

# Unit 19

## Present tenses (I am doing / I do) for the future

### A 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.

I'm doing something (tomorrow) = I have already decided and arranged to do it:

- ☐ A: What are you doing on Saturday evening? (*not* What do you do)
- B: I'm going to the theatre. (*not* I go)
- ☐ A: What time is Cathy arriving tomorrow?
- B: Half past ten, I'm meeting her at the station.
- ☐ I'm not working tomorrow, so we can go out somewhere.
- ☐ Ian isn't playing football next Saturday. He's hurt his leg.

'I'm going to (do)' is also possible in these sentences:

- ☐ What are you going to do on Saturday evening?

But the present continuous is more natural for arrangements. See also Unit 20B.

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

- ☐ What are you doing this evening? (*not* What will you do)
- ☐ Alex is getting married next month. (*not* will get)

You can also use the present continuous for an action *just before you begin to do it*. This happens especially with verbs of movement (go/come/leave etc.):

- ☐ I'm tired. I'm going to bed now. Goodnight. (*not* I go to bed now)
- ☐ 'Tina, are you ready yet?' 'Yes, I'm coming.' (*not* I come)

### B 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 begin 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 begins at 8.15 (this evening).

# Exercises

## Unit 19

- 19.1 A friend of yours is planning to go on holiday soon. You ask her about her plans. Use the words in brackets to make your questions.

- 1 (where / go?) Where are you going?
- 2 (how long / go for?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 (when / leave?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 (go / alone?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 (travel / by car?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 (where / stay?) \_\_\_\_\_

Scotland.  
Ten days.  
Next Friday.  
No, with a friend.  
No, by train.  
In a hotel.



- 19.2 Tom wants you to visit him, but you are very busy. Look at your diary for the next few days and explain to him why you can't come.



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

- 19.3 Have you arranged to do anything at these times? Write sentences about yourself.

- 1 (this evening) I'm going out this evening. or I'm not doing anything this evening.
- 2 (tomorrow morning) I \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 (tomorrow evening) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 (next Sunday) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 (choose another day or time) \_\_\_\_\_

- 19.4 Put the verb into the more suitable form, present continuous or present simple.

- 1 I 'm going (go) to the cinema this evening.
- 2 Does the film begin (the film / begin) at 3.30 or 4.30?
- 3 We \_\_\_\_\_ (have) a party next Saturday. Would you like to come?
- 4 The art exhibition \_\_\_\_\_ (finish) on 3 May.
- 5 I \_\_\_\_\_ (not / go) out this evening. I \_\_\_\_\_ (stay) at home.
- 6 '\_\_\_\_\_ (you / do) anything tomorrow morning?' 'No, I'm free. Why?'
- 7 We \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to a concert tonight. It \_\_\_\_\_ (start) at 7.30.
- 8 I \_\_\_\_\_ (leave) now. I've come to say goodbye.
- 9 A: Have you seen Liz recently?  
B: No, but we \_\_\_\_\_ (meet) for lunch next week.
- 10 You are on the train to London and you ask another passenger:  
Excuse me. What time \_\_\_\_\_ (this train / get) to London?
- 11 You are talking to Helen:  
Helen, I \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to the supermarket. \_\_\_\_\_ (you / come) with me?
- 12 You and a friend are watching television. You say:  
I'm bored with this programme. What time \_\_\_\_\_ (it / end)?
- 13 I \_\_\_\_\_ (not / use) the car this evening, so you can have it.
- 14 Sue \_\_\_\_\_ (come) to see us tomorrow. She \_\_\_\_\_ (travel) by train and her train \_\_\_\_\_ (arrive) at 10.15.



## Unit 20

### (I'm) going to (do)

**A** I am going to do something = I have already decided to do it, I intend to do it:

- ☐ A: Are you going to watch the late film on TV tonight?
- B: No, I'm going to have an early night.
- ☐ A: I hear Sarah has won some money. What is she going to do with it?
- B: She's going to buy a new car.
- ☐ I'm just going to make a quick phone call. Can you wait for me?
- ☐ This cheese looks horrible. I'm not going to eat it.

**B** I am doing and I am going to do

We use I am **doing** (*present continuous*) when we say what we have **arranged** to do – for example, arranged to meet somebody, arranged to go somewhere:

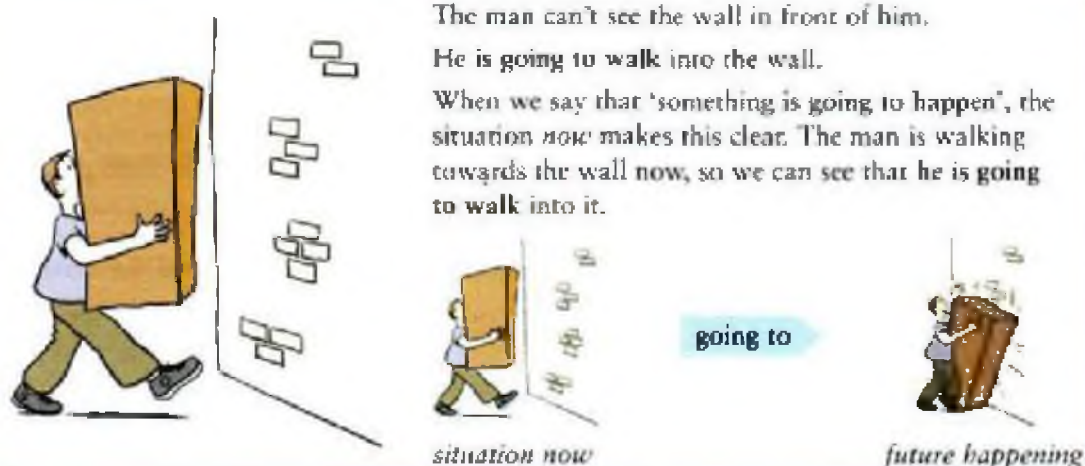
- ☐ What time are you **meeting** Ann this evening?
- ☐ I'm **leaving** tomorrow. I've got my plane ticket.

I am going to do something = I've decided to do it (but perhaps not **arranged** to do it):

- ☐ 'Your shoes are dirty.' 'Yes, I know. I'm **going to clean** them.' (= I've decided to clean them, but I haven't **arranged** to clean them)
- ☐ I've decided not to stay here any longer. Tomorrow I'm **going to look** for somewhere else to stay.

Often the difference is very small and either form is possible.

**C** You can also say that 'something is going to happen' in the future. For example:



Some more examples:

- ☐ Look at those black clouds! It's **going to rain**. (the clouds are there now)
- ☐ I feel terrible. I think I'm **going to be sick**. (I feel terrible now)
- ☐ The economic situation is bad now and things are **going to get worse**.

**D** I was going to (do something) = I intended to do it, but didn't do it:

- ☐ We **were going to travel** by train, but then we decided to go by car instead.
- ☐ Peter **was going to do** the exam, but he changed his mind.
- ☐ I **was just going to cross** the road when somebody shouted 'Stop!'

You can say that 'something was going to happen' (but didn't happen):

- ☐ I thought it was **going to rain**, but it didn't.

## Exercises

## Unit 20

### 20.1 Write a question with going to for each situation.

- 1 Your friend has won some money. You ask:  
(what / do with it?) What are you going to do with it?
- 2 Your friend is going to a party tonight. You ask:  
(what / wear?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Your friend has just bought a new table. You ask:  
(where / put it?) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Your friend has decided to have a party. You ask:  
(who / invite?) \_\_\_\_\_

### 20.2 Read the situations and complete the dialogues. Use going to.

- 1 You have decided to tidy your room this morning.  
FRIEND: Are you going out this morning?  
YOU: No, I'm going to tidy my room.
- 2 You bought a sweater, but it doesn't fit you very well. You have decided to take it back.  
FRIEND: That sweater is too big for you.  
YOU: I know, \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 You have been offered a job, but you have decided not to accept it.  
FRIEND: I hear you've been offered a job.  
YOU: That's right, but \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 You have to phone Sarah. It's morning now, and you have decided to phone her tonight.  
FRIEND: Have you phoned Sarah yet?  
YOU: No, \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 You are in a restaurant. The food is awful and you've decided to complain.  
FRIEND: This food is awful, isn't it?  
YOU: Yes, it's disgusting, \_\_\_\_\_

### 20.3 What is going to happen in these situations? Use the words in brackets.

- 1 There are a lot of black clouds in the sky.  
(rain) It's going to rain.
- 2 It is 8.30. Tom is leaving his house. He has to be at work at 8.45, but the journey takes 30 minutes.  
(late) He \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 There is a hole in the bottom of the boat. A lot of water is coming in through the hole.  
(sink) The boat \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Lucy and Chris are driving. There is very little petrol left in the tank. The nearest petrol station is a long way away.  
(run out) They \_\_\_\_\_

### 20.4 Complete the sentences with was/were going to + the following verbs:

buy   give up   have   phone   play   ~~travel~~

- 1 We were going to travel by train, but then we decided to go by car instead.
- 2 I \_\_\_\_\_ some new clothes yesterday, but I was very busy and didn't have time to go to the shops.
- 3 Martin and I \_\_\_\_\_ tennis last week, but he was injured.
- 4 I \_\_\_\_\_ Jane, but I decided to email her instead.
- 5 A: When I last saw Tim, he \_\_\_\_\_ his job.  
B: That's right, but in the end he decided to stay where he was.
- 6 We \_\_\_\_\_ a party last week, but some of our friends couldn't come, so we cancelled it.