

Present Tenses (*I am doing / I do*) with a Future Meaning

A

Present continuous (I am doing) with a future meaning

Study this example situation:



This is Ben's appointment book for next week. He is **playing** tennis on Monday afternoon. He is **going** to the dentist on Tuesday morning. He is **having** dinner with Ann on Friday. In all these examples, Ben has already decided and arranged to do these things.

We use the *present continuous* to say what we have already arranged to do. Do not use the *simple present (I do)*:

- A: What are you **doing** on Saturday evening? (*not* What do you do)
- B: I'm **going** to the theater. (*not* I go)
- B: What time is Cathy **arriving** tomorrow?
- A: At 10:30. I'm **meeting** her at the airport.
- I'm **not working** tomorrow, so we can go somewhere.
- Sam **isn't playing** football on Saturday. He hurt his leg.

“(I’m) **going to (do)**” is also possible in these sentences:

- What are you **going to do** Saturday night?

But the *present continuous* is more natural for arrangements. See also Unit 19B.

Do not use **will** to talk about what you have arranged to do:

- What are you **doing** tonight? (*not* What will you do)
- Eric is **getting** married next month. (*not* will get)

B

Simple present (I do) with a future meaning

We use the *simple present* to talk about timetables, schedules, etc. (for example, for public transportation, movies, etc.):

- The plane **leaves** Chicago at 11:30 and **arrives** in Atlanta at 2:45.
- What time **does** the movie **begin**?
- Tomorrow **is** Wednesday.

You can use the *simple present* for people if their plans are fixed, like a schedule:

- I **start** my new job on Monday.
- What time **do** you **finish** work tomorrow?

But the *continuous* is more commonly used for personal arrangements:

- What time are you **meeting** Ann tomorrow? (*not* do you meet)

Compare:

- What time are you **leaving** tomorrow?
- but* What time **does** the plane **leave** tomorrow?
- I'm **going** to the movies tonight.
- but* The movie **starts** at 8:15 (tonight).

Exercises

18.1 A friend of yours is planning to go on vacation soon. Ask her about her plans. Use the words in parentheses to make your questions.

1. (where / go?) Where are you going?
2. (how long / stay?) _____
3. (when / go?) _____
4. (go / alone?) _____
5. (travel / by car?) _____
6. (where / stay?) _____

Quebec.
Ten days.
Next Friday.
No, with a friend of mine.
No, by train.
In a hotel.

18.2 Ben wants you to visit him, but you are very busy. Look at your appointment book for the next few days and explain to him why you can't come.



- Ben: Can you come on Monday evening?
You: Sorry, but I'm playing volleyball. (1)
Ben: What about Tuesday evening?
You: No, not Tuesday. I _____ (2)
Ben: And Wednesday evening?
You: _____ (3)
Ben: Well, are you free on Thursday?
You: I'm afraid not. _____ (4)

18.3 Have you arranged to do anything at these times? Write (true) sentences about yourself.

1. (tonight) I'm going out tonight OR I'm not doing anything tonight.
2. (tomorrow morning) I _____
3. (tomorrow night) _____
4. (next Sunday) _____
5. (choose another day or time) _____

18.4 Put the verb into the more appropriate form, present continuous or simple present.

1. I am going (go) to the theater tonight.
2. Does the movie begin (the movie / begin) at 3:30 or 4:30?
3. We _____ (have) a party next Saturday. Would you like to come?
4. The art exhibit _____ (open) on May 3.
5. I _____ (not / go) out this evening. I _____ (stay) at home.
6. "_____ (you / do) anything tomorrow morning?" "No, I'm free."
7. We _____ (go) to a concert tonight. It _____ (begin) at 7:30.
8. You are on a train to New York and you ask another passenger:
Excuse me. What time _____ (this train / get) to New York?
9. You are talking to Ann: Ann, I _____ (go) to the store.
_____ (you / come) with me?
10. Sue _____ (come) to New York tomorrow. She _____ (fly) from Vancouver, and her plane _____ (arrive) at 10:15. I _____ (meet) her at the airport.
11. I _____ (not / use) the car tonight, so you can have it.
12. (watching TV) I'm bored with this program. When _____ (it / end)?

5. I'm going to have (I am going to have) lunch with Sue *or* I'm having (I am having) lunch with Sue
6. are you going to have
7. I'll turn on (I will turn on) the light.
8. I'm going to turn on (I am going to turn on) the light. *or* I'm turning on (I am turning on) the light.

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2. I'll go (I will go)
3. shall/should we meet
4. begins
5. I'll meet (I will meet)
6. I'm seeing (I am seeing)
7. Shall/Should I ask
8. I'll see (I will see)
9. are going
10. does the movie begin
11. Are you meeting
12. I'll be (I will be)

12

1. (2) Are you going to take
(3) it starts *or* it's starting (it is starting)
(4) you'll enjoy (you will enjoy)
(5) it'll be (it will be) *or* it's going to be (it is going to be)
2. (1) you're going (you are going) *or* you're going to go (you are going to go)
(2) We're going (We are going) *or* We're going to go (We are going to go)
(3) you have *or* you'll have (you will have)
(4) I'll send (I will send)
(5) I'll get (I will get)
(6) I get
3. (1) I'm having (I am having) *or* I'm going to have (I am going to have)
(2) are coming *or* will be coming
(3) they'll have left (they will have left)
(4) they're (they are)
(5) I won't be
(6) you know
(7) I'll call (I will call)
4. (1) shall/should we meet *or* are we going to meet
(2) I'll be waiting (I will be waiting)
(3) you arrive
(4) I'll be sitting (I will be sitting)
(5) I'll be wearing (I will be wearing)
(6) Is Agent 307 coming *or* Is Agent 307 going to come *or* Will Agent 307 be coming

- (7) Shall/Should I bring
- (8) I'll explain (I will explain)
- (9) I see
- (10) I'll try (I will try)

13

1. I'll have (I will have)
2. Are you going
3. It's going to land (It is going to land)
4. it's (it is)
5. I'll miss (I will miss) *or* I'm going to miss (I am going to miss); you go
6. does it end
7. I'm going (I am going) *or* I'm going to go (I am going to go); is getting
8. I'll tell (I will tell); I'm (I am); I won't be (I will not be)
9. I'm going to have (I am going to have) *or* I'm having (I am having)
10. she apologizes
11. we'll be living (we will be living)
12. you finish

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3. He must have forgotten.
4. You shouldn't have left (should not have left) so early.
5. It can't be changed (cannot be changed) now.
6. She may be watching television.
7. She must have been waiting for somebody.
8. He couldn't have done (could not have done) it.
9. You should've been (should have been) here earlier.
10. I would've helped (would have helped) you.
11. You should've been warned (should have been warned).
12. He might not have been feeling very well. *or* He might not have felt very well.

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3. could rain *or* might rain
4. might have gone *or* could've gone (could have gone)
5. couldn't go (could not go)
6. couldn't have seen (could not have seen)
7. should get
8. wouldn't recognize (would not recognize) *or* might not recognize
9. must have heard
10. should have turned

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4. rings
5. were
6. 's (is)
7. were *or* was
8. had been
9. had
10. hadn't had (had not had)
11. 'd driven (had driven)
12. didn't read (did not read)

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2. came to see us now
3. wouldn't have disturbed (would not have disturbed) you
4. you hadn't provoked (had not provoked) the dog, it wouldn't have attacked (would not have attacked) you
5. 'd be upset (would be upset); I told them what happened
6. wouldn't have gotten (would not have gotten) wet; I'd had (I had had) an umbrella
7. hadn't been (had not been) [so] nervous, he wouldn't have failed (would not have failed) [his driver's test]

18

Sample answers:

1. I wasn't (was not) / weren't (were not) feeling so tired
2. I hadn't had (had not had) so much to do
3. I would've forgotten (would have forgotten) Jessica's birthday
4. you hadn't taken (had not taken) so long to get ready
5. I would've gone (would have gone) to the concert
6. you were in trouble
7. there was/were no traffic
8. people would go out more

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3. I knew
4. I'd taken (I had taken)
5. Ann were *or* Ann was
6. they'd hurry up (they would hurry up)
7. we didn't have (did not have)
8. we'd had (we had had)
9. it weren't (were not) *or* it wasn't (was not)
10. I could
11. I hadn't said (had not said)
12. you'd slow down (you would slow down)

Present continuous (I am doing) for the future and going to

A

We use the present continuous and **going to + infinitive** (see also Unit 11C) to talk about future activities and events that are intended or have already been arranged:

- She's **making** a speech at the conference next week.
- Are you **seeing** Tony this week? (= do you have an arrangement to see him?)
- I'm tired. I'm **not going** to work any more tonight.
- We're **going to do** some climbing in the Pyrenees.

We don't use **will** to talk about arrangements and intentions (but see Unit 11C):

- Apparently, the council **are closing / are going to close** the old library. (= reporting an arrangement) (*not ...the council will close...*)

B

When we talk about an **INTENTION** to do something in the future, although no definite arrangement has been made, we prefer **going to** rather than the present continuous. To emphasise that we are talking about a **DEFINITE ARRANGEMENT**, we prefer the present continuous. Study these sentences:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before I go to China next year, I'm going to learn some Cantonese. (<i>rather than ...I'm learning some Cantonese.</i>) • I'm still not feeling very well, so I think I'm going to see the doctor some time this week. (<i>rather than ...I think I'm seeing the doctor...</i>) • What are you going to do next, now that you've finished your course? (<i>rather than What are you doing next...</i>) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They're leaving from Frankfurt airport at 6.30 pm. (<i>rather than They're going to leave...</i>) • We're having a party on Sunday, 12th November. Can you come? (<i>rather than We're going to have...</i>) • The orchestra is performing Mahler's 5th Symphony at next week's concert. (<i>rather than ...is going to perform...</i>) |
|---|--|

C

We don't use the present continuous for the future:

- when we make or report predictions about activities or events over which we have no control (we can't arrange these):
 - I think it's **going to rain / 'll rain** soon. (*not I think it's raining soon.*)
 - Scientists say that the satellite **is going to fall / will fall** to Earth some time this afternoon. (*not ...the satellite is falling...*)
- when we talk about permanent future situations:
 - People **are going to live / will live** longer in the future. (*not ...are living...*)
 - The brothers **are going to own / will own** most of the buildings in the street before long. (*not ...are owning...*)
 - Her new house **is going to have / will have** three floors. (*not ...is having...*)
- with the verb **be**:
 - John's **going to be** a shepherd in the school play next week. (*not John's being...*)
 - I'm **going to be** in Tokyo in May. (*not I'm being in Tokyo...*)

D

We tend to avoid **going to + go** and use the present continuous form of **go** instead:

- I'm **going to town** on Saturday. (*rather than I'm going to go to town...*)
- Alice **is going to university** next year. (*rather than ...is going to go to university...*)

12.1 These sentences use either the present continuous or the present simple. Write the correct form of the verb in each sentence.

- 1 I can't see the doctor. (visit)
- 2 The train is leaving at 10. (leave)
- 3 The sun is shining. (shine)
- 4 I have to go to work. (go)
- 5 The train is arriving at 10. (arrive)
- 6 The train is leaving at 10. (leave)
- 7 Are you going to the conference? (go)
- 8 I have to go to work. (go)
- 9 Before the train leaves, I'll get my bag. (get)
- 10 Brazil is playing against Argentina. (play)

12.2 These sentences use either the present continuous or the present simple. Write the correct form of the verb in each sentence.

- 1 Unless it rains, the match will start at 7. (start)
- 2 There is a train leaving at 10. (leave)
- 3 I'm tired. I can't go to work. (go)
- 4 'I can't see the doctor. (visit)
- 5 Clear the table. (clear)
- 6 In five minutes, the train is leaving. (leave)
- 7 I've got to go to work. (go)
- 8 When the train leaves, I'll get my bag. (get)
- 9 It's raining. (rain)
- 10 He is going to the conference. (go)
- 11 Nina is playing against Argentina. (play)

12.3 Which sentence is correct? Write the correct form of the verb in each sentence.

- 1 She is going to the conference. (go)
- 2 I'm going to the conference. (go)
- 3 Did you go to the conference? (go)
- 4 'I'm going to the conference. (go)
- 5 'Well, I'm going to the conference. (go)
- 6 Remember to go to the conference. (go)
- 7 a you are going to the conference. (go)
- 8 b you are going to the conference. (go)
- 9 c you are going to the conference. (go)

EXERCISES

12.1 *These sentences refer to the future. Complete them with either going to or the present continuous, whichever is correct or more likely, using any appropriate verb. (B)*

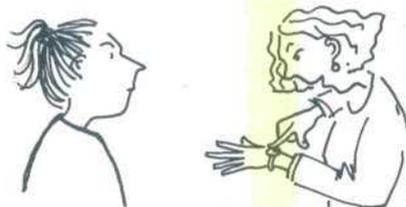
- 1 I can't go any further. I on that bench for a while.
- 2 The game at two o'clock tomorrow. I hope you can be there.
- 3 The service here is very slow. I to the manager if we're not served soon.
- 4 I have a right to be heard, and no-one me from putting my side of the argument.
- 5 The two leaders for talks later this afternoon.
- 6 The bank has announced that it its interest rates by one per cent from tomorrow.
- 7 Are you my questions or not?
- 8 I have to get up early tomorrow. I a physics class at 8.00 in the morning.
- 9 Before I apply for the job, I more information about it.
- 10 Brazil Colombia in today's final.

12.2 *These sentences refer to the future. Correct them where necessary (with either present continuous or going to) or put ✓ if they are already correct. (C & D)*

- 1 Unless aid arrives within the next few days, thousands are starving.
- 2 There are going to be more of us at the picnic than we'd thought.
- 3 I'm tired. I'm going to go to bed.
- 4 'I can't get to the match after all.' 'That's a pity. Dave's being very disappointed.'
- 5 Clear the area! The bomb's exploding.
- 6 In future, the company is going to be known as 'Communications International'.
- 7 I've redecorated the bedroom. Do you think Jane is liking it when she gets home?
- 8 Whether we like it or not, within a few years biotechnology is transforming every aspect of human life.
- 9 It's not a deep cut, but it's leaving a scar.
- 10 He is going to inherit his father's fortune.
- 11 Nina is going to go to Switzerland next week on business.

12.3 *Which of the three answers is wrong or very unlikely. What is the difference in meaning between the other two? (A-D and Unit 11B)*

- 1 She thinks living away from home when he goes to University.
a Dan will enjoy b Dan is going to enjoy c Dan is enjoying
- 2 I'm sorry, but I can't come for dinner. to York tonight.
a I'll drive b I'm going to drive c I'm driving
- 3 Did you know a new car next week?
a I'll get b I'm going to get c I'm getting
- 4 'I'm going out now, Mum.'
'Well, I hope home too late.
Remember you've got to go to school tomorrow.'
a you won't get
b you aren't going to get
c you aren't getting



Present simple (I do) for the future

A We use the present simple when we talk about future events that are part of some OFFICIAL ARRANGEMENT such as a timetable or programme:

- Their plane **arrives** at 2 o'clock in the morning.
- The next meeting of the committee is on November 5th.
- We **get off** the train in Bristol and **continue** by bus.
- I'm away on holiday next week. Can we meet the week after?

We often use **will + infinitive** in sentences like these with little difference in meaning, although the present simple suggests that the arrangement is fixed and definite (See also Unit 11C.).

B We don't use the present simple when we talk about PERSONAL PLANS or PREDICTIONS. Instead we use **will, going to**, or the present continuous (see Units 11 and 12):

- I'm really exhausted. I'm just **staying** in to watch TV tonight. (*not ...I just stay in...*)
- Although it is a problem only in Britain at the moment, I think it **will affect** the rest of Europe soon. (*not ...I think it affects the rest...*)

However, we prefer the present simple if we can make a definite, specific prediction because an activity or event is part of an official arrangement such as a timetable or programme (see A):

- There is a full moon tonight.
- The sun rises at 5.16 tomorrow.

C We use the present simple to refer to the future, not **will**, in *adverbial clauses* introduced by *time conjunctions* such as **after, before, when, and until**:

- **After** you go another 50 metres, you'll see a path to your left.
- **When** you see Dennis, tell him he still owes me some money.
- Wait here **until** I call you.

and in *conditional clauses* with **if, unless, in case, and provided**:

- Let me know **if** he says anything interesting.
- **Provided** the right software is available, I should be able to solve the problem.
- I'll bring a compass **in case** we get lost.

D We use the present simple in *that-* and *wh-*clauses when both the *main* clause and the *that- / wh-* clause refer to the future. We don't use **will** in the *that- / wh-* clause in this kind of sentence:

main clause	that- / wh-clause
I'm going to make sure I'll let you know	(that) you are invited next time. (<i>not ...you will be invited...</i>) when she gets here. (<i>not ...when she will get here.</i>)

When the main clause refers to the present, we normally use **will**, not the present simple, in the *that- / wh-* clause. However, if we are talking about a fixed arrangement we can use either **will** or the present simple. Compare:

- I **guarantee** that you'll enjoy the play. (*not ...you enjoy...*)
- It is **fortunate** that they **arrive** at the same time tomorrow. (*or ...they will arrive...*)

EXER
13.1 *If possible present*

- 1 Ellis
- 2 Wit
- 3 Nan
- 4 On t
unem
- 5 In a f
- 6 The e
- 7 Dr Br
- 8 The d
- 9 We
Thurs

10 I
to th
of my
little

13.2 *Expand the order in second. (C)*

- 1 he / need
After he
- 2 I decide /
Before...
- 3 we / not l
Until...
- 4 he / take /
Unless...
- 5 one pen / 1
In case...
- 6 I / meet yo
If...
- 7 traffic / no
Provided...

13.3 *Which of the*

- 1 Tonight I'm
- 2 By the time
claims it ma
- 3 Some peopl
- 4 The new reg
April.
- 5 Jim just pho
- 6 It says in the

EXERCISES

13.1 If possible, use the present simple of an appropriate verb to complete these sentences. If the present simple is not correct, use will + infinitive. (A & B)

- 1 Ellis's new play at the Grand Theatre next week.
- 2 With more practice she an excellent violinist.
- 3 National No-Smoking week on October 24th.
- 4 On tonight's programme we to the deputy president about the latest unemployment figures.
- 5 In a few moments, I over there and give the signal to start running.
- 6 The eclipse at three minutes past midday.
- 7 Dr Brown available again at 9.00 tomorrow.
- 8 The door in front of us automatically in a few moments.
- 9 We Amsterdam on Tuesday morning, but we Sydney until Thursday evening.

10 I to the main point of my talk in a little while.



13.2 Expand these notes to make a sentence beginning with the word(s) given. You will need to decide the order in which to place them. Use the present simple in the first clause and will or won't in the second. (C)

- 1 he / need complete rest / another two months he / come out / hospital
After he comes out of hospital, he will need complete rest for another two months.
- 2 I decide / buy / the house I / have / look at / an expert
Before...
- 3 we / not let her / walk / school alone she / a little older
Until...
- 4 he / take / work more seriously he / fail / his exams
Unless...
- 5 one pen / run out I / take two into / exam room
In case...
- 6 I / meet you outside / cinema / 8.00 I / not / see you after school
If...
- 7 traffic / not too bad I / pick you up / work
Provided...

13.3 Which of the verbs is correct or more appropriate? Underline one or both. (D)

- 1 Tonight I'm going to check that Susan does / will do her homework correctly.
- 2 By the time the book is published next year, no-one will be interested in what scandalous claims it makes / will make.
- 3 Some people believe that the earth is destroyed / will be destroyed by a nuclear accident.
- 4 The new regulations mean that businesses have to / will have to complete the form by 1st April.
- 5 Jim just phoned. He says that he is / will be with us tonight.
- 6 It says in the programme that the concert finishes / will finish at 10.20.

UNIT 12

12.1

Suggested verbs are given.

- 1 'm going to sit
- 2 is starting
- 3 'm going to complain
- 4 is going to stop
- 5 are meeting
- 6 is increasing
- 7 going to answer
- 8 'm teaching
- 9 'm going to get
- 10 are playing

12.2

- 1 are going to starve (C: an event over which we have no control)
- 2 ✓
- 3 'm going to bed (D: 'going to go to bed' is also possible but less likely)
- 4 's going to be (C: verb 'be')
- 5 's going to explode. (C: an event over which we have no control)
- 6 ✓
- 7 is going to like (C: permanent future situation)
- 8 is going to transform (C: an event over which we have no control)
- 9 's going to leave (C: permanent future situation)
- 10 ✓ ('is inheriting' would also be possible if the focus was on the arrangement; for example, if a recent meeting had been held at which this detailed decision was made)
- 11 is going to Switzerland (D: 'going to go to Switzerland' is also possible but less likely)

12.3

- 1c ('is going to enjoy' implies that this is prediction based on some evidence – perhaps Dan has previously shown that he enjoys being independent; 'will enjoy' suggests an opinion, not necessarily based on anything the speaker knows about Dan)
- 2a ('I'm going to drive' suggests a personal intention; 'I'm driving' suggests a more definite arrangement – perhaps the speaker has been told to go there by their employer)

- 3a ('I'm going to get' suggests an intention without a definite arrangement; 'I'm getting' suggests a definite arrangement – perhaps the speaker has bought the car and is simply picking it up next week)
- 4c (there is little difference in meaning here between 'you won't get' and 'you aren't going to get')

UNIT 13

13.1

Suggested verbs are given.

- 1 opens ('will open' is also possible)
- 2 will become
- 3 starts ('will start' is also possible)
- 4 talk ('will talk' is also possible)
- 5 will walk
- 6 begins ('will begin' is also possible)
- 7 is ('will be' is also possible)
- 8 will open
- 9 leave ('will leave' is also possible); don't reach ('won't reach' is also possible)
- 10 will come

13.2

- 2 Before I decide to buy the house, I will have it looked at by an expert.
- 3 Until she is a little older, we won't let her walk to school alone.
- 4 Unless he takes his work more seriously, he will fail his exams.
- 5 In case one pen runs out, I'll take two into the exam room.
- 6 If I don't see you after school, I'll meet you outside the cinema at 8.00.
- 7 Provided the traffic isn't too bad, I'll pick you up from work.

13.3

- 1 does
- 2 makes
- 3 will be destroyed
- 4 have to / will have to
- 5 will be
- 6 finishes / will finish

UNIT 14

14.1

Suggested verbs are given.

- 1 will be talking about/is talking about (a planned event)
- 2 will be suffering from (not 'are suffering from'; this does not refer to a planned activity)
- 3 will be living / am living (a planned event)
- 4 are getting (not 'will be getting'; a surprising event)
- 5 won't be needing/using/wearing (not 'am not needing/using/wearing'; this does not refer to a planned activity)
- 6 will be carrying out / are carrying out (a planned event)
- 7 will be coming / are coming (a planned event)
- 8 will be taking (not 'are taking'; this is not a definite, fixed arrangement)

14.2

- 1 a will be opening ('will open' is also possible); b will open
- 2 a will be trying ('will try' is also possible); b will try
- 3 a won't go; b won't be going
- 4 a will tell; b will be telling ('will tell us' is also possible)
- 5 a will be driving; b won't drive (it would also be possible to use 'go' in these sentences)
- 6 a will be organising; b will organise

14.3

Possible answers are given.

- 2 Will you be going anywhere near the supermarket? or Will you be going to the supermarket?
- 3 Will you be going by car (to the cinema)? or Will you be driving (to the cinema)?
- 4 Will you be selling your car soon? or Will you be selling your car in the near future?

UNIT 15

15.1

- 1 is to appear ('will appear' is also possible)
- 2 will become
- 3 is to move ('will move' is also possible)