somebody will be in the middle of doing something in a specified time in the future:

Tomorrow between 3pm and 5 pm I will be learning English.

This time next week I will be getting ready for my trip to New York.

Sometimes the fact that you will be doing something in the future may result from an arrangement you/others made in the past, e.g. you bought the tickets a week ago and your plane leaves in a week on Sunday, you say:

Next Sunday I will be flying to Paris.

The TV station made some repairs to their antennas but they are still not ready to broadcast, they say:

Our TV channel will not be working next Sunday.

We use this tense also if we want to inform about the activity that will be happening in the future and when that event continues for a period of time.

My band will be playing every night in Heineken Open Air this year.

b) Sometimes (not very often), if we want to make a prediction about something that we believe is happening now we may also use future continuous:

A: "I think I heard the doorbell",

B: "Jack please open the door. Sue will be getting ready for the party let's leave her alone."

c) If we want to ask somebody for a favor we may say:

A: *Will you be passing next to the corner store?*

B: Yes.

A: *Could you buy some bread and beer?*

Similarly, if we want to make a polite request we say:

Will you be using this computer long?

... or if we want to refuse an invitation:

I can't come I will be learning for my exam.

III. FUTURE PERFECT "I WILL HAVE DONE..."

When we want to inform about an event that will have been finished in a given point in the future we use future perfect = event finished in the future.

By this time tomorrow I will have completed my task.

Two years from now we will have been married for 30 years.

Do not worry, you will be able to use your fridge soon, I will have finished repairing it in an hour.

IV. FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS "I WILL HAVE BEEN CONTINUOUS..."

We use that tense when an activity continues for a period of time and started in the past. We want to stress the fact that the activity has continued for some time and will be happening in the future:

Next year I will have been growing carrots for 15 years!
By March we will have been preparing this plan for a year.
Jack will have been living in Poland for two years in June.

V. GOING TO

a) We use going to for the future when we have strong indications that some event is going to happen in the future.

If we see black clouds in the sky everything seems to indicate that:

"Look at the sky, It is going to rain."

A man is reading a newspaper, and he is not looking where he's going, you say:

"This guy is going to hit the lamp post, he isn't looking where he's going."

b) "Going to" has a strong connection with the present so if you want to use it to predict the future you can use in the following context:

"Watch out! You are going to trip, fall and break your leg."

c) We use "going to" to express somebody's intention about something that was arranged earlier. John decided to study Law some time ago and told his parents. The proud mother says:

John is going to study Law.

Going to describes, therefore, intentions and somebody's plans. In other words, the decisions were made earlier and we inform about them in the present (at the moment of speaking) with "going to".

I'm going to stay here until John returns.

Sometimes the decision refers to a more distant point in time (in the future):

I am going to arrive later than usual, I have a lot of customers to deal with.
I'm sure our sales are going to grow, the company seems to be producing really good products.

d) Frequently we can use both "going to" and present continuous for the future, especially in examples that include information about parties, invitations etc.:

We are going to have a nice party next Friday and We are having a party next Friday

both mean the same thing.

Present continuous for the future frequently is used for travel arrangements (planning trips etc.) or social meetings (invitations, meetings, parties etc).

e) We also use "going to" to express an impersonal intention of some authority.

The American government is going to support war efforts in the Middle East.

Structures with future tenses

Note: Some of the structures overlap in some contexts and they do not in others. To grasp the difference it is necessary to do exercises. This is the best way to see the difference and practice the use of these structures. No amount of theory will replace practice.

I. "to be" for the future

We can use "to be" for the future to express:

a) official arrangements:

The prime minister is to meet the president.

b) in news articles:

Chinese government is to build a new dam.

c) in clauses with "if":

If you are to get healthy again, you need to exercise.

d) formal commands or instructions

Students are not to talk during the exam!

II. "due to"

We can use this structure when we talk about:

a) events that are also parts of some timetables, plans, schedules:

The plane is due to arrive at 5 pm.

The construction works on the new stadium are due to start on May 5th.

We frequently use "due to" with some time references:

The match is due to start in 40 minutes.

The project is due to start in June.

III. "about to"

The events described by "about to" may or may not be planned. When we want to talk about:

a) the immediate future we can use "about to":

"Do not interrupt me, I am about to start the engine."

"Hurry up, the gate is just about to close."

IV. "on the point of" and "on the verge of"

Apart from "about to" we can use "on the point of" or "on the verge of" to discuss events that are likely to happen in the immediate future:

I was on the point of shouting at my brother, but I said nothing.

White rhinos are on the on the verge of extinction.

V. is likely to / is certain to / is sure to etc.

a) When we want to express probability of something happening in the future we can use the above mentioned structures:

Jack is likely to pass the exam. (= It is likely that Jack ...)

Mam is certain to get angry!
Dad is sure not to get angey.

VI. bound to

a) We use boud to if we want to say that something is sure to happen. By using boud to we stress our certainty.

We are so well organized, we are bound to organize a great trip.
Jack failed all his exams, he is bound to go to jail.

VII. future in the past "was going to"

a) When we want to say that you or somebody has the intention to do something but this intention was interupted, or was not necessarily realized we can say:

- 1) Tuesday 9:00 - I want to call my Aunt
- 2) Tuesday 9:30 - Dad tells me to go paint the house
- 3) Wednesday - I say:

Yesterday I was going to call my Aunt but dad told me to paint the house.

VIII. future in the past: other future tenses and constructions.

We can use most of the structure discussed in this handout and apply them to the past:

- a) Tuesday: I am about to start my lesson.
Wednesday: I was about to start my lesson when...
- b) Tuesday: The plane is due to arrive at 3 pm.
Wednesday: The plane was due to arrive at 3 pm.
- c) Tuesday: I am on the point of shouting.
Wednesday: I was on the point of shouting.
- d) Tuesday: The plan will have been prepared before evening.
Wednesday: The plan would have been prepared before evening.