

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 Lana: 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.
Lana: 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.'

Unit 25

- 1
 - 1 's/is going to read
 - 2 'll have
 - 3 'll video
 - 4 are you going to buy

- 2
 - 1 It's/It is going to attack us/me.
 - 2 aliens will land on the earth in the next ten years.
 - 3 she's/she is going to get married.
 - 4 **I'll** invite her for a meal.

- 3
 - 1 We're/We are going to build
 - 2 will be (Also possible: is going to be)
 - 3 will like (Also possible: are going to like)
 - 4 will be (Also possible: are going to be)
 - 5 We aren't going to cut (Also possible: We won't cut)
 - 6 We're/We are going to have
 - 7 will be (Also possible: is going to be)
 - 8 We're/We are going to stop (Also possible: We will stop)