

Expressing future actions.

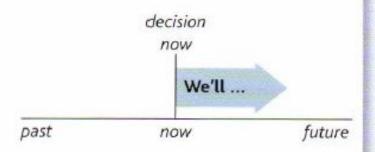
HELEN

Study the difference between will and (be) going to:





will ('ll): We use will to announce a new decision. The party is a new idea.



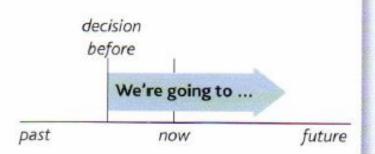
Later that day, Helen meets Dan:

SARAH

Sarah and I have decided to have a party. We're going to invite lots of people.



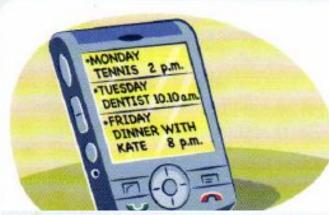
(be) going to: We use (be) going to when we have already decided to do something. Helen had already decided to invite lots of people before she spoke to Dan.







Present continuous (I am doing) with a future meaning



This is Ben's diary for next week.

He **is playing** tennis on Monday afternoon. He **is going** to the dentist on Tuesday morning. He **is having** dinner with Kate on Friday.

In all these examples, Ben has already decided and arranged to do these things.

Present simple (I do) with a future meaning

We use the present simple when we talk about timetables, programmes etc. (for public transport, cinemas etc.):

- My train leaves at 11.30, so I need to be at the station by 11.15.
- What time does the film start this evening?
- It's Wednesday tomorrow. / Tomorrow is Wednesday.

You can use the present simple to talk about people if their plans are fixed like a timetable:

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

But the continuous is more usual for personal arrangements:

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

Compare:

Present continuous

- What time are you arriving?
 - I'm going to the cinema this evening.

Present simple

- What time does the train arrive?
- The film starts at 8.15 (this evening).





Past Continuous vs Past Simple

Past Continuous vs Past Simple

We use the past continuous:

 for an action which was in progress at a stated time in the past.

The girls were playing volleyball at five o'clock in the afternoon.

(When did they start? We don't know.)

 for two or more actions happening at the same time in the past.

The children were studying while their mother was cooking.

 for an action which was in progress when another action interrupted it.
 The action that interrupted it is in the past simple.

Mary was cooking when he burnt her hand.

We use the past simple:

 for an action that took place at a specific time in the past.

Simon went to camp last month. (When did he go to camp? Last month.)

 actions which happened immediately one after the other in the past.

First she **made** the pizza, then she **put** it in the oven.

Time expressions used with the past continuous:

while, when, as, all day / night / morning, all day yesterday, etc.

Time expressions used with the past simple:

ago, yesterday, last month / week / year, in 2005, then, etc.







5 Underline the correct item.

- 1 I watched / was watching a DVD when my cat jumped / was jumping on me.
- 2 She was buying / bought a new dress last month.
- 3 Greg was sleeping / slept while Joanne listened / was listening to her MP3 player.
- 4 Mum cooked / was cooking dinner when someone knocked / was knocking on the door.
- 5 Sue was watering / watered the flowers when it started / start to rain.
- 6 They were walking / walked to school last Monday because there was no bus.
- 7 Late / was eating a sandwich while my parents drank / were drinking coffee.



