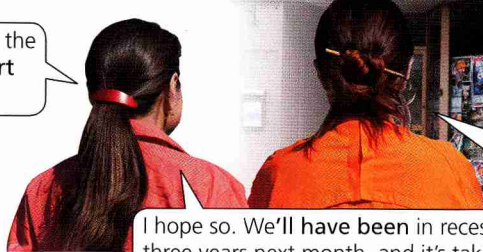


26 Predictions

Do you think that the economy **will start** improving soon?



Well, I've heard that it's **going to turn round** later this year, because house prices are starting to rise again.

I hope so. We'll **have been** in recession for three years next month, and it's taking its toll.

1 Future simple *will/won't* + infinitive

We use this to talk about predictions based on opinion, analysis or judgement:
*This investment from all sectors **will bring** economic prosperity and continued success.*

We often use *will/won't* to predict an event which we think will happen because similar events have happened in the past:

*He'll **be** in prison for a long time.* (Similar crimes have attracted long sentences.)

*The battery **won't last** forever, so you should buy a spare.* (Previous batteries haven't lasted.)

We can also use *will/won't* for future events that are certain to happen:

*Aunt Charlotte **will be** ninety on Thursday. It **won't be** light before 6 a.m.*

2 *be going to* + infinitive

When there is evidence in the present to justify the prediction, we use *be going to* + infinitive:

*Howard's wife **is going to have** a baby! Isn't it marvellous!*

*With his criminal record, there isn't a jury in the world that's **going to believe** him.*

With *be going to* the prediction is often about the immediate future:

*Sssh! The bride's father has just got up. He's **going to make** a speech now.*

This use of *be going to* for the immediate future often has an element of warning:

*Look out! You're **going to spill** your coffee!*

*It's 8.30. You're **not going to get to** school on time.*

We can use *will* for a prediction with present evidence, usually when we are giving an opinion. We often use introductory phrases such as *I think*. Compare:

*That's a bad dent in the car. **I think it'll cost** a lot to repair.*

(This is my opinion, maybe based on past experience.)

*The mechanic has phoned. I was right – that dent **is going to cost** us a lot of money!*

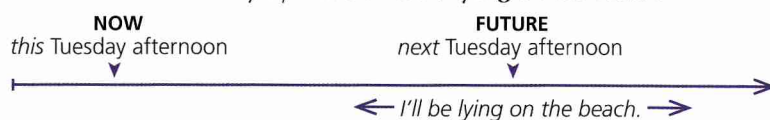
(This is based on present evidence given by the mechanic.)

There is often little difference between these two uses.

3 Future continuous *will/won't be* + *-ing* form

We use this form for a temporary action in progress at or around a particular point in the future:

*This time next Tuesday afternoon I'll **be lying** on the beach!*



Compare this with the present continuous for a temporary action in the present:

*It's Tuesday afternoon and I'm **lying** on the beach. Aren't smartphones wonderful!*

We use this form to talk about an action that will be in progress in the future; it may have a result or make another action possible:

*My mother **will be looking after** the children, so we'll be able to talk.*

*I **won't be going to** the staff meeting tomorrow, so I'll answer the phone for you.*