

## Talking about planned future events

The present continuous (is / am / are + -ing form), future continuous (will / shall + be + -ing form) and be going to can all be used to talk about planned future events. There is little difference of meaning.

Study the examples given below.

I am going to spend this coming weekend with my grandparents. (Be going to)

I am spending this coming weekend with my grandparents. (Present continuous)

I will be spending this coming weekend with my grandparents. (Future continuous)

As you can see, all of these forms can be used to talk about planned future events. There is little difference of meaning.

The present continuous tense is mainly used to talk about arrangements in the near future. In this case, the time and place of the event are usually decided or mentioned.

I am meeting Sam at 4 o'clock.

What are you doing this evening? I am going out.

What are you doing tonight? I'm watching a film.

The future continuous tense is also used to talk about planned future events. It is very common in polite inquiries about people's plans.

'Will you be staying here for long?' 'No, I will be leaving in a couple of days.' (More polite than 'Are you staying here for long?')

The future continuous tense can be used to make predictions about what will happen over a period of time in the future.

This time tomorrow I will be relaxing on the beach.

This time next year, I will be playing with my grandchild.

## **Talking about planned future events**

Note that the present continuous tense cannot be used to make predictions about the future.

Look at the way he drives. He is going to have an accident soon. OR He will be having an accident soon. (BUT NOT He is having an accident soon.)

Look at the sky. It is going to rain. OR It will be raining before long.