

A

Study this example:



'I'll phone you when I get home' is a sentence with two parts:

*the main part:* 'I'll phone you'  
and *the when-part:* 'when I get home'

The time in the sentence is future ('tomorrow'), but we use a *present* tense (I get) in the when-part of the sentence.

We do *not* use *will* in the when-part of the sentence.

Some more examples:

- We'll go out **when** it stops raining. (*not* when it will stop)
- When** you are in London again, come and see us. (*not* When you will be)
- (*said to a child*) What do you want to be **when** you grow up? (*not* will grow)

The same thing happens after **while** / **before** / **after** / **as soon as** / **until** or **till**:

- I'm going to read a lot **while** I'm on holiday. (*not* while I will be)
- I'll probably go back home on Sunday. **Before** I go, I'd like to visit the museum.
- Wait here **until** (*or till*) I come back.

B

You can also use the present perfect (have done) after **when** / **after** / **until** / **as soon as**:

- Can I borrow that book **when** you've finished with it?
- Don't say anything **while** Ian is here. Wait **until** he has gone.

If you use the present perfect, one thing must be complete *before* the other (so the two things do *not* happen together):

- When** I've phoned Kate, we can have dinner.  
(= First I'll phone Kate and *after that* we can have dinner.)

Do not use the present perfect if the two things happen together:

- When** I phone Kate, I'll ask her about the party. (*not* When I've phoned)

It is often possible to use either the present simple or the present perfect:

- I'll come as soon as I finish.                      *or*                      I'll come as soon as I've finished.
- You'll feel better **after** you have                      *or*                      You'll feel better **after** you've had something to eat                      something to eat.

C

After **if**, we normally use the present simple (if I do / if I see etc.) for the future:

- It's raining hard. We'll get wet **if** we go out. (*not* if we will go)
- I'll be angry **if** it happens again. (*not* if it will happen)
- Hurry up! **If** we don't hurry, we'll be late.

D

Compare when and if:

We use **when** for things which are *sure* to happen:

- I'm going shopping later. (for sure) **When** I go shopping, I'll buy some food.

We use **if** (*not* when) for things that will *possibly* happen:

- I might go shopping later. (it's possible) **If** I go shopping, I'll buy some food.
- If** it is raining this evening, I won't go out. (*not* When it is raining)
- Don't worry **if** I'm late tonight. (*not* when I'm late)
- If** they don't come soon, I'm not going to wait. (*not* When they don't come)

- 25.1 Complete the sentences using the verbs in brackets. All the sentences are about the future. Use will/won't or the present simple (I see / he plays / it is etc.).
- I ll phone (phone) you when I get (get) home from work.
  - I want to see Julia before she ..... (go) out.
  - We're going on holiday tomorrow. I ..... (tell) you all about it when we ..... (come) back.
  - Brian looks very different now. When you ..... (see) him again, you ..... (not / recognise) him.
  - ..... (you / be) lonely without me while I ..... (be) away?
  - We must do something soon before it ..... (be) too late.
  - I don't want to go without you. I ..... (wait) until you ..... (be) ready.
  - Sue has applied for the job, but she isn't very well-qualified for it. I ..... (be) surprised if she ..... (get) it.
  - I hope to play tennis tomorrow if the weather ..... (be) nice.
  - I'm going out now. If anybody ..... (phone) while I ..... (be) out, can you take a message?

25.2 Make one sentence from two.

- It will stop raining soon. Then we'll go out.  
We'll go out ..... when it stops raining .....
- I'll find somewhere to live. Then I'll give you my address.  
I ..... when .....
- I'll do the shopping. Then I'll come straight back home.  
..... after .....
- It's going to get dark. Let's go home before that.  
..... before .....
- She must apologise to me first. I won't speak to her until then.  
..... until .....

25.3 Read the situations and complete the sentences.

- A friend of yours is going on holiday. You want to know what she is going to do.  
You ask: What are you going to do when you are on holiday ..... ?
- A friend of yours is visiting you. She has to go soon but maybe there's time for some more coffee.  
You ask: Would you like some more coffee before ..... ?
- You want to sell your car. Jim is interested in buying it, but he hasn't decided yet.  
You ask: Can you let me know as soon as ..... ?
- Your friends are going to New York soon. You want to know where they're going to stay.  
You ask: Where are you going to stay when ..... ?
- The traffic is very bad in your town, but they are building a new road at the moment.  
You say: I think things will be better when they .....

25.4 Put in when or if.

- Don't worry if I'm late tonight.
- Tom might phone while I'm out this evening. .... he does, can you take a message?
- I'm going to Rome next week. .... I'm there, I hope to visit a friend of mine.
- I think Jill will get the job. I'll be very surprised ..... she doesn't get it.
- I'm going shopping. .... you want anything, I can get it for you.
- I'm going away for a few days. I'll phone you ..... I get back.
- I want you to come to the party, but ..... you don't want to come, that's all right.
- We can eat at home or, ..... you prefer, we can go to a restaurant.