

Will vs. Going to Future

The concepts of **will** and **going to future** can be very confusing. They both refer to events in the future and are often interchangeable with no difference in meaning. There are some rules as to when use which form.



English: Grammatical Tenses/Robbie Muffin

Let's first look at how both tenses are created:

Formation

will future: *will/will not (won't) + verb*

Example: He will swim. He will not/won't swim

going to future: *be (am/is/are) + (not) going to + verb*

Example: He is going to swim. He is not/Isn't going to swim.

Now, let's see when to use **will** and when to use **going to future**:

Usage

WILL	GOING TO
Rapid Decision: I'm hungry. I will buy a sandwich.	Prior Plan - The decision was made before: I'm going to the lake next week.
Offer: That looks difficult. I will help you.	Evidence/Signs - It's very likely to happen: My stomach hurts, I am going to throw up. It's 7:1. They are going to win.
Promise: Don't worry, I won't tell anyone your secret.	Very near future - Something is about to happen: The bomb is going to explode!
Threat: I will tell mom if you don't stop!	
Refusal: They will not listen to anything I say. My car won't start.	
WILL or GOING TO	
Predictions: I think it will rain tomorrow. = I think it is going to rain tomorrow.	

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Finally, put your new knowledge to use! :-)

Exercise

- ① For each of the 9 premises below, come up with your own fitting sentence (or question) deciding on using either **will** or **going to future**!

2. Predictions

6. Evidence/Signs

9. Threat

5. Offer

8. Promise

7. Prior Plan

4. Refusal

3. Rapid Decision

1. Very near future



Try not looking at the table until you are done!

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.