



OXFORD

BR

BUSINESS RESULT

Language Reference

UNIT 3 | Speculating about
future changes

Will

In many sentences and situations, either *will* or *going to* is possible. However, in general use *will*

1. to make predictions based on experience

We've changed the job description so more people will apply.

2. to give or ask for information about the future

When will we need to be ready?

3. to make future promises, requests, and threats

Will you give me a hand?

4. to make spontaneous decisions (at the time of speaking)

You're running late? OK, well, I'll start the presentation without you.

Shall

Note that for offers and suggestions, we use *will* in positive and negative sentences, but *shall* in questions.

Shall we have a quick drink before dinner?

Going to

Use going to

1. to make predictions based on our current feelings and thoughts

I'm going to get angry in a minute.

2. to talk or ask about plans or intentions

Sue's going to attend the Milan conference in June.

3. to talk about decisions that have already been made

I'm going to give Ed a written warning, no matter what he says.

Note that we also use the present continuous for arrangements.

Jeremy's attending the conference in Berlin in May.

Future continuous

Use the future continuous (*will + be + -ing* form) to say that something will be in progress at a time in the future.

The focus is on the future actions, rather than their result.

This time next year, I'll be playing golf on afternoons like this.

Future continuous

Note that *going to + be + -ing* form is also possible, especially for plans and intentions.

We're going to be experimenting with Internet campaigns from next March.

Future perfect

Use the future perfect (*will + have + past participle*) to say that something will be finished at a time in the future.

Our end of year figures will have come out by the time of our next meeting.

Future perfect continuous

Use the future perfect continuous (*will + have + been + -ing* form) to stress the continuation of an action, seen from a later time in the future.

Our companies will have been working together for ten years in May - we should plan a celebration.

Certainty and the future

Several modals can be used to make predictions about change in the future, with different degrees of certainty.

The recession in Spain might / could / will affect sales across Europe.

Certainty and the future

With similar meaning, *will* + adverbial (negative: adverbial *won't*) is possible.

The Spanish recession will perhaps affect pan-European sales.

The euro's strength probably won't continue beyond June.

Certainty and the future

We can also use a range of adjectives

1. with structures like *be... to...*

The Spanish recession is (un)likely / expected / certain / bound to affect sales across Europe.

2. with structures like *it's... that... will...*

It's (un)likely / probable / certain that the Spanish recession will affect sales across Europe.

Certainty and the future

Note that not all these adjectives can be used with both structures.

For example, we can say *bound to*, but not *bound that*, and *probable that*, but not *probable to*.

We can also use adverbs of degree (*quite, very, really, etc.*) with most of these structures, to add emphasis or distance.

The Spanish recession is quite likely to affect sales across Europe.



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