

GRAMMAR · LESSON 07 · B1

What's *Going to* Happen, What *I'll* Do

Future: *will vs be going to* — plans, promises, and moments

English has two main ways to talk about the future — and they feel completely different inside your head. One is for plans you already carry with you. The other is for decisions born in the moment. Let's learn when each one wins.

50 min

Future forms

CEFR B1

Ages 11-16

What you'll learn

- Form both **will + base verb** and **be going to + base verb**.
- Use **will** for instant decisions, promises, offers, and opinion-based predictions.
- Use **be going to** for plans decided earlier and evidence-based predictions.

1

WARM-UP · 4 MIN

Two futures, one moment

Read these four mini-scenes. For each one, imagine you are the speaker and ask yourself: **did I decide this before**, or am I deciding it **right now**? That one question is the heart of today's lesson.

- | | |
|----|--|
| Q1 | The waiter is holding his pen. You say, "I'll have the chicken, please." |
| Q2 | Your friend asks, "What are you doing this summer?" You say, "I'm going to travel to Spain." |
| Q3 | You look at the dark sky and say, "It's going to rain. Take an umbrella." |
| Q4 | The phone is ringing. You stand up and say, "I'll get it." |

2

GRAMMAR FOCUS · 16 MIN

The form of both futures

Both express the future — but from **different mental positions**. Learn both forms first; we'll compare uses below.

FUTURE · WILL	FUTURE · BE GOING TO
will + base verb	am / is / are + going to + base verb
<p>Positive: I will go. → I'll go.</p> <p>Negative: I will not go. → I won't go.</p> <p>Question: Will you go?</p> <p><i>Same form for all subjects.</i></p>	<p>Positive: I am going to go. → I'm going to go.</p> <p>Negative: She isn't going to come.</p> <p>Question: Are you going to come?</p> <p><i>Uses "be", changes with subject.</i></p>

□ When to use which — the four classic cases

USE 1 · WILL	Instant decisions — you decide right now, as you speak.	<i>Oh, the phone's ringing. I'll get it!</i>
USE 2 · WILL	Promises, offers, and opinion-predictions — no visible evidence, just belief.	<i>Don't worry, I won't forget. I think it will rain tomorrow.</i>
USE 3 · BE GOING TO	Plans and intentions — decided before this conversation.	<i>I'm going to study medicine next year.</i>
USE 4 · BE GOING TO	Predictions based on evidence you can see now — the future you can almost touch.	<i>Look at those clouds. It's going to rain.</i>

□ The same situation, two ways

The clearest way to feel the difference is to see identical situations treated with each form. Watch how the meaning shifts:

<p>A: I'm thirsty.</p> <p>B: I'll make you some tea.</p> <p><i>Decided right now to help.</i></p>	<p>A: Why are you boiling water?</p> <p>B: I'm going to make tea.</p> <p><i>Already planned; water is proof.</i></p>
<p>Look at that dog! It will probably bite someone one day.</p> <p><i>Opinion / general prediction.</i></p>	<p>Look at that dog! It's going to bite him — now!</p> <p><i>Evidence: growling, jumping.</i></p>
<p>"Will you come to my party?"</p> <p>"Of course I will."</p> <p><i>Promise made in the moment.</i></p>	<p>"Are you coming to Sam's party?"</p> <p>"Yes, I'm going to."</p> <p><i>Plan already decided.</i></p>

□ Quick decision flow

Did you decide before this conversation — or is there visible evidence right now?**NO / UNSURE**→ use **WILL***(instant decision, promise, opinion)***YES**→ use **BE GOING TO***(plan / evidence-based prediction)***□ Signal words that help you choose**

Some phrases hint strongly at one form over the other:

OFTEN WITH WILL

I think · I'm sure · I hope · maybe · probably · perhaps · I promise · I expect · in the future · one day

OFTEN WITH BE GOING TO

Look! · Watch out! · next week · this weekend · tonight · in a minute · already · My plan is... · I've decided to...

⚠ Three common B1 mistakes**1. Don't use *will* for a plan you already have.**

- ~~"What are your plans for Saturday?" "I will visit my cousin."~~
- **"I'm going to visit my cousin."** *(plan decided earlier)*

2. Don't use *be going to* when you decide in the moment.

- ~~"The phone is ringing!" "OK, I'm going to get it."~~
- **"OK, I'll get it."** *(instant decision)*

3. If you can see the evidence, use *be going to*.

- ~~Look at her — she will fall!~~ □ **Look at her — she's going to fall!**

3

KEY VOCABULARY · 6 MIN

Words for plans and predictions

Word	POS	Meaning	Example
plan	<i>n / v</i>	something you have decided to do	<i>My plan is to travel in July.</i>
intend	<i>v</i>	to plan to do something	<i>I intend to finish by next week.</i>
predict	<i>v</i>	to say what you think will happen	<i>Scientists predict a hot summer.</i>
evidence	<i>n</i>	signs or proof that something is true	<i>There's no evidence it will snow.</i>
promise	<i>v / n</i>	to say you will certainly do something	<i>I promise I won't be late.</i>
offer	<i>v / n</i>	to say you will give or do something	<i>I'll offer her a lift.</i>
certainly	<i>adv</i>	definitely; without doubt	<i>I'll certainly come.</i>
probably	<i>adv</i>	very likely, but not 100% sure	<i>It'll probably rain later.</i>
carve	<i>v</i>	to cut a shape from wood or stone	<i>Grandpa carved a wooden horse.</i>
glue	<i>n / v</i>	a sticky substance for joining things	<i>She'll glue the pieces together.</i>

4

READING · 12 MIN

What's Going to Happen

THE PULSE · ISSUE 10
PLANS & PROMISES

What's Going to Happen

The future is a funny word. Some of it we've already decided — it lives in our notebooks and in our heads. The rest of it we make up on the spot, one small decision at a time. We asked five teens to show us both kinds of future in action.

B

Bruno, 15

São Paulo · Brazil

"Some plans you carry. Some you make in a second."

It is a Tuesday evening in São Paulo, and Bruno has exactly one hour before dinner. His plans for the next twelve months are written on a piece of paper stuck to his wall. "**I am going to learn the guitar,**" it says. "**I am going to read thirty books. I am going to save enough for a new bike.**" He wrote the list in January, and he has been surprisingly good at following it. These are **plans** — decided long before this evening, proof written in ink.

Tonight, though, his little sister is crying in the next room. She has broken her favourite toy, a small wooden horse their grandfather carved. Bruno looks at her, looks at his homework, and makes an instant decision. "**I'll fix it,**" he says. "*Give me twenty minutes.*" He had not planned this. He does not know yet how he **is going to do** it — notice the shift: *how* suggests a method he needs to think about, which is closer to a plan forming in his head. But the moment he sees her face, something inside him decides.

That is the difference: the list on his wall **is going to happen** because he chose it weeks ago. The horse **is going to be fixed** because he just decided, right now, that he **won't let** his sister cry. An hour later, his mother looks at the kitchen table — glue, tiny pieces of wood, his sister laughing again — and shakes her head. "**You're going to be late for dinner,**" she says, and she's right — the **evidence** is everywhere. Bruno smiles. "**I know. I'll eat fast.**" — another tiny decision, made in the moment.

... FOUR MORE VOICES ...

M

Milla, 14 · Gothenburg · Sweden

The big move

Milla's family **is going to move** to a new city in August. She has known for three months, and she has written a list of things she **is going to do** differently at her new school. But when her best friend asked her yesterday, "What about us?", Milla just said, "**I'll call you every single week. I promise.**" That was not on any list.

D Darius, 16 · Bucharest · Romania

Storm-watcher

Darius loves weather. He has an app, three weather books, and strong opinions. Last Sunday, his little brother wanted to play football outside. Darius looked at the sky and said, "*It's going to rain. Those clouds are black.*" Ten minutes later, it started pouring. His brother was furious. "Fine," Darius said. "*I'll play FIFA with you instead.*"

R Reza, 15 · Tehran · Iran

First competition

Reza **is going to enter** his first poetry competition next month. He **'s going to read** a piece he wrote about his late uncle. He has been practising for six weeks. The night before the final, his mother asked if he was scared. Reza thought for a moment and said, "A little. But I **think I'll be okay.** I've said those words a thousand times."

C Chiara, 13 · Palermo · Italy

New puppy

The vet looks worried. Chiara's puppy has not eaten all day. "*He's going to be fine,*" the vet says gently, "*but we need to run some tests.*" Chiara is trying not to cry. Her father puts a hand on her shoulder. "Don't worry," he says. "*I promise we'll take care of him. Whatever it costs, we'll pay.*"

WILL (instant decisions, promises, opinions)**BE GOING TO** (plans, evidence-based predictions)

5

PRACTICE · 8 MIN

8 quick decisions

Choose the correct option for each gap. Answers on the last page.

1	"The phone's ringing!" "Don't move, I ___ answer it." · A) will B) am going to C) answer
2	I've already bought the tickets. We ___ see that new film tonight. · A) will B) are going to C) see
3	Look at those clouds! It ___ rain any second. · A) will B) is going to C) rains
4	Don't worry about the test — I'm sure you ___ pass. · A) will B) are going to C) pass
5	"I need help with my bag." "No problem, I ___ carry it for you." · A) am going to B) will C) carry
6	A: What ___ you ___ after graduation? B: Study architecture. · A) will / do B) are / going to do C) do / do
7	I promise I ___ tell anyone your secret. · A) won't B) am not going to C) don't
8	Be careful! You ___ drop those glasses! · A) will B) are going to C) drop

6

SPEAKING · 5 MIN

Plan or moment?

Work with a partner. Answer each question twice. First, describe a **plan** using *be going to*. Then, add an **instant decision or promise** using *will* that fits the situation.

- Q 1** What are your plans for the weekend? And what will you do if your best friend calls asking for help?
- Q 2** What are you going to do after school today? If it starts raining suddenly, what will you do?
- Q 3** What subjects are you going to take next year? What will you do if one is harder than expected?
- Q 4** Where are you going to travel in your life, if you could go anywhere? What will you try or eat there?
- Q 5** What are you going to give your best friend for their birthday? If they don't like it, what will you do?

Model dialogue

Luca : What are you *going to do* this summer?

Rina : I'm *going to work* at my uncle's bookshop. It's already decided.

Luca : Oh, nice. You know, my sister is looking for summer reading — can you help?

Rina : Of course! I'll *bring* her some recommendations tomorrow.

7

WRITING · 10 MIN

Your future — both kinds

Write a short piece (**80-100 words**) about your future. Include **three plans** you already have for the next year (use *be going to*) and **three things you'll do** in specific everyday situations — a promise, an offer, or a quick decision (use *will*). Try to make the difference between the two forms feel natural.

Include: 3+ *be going to* plans 3+ *will* promises/offers/decisions 1 evidence prediction
 80-100 words

8

COMPREHENSION QUIZ · 6 MIN

10 questions — let's see what stuck

Circle the best option (A, B, C or D) for each question.

1	A: There's someone at the door! B: OK, I ___ get it. · A) am going to B) will C) get D) am getting
2	Ana has bought paint and brushes. She ___ her bedroom this weekend. · A) will paint B) is going to paint C) paints D) is painting
3	Be careful with that hot pan — you ___ yourself! · A) will burn B) are going to burn C) burn D) are burning
4	Don't worry, Mum. I promise I ___ late again. · A) am not going to be B) won't be C) am not being D) don't be
5	Our teacher thinks the exam ___ be easier this year. · A) is going to B) will C) is D) will have
6	What ___ you ___ for your birthday this year? Anything special? · A) will / do B) are / going to do C) do / do D) are / doing
7	Wait! That ice on the path looks dangerous. You _____. · A) will slip B) are going to slip C) slip D) are slipping
8	I haven't decided yet, but I think I ___ medicine at university. · A) am going to study B) will study C) study D) am studying
9	Look at the sky — it ___ a beautiful sunset tonight. · A) will be B) is going to be C) is D) was
10	"Do you need a ride to the station?" "Yes, thanks. That ___ really help." · A) is going to B) will C) does D) has



ANSWER KEYS

Check your answers

Practice · Part 5

1	A — will	<i>Instant decision at the moment of speaking → will.</i>
2	B — are going to	<i>Plan decided earlier (tickets bought) → be going to.</i>
3	B — is going to	<i>Visible evidence (clouds) → be going to.</i>
4	A — will	<i>Opinion-based prediction ('I'm sure') → will.</i>
5	B — will	<i>Offer at the moment of speaking → will.</i>
6	B — are / going to do	<i>Asking about existing plans → be going to.</i>
7	A — won't	<i>Promise ('I promise') → will (here, won't).</i>
8	B — are going to	<i>Visible, imminent evidence → be going to.</i>

Quiz · Part 8

1	B — will	<i>Instant decision → will.</i>
2	B — is going to paint	<i>Plan with visible proof (supplies bought) → be going to.</i>
3	B — are going to burn	<i>Visible, imminent evidence → be going to.</i>
4	B — won't be	<i>Promise → will (won't).</i>
5	B — will	<i>Opinion-based prediction ('thinks') → will.</i>
6	B — are / going to do	<i>Existing plans → be going to.</i>
7	B — are going to slip	<i>Visible evidence (ice) → be going to.</i>
8	B — will study	<i>'I think' + no firm plan → will.</i>
9	B — is going to be	<i>Visible evidence (sky) → be going to.</i>
10	B — will	<i>Offer-response; opinion prediction → will.</i>

Great work finishing Lesson 07! You now know when the future in your head is a plan and when it's a decision born in the moment. In **Lesson 08**, we turn to a third way to talk about the future — using **Present Continuous** and **Present Simple** — for arrangements, schedules, and timetables.