

THE SIMPLE FUTURE TENSE

(I shall/will/'ll do)

Look at these sentences :

1. I think he will sell his house if you ask him.
2. If it continues to rain hard, they'll combine Maghreb and 'Isha prayers.
3. I shall/will/'ll talk it over with him when I see him.
4. My nephew will be eighteen years old tomorrow.

The underlined verb forms are in the Simple Future Tense. We use this tense when we are talking about a future action — particularly one that *depends on external circumstances* (like time, condition, and reason). Note the use of the conditional clauses in examples (1) and (2), and the clause of time (with “when”) in example (3).

In American English, “will” is normally used with all pronouns (I/we/etc. will); in British English, “shall” is usually used with the first person (I, we), and “will” with the second and third persons (you, he, she, it, they). However, in spoken English (British and American) the contracted form (I'll, you'll, etc.) is usually used with pronouns.

While “will” expresses indefinite futurity, that which depends on external circumstances, the construction “be going to” expresses futurity that is marked by decision or intention. Compare these two sentences:

- a. He'll sell his house if you ask him.
(Here the future action is indefinite; it depends on whether you ask him or not.)
- b. He is going to sell his house.
(Here he has decided to sell it.)

Exercise 7

Choose the more appropriate future form. "will" or "be going to" :

1. They have decided to elect Mr. X Chairman. They
(will - are going to) elect him Chairman today.
2. I (will - am going to) help you if I have time.
3. Do you think we (will - are going to) win the match?
4. I expect he (will - is going to) arrive tonight.
5. A: Have you decided where to go for your holidays yet?
B: Yes, we (will - are going to) perform 'Umrah and then visit
Medinah.