



Future Tenses

Inglés

LEARNING PATHWAY

- With this worksheet, you will put into practice and consolidate your knowledge on **future tenses**.
- This topic is part of the unit related to tenses, as illustrated in the following figure.



INDEX

INTRODUCTION

CONTENTS

Present Continuous for the future

Going to

Present Progressive **vs** Going to

Will

SUMMARY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

So far, we have worked with two of the three main groups of English tenses: **past** and **present**. Therefore, in this worksheet we will be working with the last one missing: **future**. The future tense is used for things that have not happened yet, but are going to happen (Seaton and Mew, 2007). There are different ways of expressing future depending on the meaning and/or intention behind what we want to say. For instance, we are going to make use of the structure **going to** to talk about future events that have been planned in advance (Hall and Barduhn, 2016). However, when talking about a decision you have just made, we rather be using **will** instead of going to. In this worksheet, we will be reviewing future tenses and their different uses, as well as a comparative table with the main differences between the **present continuous** and the **going to** structure.

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CONTENTS

Present Continuous for the future

We can use the present continuous with a future meaning to talk about **plans** for a **fixed time** or **place** (Swan and Walter, 2001). According to Hewings (2005), the present continuous indicates that we have a firm intention or have made a definite decision to do something.

The present continuous is formed as follows:

Affirmative (+)

subject + "am/is/are" + verb -ing + rest of the sentence

Example:

I am washing my hair this evening

Negative (-)

subject + "am/is/are" + **not** + verb -ing + rest of the sentence

Example:

I am not washing my hair this evening

Interrogative (?)

"am/is/are" + subject + verb -ing + rest of the sentence + ?

Example:

Am I washing my hair this evening?





Important

Note the use of future markers such as “*this evening*.” Some other future markers are *tonight, next day, next year, later, soon, tomorrow, etc.*

Exceptions

There are some exceptions in which we do not use present continuous for the future (Hewings, 2005):

- When we make or report predictions about activities or events over which we have no control.
 - I think it’s going to rain soon.
- When we talk about permanent future situations.
 - Her new house will have three floors.

Going to

As stated by Swan (1995), ‘going to’ is actually a present tense, more specifically the present progressive of go (**go** > **going**). It will be used for future events that have been planned in advance, rather than decided upon at the time of speaking (Hall and Barduhn, 2016). We can also use it to talk about something that we think is likely to happen in the future.

The ‘going to’ structure is formed as follows:

Affirmative (+)

subject + “am/is/are” + going to + main verb + rest of the sentence

Example:

It is going to get dark very soon.



Negative (-)

subject + "am/is/are" + **not** + going to + main verb + rest of the sentence

Example:

We are not going to bake a cake this afternoon.

Interrogative (?)

"am/is/are" + subject + going to + main verb + rest of the sentence + ?

Example:

Are you going to clean your room today?



Important

In informal speech, **going to** is often pronounced as [ˈgɑː.nə] (or "gona", in Spanish). In writing, it is sometimes shown as gonna, especially in American English.

E.g., Nobody is gonna talk to me like that.

Present Continuous vs Going to

In many cases, both structures can be used to express the same idea (e.g., *I'm washing / going to wash my hair this evening*)

Present Continuous	Going to
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• According to Swan (1995), present progressive is used especially for personal arrangements. Therefore, it is not generally used to make predictions about events that are outside people's control.• The present progressive is used for actions and events, but not usually for permanent states (Swan, 1995).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We prefer going to when we are talking not about fixed arrangements, but about intentions and decisions (Swan, 1995).

Will

You can use the verb **will** as a helping or auxiliary verb to form future tense (Seaton and Mew, 2007).

Affirmative (+)

subject + will + main verb + rest of the sentence

Example:

It will be sunny tomorrow

Negative (-)

subject + will + **not** + main verb + rest of the sentence

Example:

She will not be here this evening

Interrogative (?)

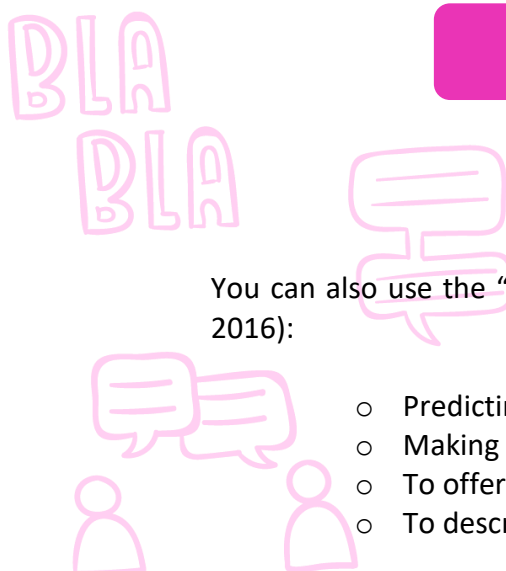
will + subject + main verb + rest of the sentence + ?

Example:

Will all the family be at the wedding?

You can also use the “will” structure for (Swan and Walter, 2001; and Hall and Barduhn, 2016):

- Predicting
- Making a promise
- To offer to do something for someone
- To describe a decision you have just made (at the time of speaking)



SUMMARY

To sum up, we will be using **future tenses** for things that have not happened yet, but are going to happen (Seaton and Mew, 2007). Throughout this worksheet, we reviewed the use of three structures for talking about the future: **present continuous**, **going to** and **will**. Whereas present progressive is used for **fixed arrangements**, going to is used for **intensions and decisions**. The “will” structure will be used for **predicting, making a promise** or even to describe a **quick decision** (among other uses).

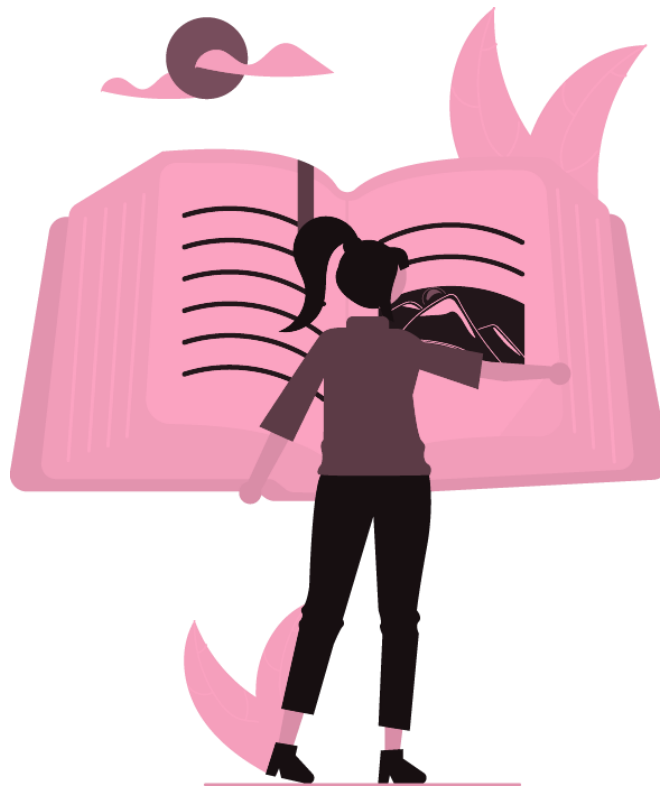


Key words

Grammar; Tenses; Future Tenses; Present Continuous; Going to; Will

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