

Future Forms: Will vs. Going To

INTERMEDIATE

Focus: Decisions at the moment of speaking, Pre-meditated intentions, Decision timing (past vs. now), Visual cues in the present, Logical certainties, Situational evidence, Personal opinions, Known character traits, General future expectations, Lending and helping

In English, we often choose between **Will** and **Be Going To** based on *when* we made the decision and *what evidence* we have.

1. Be Going To + Infinitive

We use **(am/is/are) going to** for plans made **before** the moment of speaking, or predictions based on **physical evidence**.

- **Prior Plans & Intentions:** You decided this in the past. It is a plan.
 - *Example:* "I bought some wood because I **am going to build** a bookshelf." (The decision was made before speaking).
- **Predictions based on Evidence:** You can see something happening *now* that tells you the future.
 - *Example:* "Look at those dark clouds! It **is going to rain**." (Visual cue).
 - *Example:* "She looks very pale. She **is going to faint**." (Situational evidence).

2. Will + Infinitive

We use **Will** for decisions made **at** the moment of speaking, predictions based on **opinion**, or for offers and promises.

- **Instant Decisions:** You react to a situation now. You did not plan this.
 - *Example:* "The phone is ringing. I **will answer** it." (Decision made now).
 - *Example:* "I forgot my wallet. I **will pay** you back later."
- **Predictions based on Belief/Opinion:** Often used with *I think, I hope, I'm sure, I believe*.
 - *Example:* "I think cars **will fly** in the future." (General expectation/opinion).
- **Offers, Promises & Refusals:**
 - *Example:* "That bag looks heavy. I **will help** you." (Offer).
 - *Example:* "I **won't tell** anyone your secret." (Promise).

Summary Table

Context	Form	Example
Plan / Intention	Going to	"I am going to study medicine next year."
Evidence	Going to	"Watch out! You are going to hit the tree!"
Instant Decision	Will	"It's cold. I will close the window."
Offer / Promise	Will	"I will love you forever."
Opinion / Belief	Will	"I'm sure he will pass the exam."

Practice Exercises

Instruction: Complete the sentences using the correct form of the verb (**will** or **be going to**).

- Pay attention to the context (evidence, plan, instant decision, or opinion).
- For **negatives**, use (not/verb).
- For **questions**, pay attention to the subject position, e.g., (you/go).

1. I have already bought the paint. I _____ (paint) the living room tomorrow.
2. "It's very hot in here."
"Okay, I _____ (turn) on the air conditioning."
3. Look at the traffic on the GPS! We _____ (be) late for the meeting.
4. I promise I _____ (pay) you back as soon as I get my salary.
5. I am sure you _____ (enjoy) the movie; the actors are fantastic.
6. She has decided to leave. She _____ (not/accept) the job offer.
7. I don't like this soup. I _____ (not/eat) it!
8. Look at the sun coming out. It _____ (not/rain) anymore.
9. Don't worry, I _____ (not/forget) to feed your dog while you are away.
10. I believe the prices _____ (not/drop) anytime soon because of the economy.
11. Why have you got your camera? What _____ (you/photograph)?
12. The doorbell is ringing. _____ (you/get) it, or should I?
13. She is standing right on the edge of the cliff! _____ (she/fall)?
14. Do you think people _____ (live) on Mars in the next fifty years?
15. Where _____ (they/stay) when they visit London next week? Have they booked a hotel?

Answer Key

1. **am going to paint** (Prior Plan/Intention)
2. **will turn** (Instant Decision)
3. **are going to be** (Prediction based on Evidence)
4. **will pay** (Promise)
5. **will enjoy** (Prediction based on Opinion/Belief)
6. **is not going to accept** (Prior Intention - Negative)
7. **will not eat / won't eat** (Instant Decision/Refusal - Negative)
8. **is not going to rain** (Prediction based on Evidence - Negative)
9. **will not forget / won't forget** (Promise - Negative)
10. **will not drop / won't drop** (Prediction based on Belief - Negative)
11. **are you going to photograph** (Prior Intention - Question)
12. **Will you get** (Instant Decision/Request - Question)
13. **Is she going to fall** (Prediction based on Evidence - Question)
14. **will live** (Prediction based on Opinion - Question)
15. **are they going to stay** (Prior Plan - Question)