

English A2 · Talking about the future

Elementary English for Chinese speakers; classroom examples, not official exam items.

Three doors into the future

will is a door you open now; going to is a door you opened earlier; the continuous is a door with people already waiting behind it.

will: decided this second

Use	Example	Signal
instant decision	"The phone is ringing." — "I'll get it!"	spoken now
promise	I won't forget your birthday.	I promise
opinion prediction	I think it will rain tomorrow.	I think / probably / maybe

Use the evidence

won't is a rebel spelling: will + not → won't.

Your turn: the ringing phone

Your turn

"Someone is at the door!" — "I ____ get it!"

- A. 'm going to
- B. 'll
- C. 'm
- D. going to

going to: decided earlier

a plan made before speaking

I'm going to study medicine.

The decision exists already; you are reporting it.

a prediction with evidence

Look at those clouds — it's going to rain.

You can see the evidence with your own eyes.

Your turn: clouds

Your turn

Look at those clouds! It ____ rain.

- ☐ A. will
- ☐ B. is going to
- ☐ C. rains
- ☐ D. is raining

Four doors, one sentence

Door	Meaning	Example
will	just decided	I'll meet Li tomorrow.
going to	my plan	I'm going to meet Li tomorrow.
present continuous	arranged: time and person fixed	I'm meeting Li at five.
present simple	a printed timetable	The train leaves at nine.

Use the evidence

All four can be correct — with four different meanings.

Your turn: the honest door

Your turn

We agreed last week: "We ____ (have) a test on Monday."

- A. will have
- B. 're having
- C. have
- D. going to having

The will-everything habit

- 1 **The instinct** huì covers everything, so will covers everything.
- 2 **The overuse** The train will leave at nine. — but it is a printed timetable.
- 3 **The fix** The train leaves at nine. — timetables take the present simple.

Decision

Match the door to the meaning: decided now, planned, arranged or printed.

Say it aloud

Instant decision: It's hot. I'll buy an ice cream.



Plan: I'm going to do my homework
on Saturday morning. (Stop laughing.)



Arrangement: I'm meeting my friends at the mall at three.



Timetable: The bus home leaves at six.

Check yourself

- I'll get it! — decided this second.
- It's going to rain — evidence you can see.
- We're having a test on Monday — arranged and announced.
- The film starts at eight — printed, so present simple.