Section 3 talking about the future

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language notes
The differences between the structures used to talk about the future are complicated, and not very important for beginners. Note that many languages use a present form to talk about the future in cases where English doesn’t:

*We have a party this evening.
*I promise I never forget you.

Where English does use a present form to talk about the future, it is most often a present progressive (see page 38).

possible further activities

Horoscopes Get students, individually or in groups, to write good or bad horoscopes for themselves, for you, for other people they know, for members of the government etc. The will future and the going-to structure are both possible.

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possible further activities

Contractions Write up or say full-form ‘going to’ sentences and get students to say them with contractions.

Miming future actions Students take it in turns (individually or in groups) to mime things that they are going to do (not things that they are doing). The class try to guess what is being mimed. (‘You’re going to drive.’ ‘You’re going to swim.’ ‘You’re going to have breakfast.’ ‘You’re going to watch TV.’ …)

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possible further activities

Holidays Students write or say some things that they are probably or certainly going to do on their next holiday.

‘Gonna’ Ask students to see how many song titles they can find on the internet containing “I’m gonna” or “you’re gonna”.

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possible further activities

Contractions Write up or say full-form present progressive sentences (with future reference) and get students to say them with contractions.

Plans Students say what they are (not) doing this evening.

Diaries Students write diaries for themselves with entries like those in the illustration to Exercise 2. They exchange them and report to the class on each other’s plans. (‘On Monday, Marco is having lunch with the President.’)

An asterisk (*) indicates an incorrect form or use.

➔ Section 3 continues
language notes

Note that first-person *shall* is becoming uncommon except in offers and questions about obligation. (‘Shall I carry something for you?’ ‘Shall we wait here?’). In other cases, *I/we will* is normal. The information in some older grammars about differences between *will* and *shall* is no longer accurate.

possible further activities

*Constructions* Write up or say full-form sentences with *I will / will not, you will / will not etc,* and get students saying them with contractions.

*Predictions* Students work in groups to predict news items for next week, using *will* + infinitive. (*There will be …* is a useful structure.) Help with vocabulary. Next week, check to see whether any of the predictions were accurate.

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possible further activities

*Electoral promises* Students prepare and make short political speeches containing promises, the more extravagant the better. (‘If you elect me, I will …. Vote for me.’) Help with vocabulary. When everybody has finished, the class vote.

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language notes

Where English uses a present form to talk about the future, it is most often a present progressive. The simple present is only used in certain cases.

On the other hand, some languages use a future form after a conjunction, where English uses a present:

* *I’ll phone you as soon as I’ll arrive.*
* *When I’ll have some time I’ll paint the kitchen.*

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possible further activities

*Problems* Students make problems for each other like the one in Exercise 2 on page 42.

*Directions* Students write directions like those in Exercise 5 on page 43, to tell someone how to find their home.

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possible further activities

*Questions and negatives* Students work in groups to add sentences to Exercise 4, using words that begin with the same sound. (‘Franco will play football in France. Will Tomas play tennis in Turkey?’ ‘Stefan will eat salad at six o’clock.’)