

# Grammar Future Forms

## Not Just WILL! – Guide to Future Forms in English (Blank Version)

Future in English is a whole collection of different tenses and forms – not just **WILL!**

1. We need to select the most appropriate tense or form for what we want to communicate. If you only use **WILL** for every future situation, you will sound unnatural – apart from when it should be used. We use **WILL** for a number of very specific uses (below), rather than for discussing general future actions, like what you are doing tomorrow: use **PRESENT CONTINUOUS** or **GOING TO** instead.
2. Learners often overuse **WILL**, in some cases because their L1 has a particular future tense and they feel that **WILL** is equivalent to that. Try saying each example sentence below with **WILL** and you will see how unnatural many of them sound. There are **NO** dedicated future verbs in English so we use present and past forms instead, e.g. infinitive, present participle, past participle, and modal verbs like **WILL** and can.
3. Some learners only ever use **WILL** or **GOING TO** for future in English, but it is recommended to learn all the future forms, so you can always use the most appropriate one.

Write your own example sentences below to show each use:

Use:	Tense / Form:	Example:
decision at the moment of speaking [spontaneous]	will	
promise / assurance		
offer		
prediction [without present evidence]		
refusal		
fact		
hope / expectation		
formal command		
suggestion [question form only]	shall	
intention / plan	be going to	
prediction [with present evidence]		
command		
arrangement	present	
scheduled event	continuous	
timetabled event	present simple	
after: when / as soon as / until, etc.		
an action in progress at a specific time	future / con	
completed action before a later time	future / perf	
incomplete action before a later time	fu / perf / con	

Future forms with **BE**:

preview an imminent action	be + about to	
show a fixed arrangement	be + set to	
formal command	be to	

Future forms with modal verbs:

possibility	can / could / may / might	
obligation	must / have to	
advice	should / ought to	
necessity	need to	

Future forms with conditionals:

real future = real possibility	1 <sup>st</sup> conditional	
hypothetical future	2 <sup>nd</sup> conditional	
3 <sup>rd</sup> cond. + 2 <sup>nd</sup> cond. for a future result	mixed cond.	