English tenses

	Present continuous and present simple
A	We can use the present continuous with states verbs (e.g. attract, like, look, love, sound) when we want to emphasise that a situation is temporary or for a period of time around the present. Compare: - Jean stays with us quite often. The children love having her here, and - Jean's with us at the moment, the children are Loving having her here. State verbs which we rarely use with present continuous include believe, consist of, doubt, own.
B	Some verbs have different meanings when are used to talk about states and when they describe actions. With their "state' meanings, they usually take simple rather than continuous forms. With their "action" meanings, they may take simple or continuous forms, depending on context. Compare: • The new treatment for influenza **doesn't appear** to work. (Appear: state = seem) and o *Madonna is currently **appearing** in a musical on Broadway./ She often appears in musicals. (Appear: action = take part). *Do you think it's a good idea? (think:state=bout an opinion) and * I'm thinking of going in August. / your trouble is you think too much. (think: action = consider) Other verbs like this include **anticipate cost. Expect, feel, fit, have, imagine, measure, weigh.**
C	With some verbs describing mental states (eg **find, realise, regret, understand**) we can use the present continuous to emphasise that we have recently started to think about something or that we are not sure about something Compare: ***I regret** that the company will have to be sold. (I have made the decision and I am sorry about it) and ***I'm regretting** my decision to give her the job. (= I am increasingly aware that it was the wrong decision) When it means "think carefully about" the verb **consider** is only used with the present continuous: * **He's considering** taking early retirement, (not he considers taking early retirement.) Some other verbs describing preferences and mental states (e.g. **agree. Believe, conclude, know, prefer**) are rarely used with the present continuous: *I believe you now. (not I'm believing you now.)
D	We use the present simple with verbs which perform the action they describe: * I admit I can't see as well as I used to. * We apologise for not replying earlier.

	Other verbs like this (sometimes called performatives include **acknowledge, advise, beg, confess, congratulate, declare, deny, forbid. guarantee. name. order. permit, predict, promise, refuse, remind, request, thank, warn**. Some verbs used as performatives in affirmative (=positive) sentences (**apologise, deny. guarantee. promise. Suggest**) have a similar meaning with either the present simple or the present continuous in negative sentences: * I don't deny/I'm not denying taking die books, but Andy said it would be okay. Note that we can use modals with performatives, often to make what we say more tentative or polite: * We would advise you to arrive two hours before the flight leaves. I must beg you to keep this a secret.

E	We often use the present simple and present continuous in stories and jokes in informal spoken English to create impression that events are happening now. This can make them more direct and exciting and hold people's attention: - She **goes** up to this man and **looks** straight in his eyes. He's not **wearing** his glasses, and he **doesn't recognise** her.. - The man's **playing** golf when a kangaroo **bounds** up to him, **grabs** his club and hits his ball about half a mile ... The main events are usually described in sequence using the present simple and longer background events are described using the present continuous. In narratives and anecdotes the present simple can be used to highlight an event. Often it is used after past tenses and with a phrase such as **suddenly** or **all of sudden:** - I was sitting in the park, reading a newspaper, when all of a sudden this dog **jumps** at me.
F	We also use the present simple and present continuous in live commentaries(for example, on sports events) when the report takes place at the same time as the action: - King **serves** to the left-hand court and Adams **makes** a wonderful return, She's **playing** magnificent tennis in the match...
G	We can use the present simple in phrases such as It says here, I gather, I see, I understand and they say, (someone) says, (someone) tells me to introduce news that we have heard, read, seen (e.g on television), or been told. We can also use past tenses (e.g it said here, I heard): - **I gather** you're worried about Ken. Jane **tells me** you're thinking of emigrating. - Professor Otto is at the conference and I **hear** she's an excellent Speaker
H	The present simple is often used in newspaper headlines to talk about events that have recently happened: QUAKE HITS CENTRAL IRAN FOREIGN MINISTER RESIGNS FIRE BREAKS OUT IN HOTEL ROOM SCIENTISTS FIND BRIGHTEST STAR

	We can use the present simple to refer to contents of books, films, newspapers, etc: - Thompson **gives** a list of the largest European companies in Chapter Six. . At the beginning of the book, three men **find** $4 million in a crashed plane - In the film, Joan Smithson **takes** the role of a private detective.
I	We can use the present continuous with adverbs such as **always**, **constantly, continually or forever** to emphasise that something is done so often that it is characteristic of a person, group or thing: *A: I think I'll stay here after all. B: You **are** constantly **changing** your mind. * Tony is a really kind person. He's always offering to help me with my work. We often use this pattern to indicate disapproval. The past continuous is used in a similar way with these adverbs (e.g. **Was** Kath always **asking** you for money, too?). We can use the present continuous to describe something we regularly do at a certain time: * At 8 o'clock I'm usually **driving** to work, so phone me on my mobile. * 7 o'clock is a bit early. We'**re** generally **eating** then.
J	We can use the present continuous to describe something we regularly do at a certain time: * At 8 o'clock I'm usually driving to work, so phone me on my mobile. * 7 o'clock is a bit early. We're generally eating then. We can use the present (or past) continuous rather than the present (or past) simple with the verb **wonder** if we want to be especially friendly or polite, particularly if we are unsure about the other person's feelings towards something or how they will react to what we say: * You said that there were only 50 books in the boxes. I'm just wondering/ I was just wondering whether you counted them all? (More polite than 'I just wonder...?)

Past simple and present perfect

A

A Time expressions that refer to the present, such as **this morning/week/month and today**, can be used with either past simple or present perfect verbs. If we think of **this morning** (etc.) as a past, completed time period, then we use the past simple; if we think of this morning (etc.) as a time period which includes the present moment, then we use the present perfect. Compare:

*I didn't shave this morning. (=the morning is over and I didn't shave)

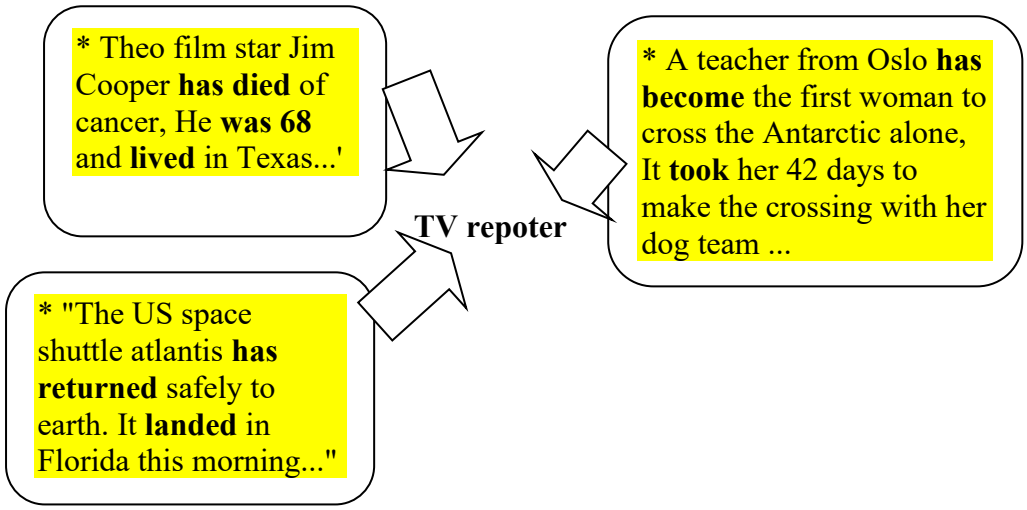
and

*I haven't shaved this morning. (=it is still the morning and I might

shave later)

B

In news reports, you will often read about or hear recent events introduced with the present perfect, and then the past simple or other past tenses are used to give detalls:



C

In a sentence which includes time clause with since, we generally prefer a past simple verb in the time clause and a present perfect verb in the main clause. The time clause refers to a particular point in the past:

*Since Mr Hassan **became** president, both taxes and unemployment **have increased**. (Rather than ....has become...)

*She **hasn't been** able to play tennis since she broke her arm.(Rather than ....has broken...)

Notice, however, that we use the present perfect in the time clause if the two situations described in the main clause and time clause extend until the present:

*Have you met any of your neighbours since you'**ve lived** here?

(not...you lived...)

D

After the pattern **It/This/That** is/will be **the first time** ... we generally use the present perfect in the next clause:

*That's the first time I**'ve seen** Jan look embarrassed. (reporting a past event).

*It won't be the first time she **has voted** against the government in her long career. (talking about a future event) Notice, however, that after It/This/That was the first time... we generally use the past perfect.

	* It was the first time I**'d talked** to Ella outside the office.
E	With time clauses introduced by **after, when, until, as soon as, once, by the time** and the time expressions **the minute/second/moment** the past simple refers to past, completed events and the present perfect refers to future events. Compare these examples: • After she left hospital (past), she had a long holiday. And • A Dominic **has left** school (future), he will be spending six months in India. • The minute I got the news about Sue (past) I telephoned my parents. And • l'll contact you the minute I've got my exam results. (future) In the time clause in sentences like his it is possible to use the past perfect instead of the past simple (e.g. After she had left...) and the present simple instead of the present perfect (e.g. After Dominic leaves...) with the same meaning.

Past continuous and past simple

A

When we talk about two events or activities that went on over the same period of past time, we can often use the past continuous or the past simple for both :

- Sally was reading to the children while Kevin was washing up. (Or ....**read... washed up**.)

Using the past continuous emphasises that the event or activity (was reading') was in progress during the past period of time ('while Kevin was washing up'). Compare :

- When I **was learning /learned** to drive I was living with my parents.

  Was learning emphasises that the activity was in progress ('I had lessons during this time') and learned emphasises completion (I passed my test during this time).

  When we talk about two or more past completed events that followed one another we use the past simple, not the past continuous. For both.

- She got up when the alarm clock **went** off.
- He **jumped** out of bed and ran to see who the parcel was for

B

We usually use the past simple rather than the past continuous to talk about repeated past actions:

- We went to Spain three times last year
- Did you drive past her house every day?

However, we can use the past continuous, particularly in spoken English, when we want to emphasise that repeated actions went on for a limited and temporary period of past time:

- When Carlo was in hospital, we were visiting him twice a day. (or ...we visited...)
- To lose weight before the race, I wasn't eating any sweets or biscuits for weeks. (or ...1 didn't eat...)

Or to talk about something that happened surprisingly often:

- Last week **I was having** to bring work home ever night to get it all done. (or ...**had**...)
- When the builders were here I **was making** them cups of tea all the time. (or ...**made**...)

C

We often use the past simple in a narrative (eg. a report or a story) to talk about a single complete past event and the past continuous to describe the situation that existed at the time. The event might have interrupted the situation, or **happened** while the situation was in progress:

- Erika **dropped** her bag while she **was getting** into her car.
- She was **shaking** with anger as she left the hotel

We can use either the past continuous or past simple to talk about things we intended to do but didn't:

We were meaning to call in and sec you, but Jane wasn't feeling well. (or We meant...)

Other verbs used like this include: **consider + -ing; expect to; hope to; intend to; plan to/on+-ing; think about + -ing/of + -ing; want to.** These verbs (with the exception of mean and expect) and **wonder about** can also be used with the present and past continuous to report what we might do in the future. The past continuous is less definite than the present continuous:

D	• I was thinking of going down to London next weekend, but it depends how much money I've got. (less definite than I'm thinking of going...) • We **were wondering about** inviting Kay over tomorrow. (less definite than We're wondering about...)

	Past continuous and past simple
A	When we talk about two events or activities that went on over the same period of past time, we can often use the past continuous or the past simple for both: • Sally was reading to the children while Kevin was washing up. (Or ....**read... washed up**.) Using the past continuous emphasises that the event or activity (was reading') was in progress during the past period of time ('while Kevin was washing up'). Compare: • When I **was learning /learned** to drive I was living with my parents. **Was learning** emphasises that the activity was in progress ('I had lessons during this time') and learned emphasises completion (I passed my test during this time). When we talk about two or more past completed events that followed one another we use the past simple, not the past continuous. For both : • She got up when the alarm clock **went** off. • He **jumped** out of bed and ran to see who the parcel was for
B	We usually use the past simple rather than the past continuous to talk about repeated past actions: • We went to Spain three times last year • Did you drive past her house every day? However, we can use the past continuous, particularly in spoken English, when we want to emphasise that repeated actions went on for a limited and temporary period of past time: • When Carlo was in hospital, we were visiting him twice a day. (or ...we visited...) • To lose weight before the race, I wasn't eating any sweets or biscuits for weeks. (or ...1 didn't eat...) Or to talk about something that happened surprisingly often: • Last week **I was having** to bring work home ever night to get it all done. (or ...**had**...) • When the builders were here I **was making** them cups of tea all the time. (or ...**made**...)
C	We often use the past simple in a narrative (eg. a report or a story) to talk about a single complete past event and the past continuous to describe the situation that existed at the time. The event might have interrupted the situation, or **happened** while the situation was in progress: • Erika **dropped** her bag while she **was getting** into her car. • She was **shaking** with anger as she left the hotel
	We can use either the past continuous or past simple to talk about things we intended to do but didn't: We were meaning to call in and sec you, but Jane wasn't feeling well. (or We meant...) Other verbs used like this include: **consider + -ing; expect to; hope to; intend to; plan to/on+-ing; think about + -ing/of + -ing; want to.** These verbs (with the exception of mean and

D	expect) and **wonder about** can also be used with the present and past continuous to report what we might do in the future. The past continuous is less definite than the present continuous: • I was thinking of going down to London next weekend, but it depends how much money I've got. (less definite than I'm thinking of going...) • We **were wondering about** inviting Kay over tomorrow. (less definite than We're wondering about...)

Past perfect and past simple

When we give an account of a sequence of past events we usually put these events in chronological order using the past simple. If we want to refer to an event out of order- that is, an event which happened before the last event in the sequence we have written or spoken the United States. He had made his fortune in about - we can use the , past perfect. Study the use of the past perfect and past simple in the text on the right:

Don José a wealthy Cuban landowner who emigrated to Mexico in 1959. the agricultural reforms had begun a few months before this. He moved again in 1965 and made his home in growing sugar cane as a young man in Cuba and he brought his expertise to his new home.

Order of events:	1 made fortune 2 reforms bagan 3 emigrated to Mexico 4 moved to U.S.
Order events are mentioned:	1 emigrated to Mexico 2 reforms **had begun** (out of order) 3 moved to U.S. 4 **had made** fortune (out of order)

When we understand that we are talking about events before another past event, we don't have to continue using the past perfect:

- We bought a new car last month. We**'d driven** my parent's old car for ages, but it started (or **had started**) to fall apart. We put (or **had put**) a new engine in it, but that didn't solve (or **hadn't solved**) the problems we were having.

If the order of past events is clear from the context (for example, if time expressions make the order clear) we can often use either the past perfect or the past simple:

- After Ivan **had finished** reading, he put out the light. (or ...Ivan **finished**...)
- They **were given** help and advice before they **had made** the decision. (or...they made...)
- The two leaders agreed to meet, even though earlier talks had falled to reach an agreement. (or...talks **falled**...)

The past perfect is often used in reporting what was originally said or thought in the present perfect or past simple :

Taking about a past event	Reporting this past event
• 'I have met him before.' • 'The village hasn't changed much. • 'Smithers drowned in the recent floods. • 'She stole the watch.'	• I was sure that I had met him before. (Not ...i met him...) • On my last visit to Wixton I found that the village hadn't changed much. (not ...the village didn't change...) • Police were convinced Smithers had

	drowned in the recent floods. (or ..drowned...) • She admitted that she had stolen the watch. (or ... stole...)

We can use either the past perfect or past simple (and often past continuous and past perfect continuous; when we talk about things that we intended to do, but didn't or won't now do in the future:

- **I had hoped** to visit the gallery before I left Florence, but it's closed

on Sundays. (or I hoped..., I was hoping..., I had been hoping...)

- Bill **planned** to retire at 60, but we have persuaded him to stay for a

few more years. (or **Bill had planned**..., Bill **was planning**..., Bill

had been planning...) Other verbs used like this include: **consider + -ing; expect to; intend to; mean to; think about + ing/of+ -ing; want to.**

Present perfect continuous and present perfect

A

We use the present perfect continuous to express the idea of an activity (a task, piece of work, etc.) in progress until recently or until the time of speaking:

- Have you been working in the garden all day? You look exhausted.

She's been writing the book since she was in her twenties and at last it's finished.

Notice that we often use time expressions to say how long the activity has been in progress.

We don't use the present perfect continuous with verbs such as **belong know, (dis)like**, and **understand** that describe unchanging states:

- Have you known each other long? not Have you been knowing...)
- I haven't liked ice cream since I ate too much and was sick.(not I haven't been liking...)
- When we talk about situations (general characteristics or circumstances) that exist until the present we often use either the present perfect **or** present perfect continuous :

"Where's Dr Owen's office?' Sorry, I don't know **I haven't been working** here for long.' (or I haven't worked here for long. Present perfect continuous emphasises the activity of working; present perfect emphasises the state of having a job.)

- We've been looking forward to this holiday for ages. (Or We'**ve looked forward** to.... Present perfect continuous emphasiscs a mental ***process***; present perfect emphasises a mental **state**.)

B

We often use the present perfect or the present perfect continuous to talk about something that has recently finished if we can still see its results. However, we generally use the present perfect continuous with verbs that suggest extended **or** repeated activity. Compare:

- He's broken his finger and is in a **lot of** pain. (not He's been breaking...) and
- He's been playing football ah afternoon and needs a shower!

(more likely than He's **played**...)

We use the present perfect continuous rather than the present perfect when we draw a conclusion from what we can see, hear, etc. We often use this form to complain or criticise

- Who'**s been messing** around with my papers? They're all over the place.
- You'**ve been eating** chocolate, haven't you? There's some on your shirt.

When we talk about the result of circumstances or an activity, we use the present perfect, rather than the present perfect continuous. When we focus on the ***process*** we often use either the present perfect or the present perfect continuous. Compare:

- Prices have decreased by 7% (not Prices have been decreasing by7%.) and
- Prices have been decreasing recently. (or Prices have decreased...)

I've used three tins of paint on the kitchen walls. (not I've been using three tins of paint on the kitchen walls.) and

- **I've been using** a new kind of paint on the kitchen walls. (or I'**ve used**...)

C

We use the present perfect continuous to emphasise that an activity is ongoing and repeated, while the present perfect suggests that the activity happened only once or on a specified number of occasions:

- Joseph **has been** kicking a football against the wall all day. (more

likely than.has kicked..)

- He has played for the national team in 65 matches so far. (not He has been playing for the national team in 65 matches so far.)

Compare:

- The workers **have been calling** for the chairman's resignation (=emphasises a number of times, probably over an extended period) and
- Workers have called for management to begin negotiations on

pay. (maybe a number of times or only once.)

	Past perfect continuous, past perfect and past continuous
A	We use the past perfect continuous to talk about something that was in progress recently before or up to a past point in time, and the past perfect when we talk about a finished activity before a past time: • I'**d been finishing** some work in the garden when Sue arrived, so I didn't hear her come in. (not I'**d finished** some work in the garden when Sue arrived, so I didn't hear her come in.) and • I'**d finished** all the ironing so I started cleaning the windows. (not I'd been finishing all the ironing so I started cleaning the windows.) Sometimes we can use either the past perfect continuous or the past perfect with a very similar mean • I'd been working/I'd worked hard all year, so I felt that I deserved a holiday.
B	If we talk about how times something happened in a period up to a particular past time, we use the past perfect, not the past perfect continuous: • How many times **had** you **met** him before yesterday? (Not How many times had you been meeting...) • I had stayed in the hotel twice in the 1980s. (not I had been staying in the hotel twice...)
C	The past perfect continuous can be used to talk about a situation or activity that went on before a particular past turne and (i) finished at that rime. (ii) continued beyond it, or (iii) finished shortly before it: • We'd been driving for about an hour when the engine suddenly stopped. • She felt terrible during the interview because she had been suffering from flu since the previous day. • When I last saw John, he'd been running and was out of breath. If we are not interested in how long the activity went on, we can use the past continuous instead of the past perfect continuous. Compare: When the merger was announced it became apparent that the two companies had been discussing the possibility since last year. And • A friend told me about a conversation she'd recently overheard. Two women were discussing their holiday plans... • I first met Steve and Jane when they had been going out together (or five years, and they didn't get married for another three years after that, and • Emma met Graham when she was going out with his best friend.
D	Remember that we don't describe states with continuous tenses, and we use the past perfect, not the past perfect continuous, even when we focus on the length of a situation up to a particular past time: We had owned the car for 6 months before we discovered it was stolen. (not We had been owning the car for 6 months...)

E	The past perfect continuous is mainly used in written texts and is less common in speech. Here are two examples of the past perfect continuous used in newspaper stories: • The body of a climber who went missing in the Alps was finally found yesterday. Carl Sims **had been** climbing alone in the dangerous area of Harz Waterfall, which has claimed many lives in the past. A spokesman for the company said Morgan **hadn't been working** for them long and wasn't familiar with safety procedures: 'It was an unfortunate incident...'

Present and past time: review

A

Continuous and simple

When we focus on an activity itself, starting before and continuing up to (and possibly beyond) a particular point of time, rather than focusing on actions as completed events, we use continuous forms:

- Janet can't come to the phone. She's washing her hair.
- As you're not using your car at the moment, can I borrow it?
- This time yesterday I was flying over the Pacific.
- Was she wearing that red dress when you saw her?

We use simple forms to talk about general situations, habits, and things that are or were always true:

- When I **worked** as a postman **I got up** at 3 o'clock every morning.
- Miguel **doesn't play** golf very well.
- These birds **build** their nests on the ground.
- The earthquake **struck** the area at midday yesterday. (past simple for completed events).

We use simple forms with verbs that describe unchanging states; that is, things that stay the same:

- She **intends** to work hard at school and go on to university.
- **Did** you **understand** the instructions we were given? However, we can use continuous forms with these verbs when they describe something happening or changing:
- She **was intending** to talk to Tony about the idea, but she didn't get the opportunity.
- I**'m understanding** physics much better now that Mr Davies is teaching us.
-

B

Perfect

We use perfect verb forms to describe one event or state from the point of view of a later time. The present perfect suggests a connection between something that happened in the past and the present time. Notice, however, that the situation or event does not have to continue until the time of speaking, only to have some connection or relevance to the present time:

- I**'ve finished** the new Harry Potter book now, so you can borrow my copy if you like.
- **Have** you **turned** the gas off? I don't like it to be on when I'm not at home. Your nose is bleeding. Has somebody hit you? The past perfect is used to locate a pa event before another past event:
- I invited him **out to** dinner, but he said he **had** already eaten.
- By the time I picked up the phone, they **had rung off**

Combinations of perfect and continuous

We combine the perfect and continuous forms in the present perfect continuous to describe an activity in progress either at or recently before the time of speaking, and possibly beyond it:

- I have been following the discussions with great interest.

We can also use the present perfect continuous to talk about activities that have recently finished with some result that can be scen, heard, etc.:

C	• Look at the dirt on your clothes ! Have you been digging in the garden again ? The past perfect continuous has a similar meaning. However, the point of reference is not 'now' (as it is with the present perfect continuous) but a point in the past : • When we met Simon and Pat, they had been riding • It had been snowing heavily for hours and when I went to the door I couldn't open it.

	Will and be going to
A	We can use either will or be going to to talk about something that is planned, or something that we think is likely to happen in the future : • We will study climate change in a later part of the course. (Or We are going to study...) • Where will you stay in Berlin ? (Or Where are you going to stay... ?) • The south of the city won't be affected by the power cuts. (or... isn't going to be affected...) • We often prefer be going to in informal contexts (see also D).
B	We use **will** rather **than be going to** to make a prediction based on our opinion or experience : • Why **not come** over at the weekend The children will enjoy seeing you again • 'Shall I ask Sandra ? No, she **won't** want be disturbed We use be going to rather than will when we make a prediction based on some present evidence : • The sky has gone really dark. There's going to be a storm. • What's the matter with her ? It looks like she's going to faint.
C	' To predict the future we often use **will** with **I bet** (informal), **I expect** ; **1 hope, I imagine, I reckon (informal), I think, I wonder**, and I**'m sure** and in questions with **think and reckon** : I imagine the stadium **will be** full for the match on Saturday. That cheese smells awful I bet nobody will eat **it**. When do you think you**'ll finish** work ? Do you reckon he**'ll say** yes ? **Be going to** can also be used with these phrases. Particularly in informal contexts.
D	We use **will** when we make a decision at the moment of speaking and be going to for decisions about the future that have already been made. Compare : • I'll pick him up at 8.00. (An offer, making an arrangement now) and • I'm going to collect the children at 8.00. (This was previously arranged) • Pineapples are on special offer this week.' 'In that case, I'**ll buy** two.' and • When I've saved up enough money I**'m going** to buy a digital camera. However in a formal style, we use **will** rather than **be going** to to talk about future events that have been previously arranged in some detall. Compare : • Are you going to talk at the meeting tonight ? and • The meeting **will begin** at 9.00 a.m. Refreshments will be avallable from 8.30 onwards.

E	We can use **will** or **be going** to with little difference in meaning in the main clause of an if-sentence when we say that something (often something negative) is conditional on something else : • If we go on like this, **we'll /we're** going to lose all our money. • **You'll/ You're** going to knock that glass over if you're not more careful. When the future event does not depend on the action described in the ifclause, we use be going to, not will. This kind of sentence is mainly found in spoken English. Compare : • I**'m going to** open a bottle of lemonade, if you want some. (= I**'m going to** open a bottle of lemonade. Do you want some ?) and • I'll open a bottle of lemonade if you want some. If you say you want some, I'll open a bottle.) • However, we use **will** not be going to, when the main clause refers to offers, requests, promises, etc. and ability : • If Jack phones I'll let you know. =an offer ; ..., I'm going to let you know suggests 'I intend to let you know when Jack phones) • If you look to your left, you'll see the lake. (=you'll be able to see ; ...you're going to see...' suggests 'I know this is what you can see when you look to your left) And when one thing is the logical consequence of another : • If you don't switch on the monitor first, the computer won't come on.

Present simple and present continuous for the future

A

- Present simple

We can often use either the present simple or will to talk about future events that are part of some timetabled or programmed arrangement or routine. However, we prefer the present simple for fixed, unchangeable events. Compare :

- Does the sale finish on Thursday or Friday ? (Or Will the sale finish... ?) and
- The sun rises at 5 :16 tomorrow. (More likely than the sun will rise...)

We avoid the present simple when we talk a bout less formal or less routine arrangements, or predictions. Instead we use **will be going to** or the present continuous :

Are you just staying in to watch TV tonight, or are you coining dancing ? (not Do you just stay to watch TV tonight, or do you come... }

- It's only a problem in Britain now, but it **will** affect the rest of Europe soon. not... but it affects the rest of Europe soon.)

B

We use the present simple, not will to refer to the future -

- in time clauses with contractions such as after, as soon as, before, by the time, when, while, until:
- When you see Dave, tell him he still owes me some money. (not When you will see Dave...)
- I should be finished by the time you get back. (not ... by the time you will get back.)

► in conditional clauses with **if, in ease, provided**. and **unless**:

► provided the right software is avallable, I should be able to solve the problem.

► I'll bring some sandwiches in case we don't find anywhere decent to eat.

when we talk about possible future events with **suppose**, **supposing**, and **what if** at the beginning of a sentence. Notice that the past simple can be used with a similar meaning:

►Suppose we **miss** the bus. - How will we get home? (or Suppose we missed ...)

►What if the train's late? Where shall I meet you then? (or What if the train was late?)

C

- present continuous

We can often use either the present continuous or be going to with a similar meaning to talk about planned future events. This use of the present continuous indicates that we have a firm intention or have mde a definite decision to do something, although this may not a Ire ad y he arranged:

► Are you seeing the doctor again next week? (or Are you going to see...?)

► I'm not asking Tom to the party. (or I'm not going to ask...) However, 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 soon.

►Scientists say that the satellite won't cause any damage when it falls to Earth some time this afternoon.

When we talk about permanent future situations:

►People **are going to live/will live** longer in the future.

► Her new house **is going to have/will have** three floors.

D	Many people avoid be going to + go/come and use the present continuous forms of go and come instead: ► I'm going to town on Saturday. (rather than I'm going to go to town...) ► **Are** you **coming** home for lunch? {rather than Are you going to come...?)

Future continuous and future perfect (continuous)

A

- Future continuous : I will be doing

We can use the future continuous to talk about something that is predicted to start before a particular point of future time, and that may continue after this point. Often it is the result of a previous decision or arrangement:

► This time next year this part of the garden will be looking beautiful.

►She will be taking up her place at university in October.

► When it goes into orbit, the spacecraft will be carrying 30 kilos of plutonium.

We can also use the future continuous to talk about a future activity that is part of the normal course of events or that is one of a repeated or regular series of events:

►Dr Jones will be giving the same talk in room 103 at 10.00 next Thursday.

► **Will** you **be driving** to Glasgow, as usual?

We can often use either the future continuous or the present continuous when we talk about arranged activities or events in the future (see also Unit 10). Compare:

► We will be leaving for Istanbul at 7.00 in the evening.

(timetabled; or ...are leaving...) and

► When the race starts later this afternoon the drivers will be hoping for drier weather than last year. (not ...are hoping..., not reporting the detalls of a programme or timetable) .

B

The future continuous is sometimes used to indicate that a future activity is pre-arranged. Using will can indicate willingness, intention, invitation, etc. Compare:

►Ann **will be helping** us to organise the party. (suggests a previous

arrangement) and

► Ann'**ll help** us organise the party. (suggests she is willing to help) When we don't want to indicate willingness, intention, invitation, etc., we prefer to use the future continuous instead of will. For example, if guests have stayed longer than you wanted, and you don't know when they are leaving, you might ask:

► Will you be staying with us again tonight? (asking about their plans) rather than.

►Will you stay with us again tonight? (they might think this is an invitation).

C

Future perfect and future perfect continuous : I will have done and I will have been doing

We use the future perfect to say that something will be ended,

completed, or achieved by a particular point in the future:

►By the time you get home I will have cleaned the house from top to bottom.

► I'm sure his awful behaviour will soon have been forgotten. (= passive form).

We use the future perfect continuous to emphasise the duration of an activity in progress at a particular point in the future:

►On Saturday, we will have been living in this house for a year.

►Next year I will have been working in the company for 30 years. With both the future perfect and future perfect continuous we usually mention the future time (By the time you get home.... On Saturday..., etc.).

D	The future continuous, future perfect and future perfect continuous can also be used to say what we believe or imagine is happening around now: ► We could ask to borrow Jim's car. He won't be using it today – he went to work by bike. ► Most people will have forgotten the fire by now. ► Tennis fans will have been queuing at Wimbledon all day to buy tickets. We can use the future perfect continuous to say what we think was happening at a point in the past: ►Motorist Alan Hesketh **will have been asking** himself whether speed cameras are a good idea after he was fined £100 last week for driving at 33 mph in a 30 mph zone.

	Be to + infinitive
A	**Be to + infinitive** is commonly used in news reports to talk about events that are likely to happen in the near future : ► Police officers are to visit every home in the area. ► The main Rome to Naples rallway line is to be reopened today. (passive form) It is used to talk about formal or official arrangements, formal instructions, and to give orders: ►You are not to leave the school without my permission. ► The European Parliament is to introduce a new law on safety at work. ► Children are not to be left unsupervised in the museum, (passive form). Passive forms are often used to make orders and instructions more impersonal Notice that we only use be to + infinitive to talk about future events that can be controlled by people. Compare: ► In the next few years, thousands of speed cameras are to appear on major roads. (or ...will appear...) and ► Scientists say they can't predict when or where the disease will appear again. (not ...the disease is to appear again; the appearance of the disease can't be controlled). ► The President is to return to Brazil later today. (or ...will return...) and The cornet will return to our solar system in around 500 years. (not The cornet is to return..., the movement of the cornet can't be controlled). However, when be to + infinitive refers to the future from the past, we often use it to describe what happened to someone, whether they were able to influence events or not: ►Matthew Flinders salled past Tasmania in 1770, but it was to be a further 30 years before he landed there. ► Clare Atkins was to write two more books about her experiences in Africa before her death in 1967.
B	We often use **be to + infinitive** in if-clauses to say that something must happen first (in the main clause) before something else can happen (in the if-clause): ►If the human race is to survive; we must look at environmental problems now. ► If the law needs to be revised //justice is to be done. (passive form). Compare the use of be to + infinitive and the present simple for the futur e in if-clauses: ► If Jones is to win gold at the next Olympics, he needs to work on his fitness. And ► If Jones wins gold at the next Olympics; he has said that he will retire from athletics. Notice how the order of cause and effects in if-sentences is reversed with these two tenses: ► If Jones is to win gold... = effect), he needs to work... (cause) and ► If Jones wins gold... (= cause), he has said that he will retire... (=effect)
C	We can use be about to + infinitive to say that something will (not) happen in the very near future: • I'm about to start work on my second novel. • Appearing on TV might make her famous, but it's not about to make her rich.

Notice that while be to + infinitive is mainly used in news reports and formal contexts, we often use be about to + infinitive in conversation:

- We're just about to eat. Do you want to join us?
- I was about to go to bed when my brother turned up.

	Other ways of talking about the future
A	Some phrases are commonly used to refer to actions or events in the future with a meaning similar to be about to + infinitive. We can use be on the verge of.../ brink of... point of... (+ -ing or noun) to say that something will happen soon : ► People are on the verge of starvation as the drought continues. ►Scientist are on the brink of making major advances in the fight against AIDS. I looked for my car everywhere in the car park but couldn't find it. I was on the point of phoning the police, when I remembered that I'd walked to work that morning **Be on the brink of** usually refers to something important, exciting, or very bad. We use be due to (+ infinitive) to say that something is expected to happen at a particular time, be sure/bound to (+ infinitive) to say that something is likely or certain to happen, and be set to (+ infinitive) to say that something is ready to happen. ► The company's chief executive is due to retire next year, but following today's announcement of further losses she is sure to be asked to leave sooner. ►Will there be somewhere to get a coffee at the station?' 'Oh, yes, there's bound to be.' ► Her new film is set to be a great success. Notice that we use due to + noun to give the reason for something, not to talk about the future (e.g. Due to illness, Pavarotti is unable to perform tonight). Note that past tense forms of be can be used with these phrases to talk about future events seen from the past: • It was his 64birthday in 1987 and he was due to retire the following year.
B	We use some verbs with a to-infinitive to talk about intentions : ► Do you mean to work any harder in your second year at college ? • We guarantee to refund your money if you are dissatisfied with the computer. Other verbs like this include **agree, aim, expect, hope, intend, plan, promise, propose, resolve, undertake, and want. The present continuous + to-infinitive or present simple + to-infinitive can be used with aim, expect, hope, intend, plan, propose, and want** to talk about intentions : ► I'm aiming to get to Bangkok by the end of June. (or I aim to get...) Some people, particularly in speech and in journalism, use **be looking + to-infinitive** to mean planning a course of action: ► **We're looking** to create 3,000 jobs in the city over the next year. When these verbs are used with past tense forms, they are concerned with future events seen from the past : ► Jack **had resolved** to become fluent in Spanish before his 30 birthday. • She **was expecting** to inherit her father's fortune when he died. • The new management **had been looking** to create 20 new jobs.
C	Some people use **shall** (and **shan't**) instead of **will** (and **won't**) in statements about the future with **I** and **we**. However, it is more common to use **will** (particularly its contracted form **'ll**) and **won't :** • He was a good friend and we **shall** miss him greatly. (More commonly ...we'll miss...) I definitely intend to visit Canada, but I shan't go for the next five years. (More commonly ...I **won't**...) In current English we don't usually use shall/shan't with other subjects (it, she, they, etc.) to talk about the future, although this is found in formal rules and in older literary styles :

	• The match referee **shall** be the sole judge of fair play. • All people of the world **shall** live together as brothers.

The future seen from the past

A

There are a number of ways of talking about an activity or event that was in the future at a particular point in the past. In order to express this idea, we can use the past tenses of the verb forms we would normally use to talk about the future. These forms are often used in reporting. Compare the following sentences :

The future from now ...	The future from the past...
►I haven't got much money, so I think **I'll stay** at home this summer.	► Maureen decided that she **would stay** at home for the summer.
► **I'm not going** to say. anything about the exams today, because I don't have time.	►**I wasn't going to say** anything about the exams, but the students asked me to.
►**I'm having** a meeting with my tutor tomorrow to discuss my work.	►I couldn't go to the match because **1 was having** a meeting with my tutor
► **Will you be going** alone, or is Jane going with you?	►At the time, I thought **I. would be going** alone, but then Tom said he wanted to come.
► The exam **will have** finished by 3 o'clock, so I'll see you then.	► The exam was so easy that most people **would have finished** after 30 minutes.
There is to be a meeting of ministers this evening.	► It was announced that there **was to be** a meeting of ministers that evening.
► When the school closes, all the teachers and children **are to be moved** to one nearby	►As she approached retirement she heard that she **was to be moved** to a post in a nearby school.
►As the bell **is about to go** for the end of the lesson, you can pack your books away.	►The bell was about to go when all the children started to pack their books away.

If the If future seen from the past is still in the future for the speaker, then either form is possible :

► It was announced this morning that there is/was to be a statement this evening.

In some cases we don't know whether the activity or event happened or not. Compare :

►I didn't phone to give him the news because we were seeing cach other later. He was very upset when I told him. (- we saw each other) and

► We **were seeing** each other later that day, but I had to phone and cancel. (= we didn't see each other)

► They left the house at 6.00 a.m. and **would reach** Edinburgh some 12 hours later. (=they reached Edinburgh) and

►He was sure that the medical tests **would show** that he was healthy. (=we don't know whether he was healthy or not)

B

To talk about an activity or event that was in the future at a particular point in the past, we can use **was/were to + infinitive** (for things that actually happened) and was/were to have + past participle (for things that were expected, but didn't happen) :

►At the time she was probably the best actor in the theatre company, but in fact some of her colleagues **were to become** much better known.

► **He was to find out** years later that the car he had bought was stolen.

►The boat, which **was to have taken** them to the island, falled to arrive.

►There **was to have been** a ban on smoking in restaurants, but restaurant owners have forced the council to reconsider. Note, however, that in less formal contexts we would often more naturally use **be supposed to** :

► **I was supposed to help**, but I was ill. (More natural than I was to have helped...) and that **was/were to + infinitive** can be used informally to talk about things that didn't happen :

► We **were to** see each other that day, but I had to phone and cancel. (Or **We were to have seen**.../We **were supposed to see...**).