

# WILL VS. GOING TO

## When to use GOING TO

The structure **BE GOING TO** is normally used to indicate the future but with some type of connection to the present. We use it in the following situations:

### 1. When we have already decided or we **INTEND** to do something in the future. (Prior Plan)

The decision has been made before the moment of speaking.

- They're **going to** retire to the beach - in fact they have already bought a little beach house.
- I'm **going to** accept the job offer.

### 2. When there are definite signs that something is going to happen. (Evidence)

Something is likely to happen based on the evidence or experience you have.

- I think it **is going to** rain - I just felt a drop.
- I don't feel well. I think I'm **going to** throw up. (throw up = vomit)

### 3. When something is about to happen:

- Get back! The bomb **is going to** explode.

## When to use WILL

Where there is no implicit or explicit connection to the present, use **WILL**:

### 1. For things that we decide to do now. (Rapid Decisions)

This is when you make a decision at that moment, in a spontaneous way.

- I'll buy one for you too.
- I think I'll try one of those. (I just decided this right now)

## 2. When we think or believe something about the future. (Prediction)

- My team will not win the league this season.
- I think it will rain later so take an umbrella with you.

Note: You can use both **Will** and **Going to** for making future predictions.

## 3. To make an offer, a promise or a threat.

- I'll give you a discount if you buy it right now.
- I promise I will behave next time.
- I'll take you to the movies if you'd like.

## 4. You use **WON'T** when someone refuses to do something.

- I told him to take out the trash but he **won't** do it.
- My kids **won't** listen to anything I say.
- My car **won't** start.

## Future Predictions

As you can see, both **Will** and **Going to** can be used for making future predictions without having a real difference in meaning.

- The weather report says it **will** rain tomorrow. (Correct)
- The weather report says it **is going to** rain tomorrow. (Correct)

## Compare Will vs. Going To

If someone asks: "Are you busy this evening?"

If I respond: "Yes, I'm going to go to the movies." I use **going to** because it is a plan I made earlier (before I was asked the question). - In this case we cannot use **Will**.

If I haven't made plans, then you can say either: "I **will** probably watch TV." or "I'm probably **going to** watch TV."

Both **will** and **going to** are possible in this situation because we are predicting what will happen (since we haven't made any plans).

**Reference:**

Woodward English (s.f.). Future - Will vs. Going to.

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