



Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper - Intermediate

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Future Tenses 5 K S Sandhu

A Busy Week Ahead

Emma sat at her desk, staring at her computer screen. It was Friday afternoon, and she was going to have a relaxing weekend with her friends. But things were about to change.

“Hi Emma, it’s Sarah here,” said her best friend on the phone. “I was going to call you earlier, but I’ve been so busy. Listen, there’s a problem with our cinema plans tonight. I’m due to finish my shift at the café at 6 p.m., but my boss just told me I might have to stay longer. I’m sure to be tired if I work extra hours!”

Emma laughed. “Don’t worry, Sarah. I wasn’t going to go out anyway because I need to prepare for my presentation on Monday. The manager is to give me feedback on it next week, so I want to make it perfect.”

As soon as she put the phone down, her mobile rang again. It was her brother, Tom.

“Emma? Hi! You were going to help me choose a new laptop this weekend, right? Well, I’m about to buy one online, but I’m not sure which one is best. The shop is likely to have a sale soon, but I don’t want to wait.”

Emma sighed. “Tom, I can’t talk now. I’m about to start cooking dinner. Can we discuss it tomorrow morning? I hope to have more time then.”

The next day, everything became even busier. Emma received a voice message from her boss: “Hello Emma, this is Mr. Carlton. You were going to send me the quarterly report yesterday, but I haven’t received it yet. We are due to present the results at the board meeting on Tuesday. There’s likely to be a delay if we don’t get the numbers right. Please finish it by Monday.”

Emma felt stressed. She wasn’t going to spend her whole Saturday working, but now she had no choice. While she was typing, her mother called.

“Darling, the family reunion is to take place next month. Your aunt and uncle are sure to ask about your new job. You are likely to get lots of questions! I was going to bake a cake, but I think I’ll need your help.”

“Mum, I might be free next weekend,” replied Emma, “but this week is impossible. My presentation is due to happen soon, and I still have to practise it.”

Later that evening, Emma met Sarah at the gym for their usual aerobics class. They were both out of breath after the warm-up.

“I can’t believe how busy I am,” said Emma. “I was going to relax this weekend, but everything changed. My report is to be ready by Monday, and my brother is about to buy an expensive laptop without my advice!”

Sarah smiled. “Same here! I was going to go shopping tomorrow, but now I’m likely to work overtime again. Life is sure to get easier after this busy period, don’t you think?”

Emma nodded. “I hope to finish everything by Sunday evening. Then we can finally have that cinema night we planned. Things are bound to improve next week!”

As they continued exercising, Emma realised that even when plans change, being organised helps. She felt more confident about the week ahead. The future might be busy, but she was going to manage it.

Questions:

Question 1: What was Emma originally planning to do on the weekend?

Question 2: Why was Sarah going to be late for the cinema plans?

Question 3: What is Emma due to do on Monday?

Question 4: Why did Tom call Emma?

Question 5: What message did Emma receive from her boss?

Question 6: What event is due to take place next month according to Emma’s mother?

Question 7: How does Emma feel about her busy week at the end of the story?

Question 8: What future form is used when Emma says “I’m about to start cooking dinner”?

Question 9: Who is sure to ask Emma about her new job?

Question 10: What does Emma hope to do by Sunday evening?

Answers:

Answer 1: She was going to have a relaxing weekend with her friends.

Answer 2: She might have to stay longer at the café because her boss asked her to work extra hours.

Answer 3: She is due to give a presentation on Monday.

Answer 4: He called because he was about to buy a new laptop and wanted her help choosing one.

Answer 5: Her boss said she was going to send the quarterly report yesterday but didn't, and it is due for the board meeting on Tuesday.

Answer 6: The family reunion is to take place next month.

Answer 7: She feels more confident about the week ahead.

Answer 8: "Be about to" (for something that is going to happen very soon).

Answer 9: Her aunt and uncle are sure to ask her about her new job.

Answer 10: She hopes to finish everything by Sunday evening so they can have their cinema night.

45 Other ways to talk about the future



1 was/were going to

We use *was/were going to* to talk about something that was expected or planned for the future but it didn't happen. We sometimes call this form 'the future in the past':
In 2005 they were going to build a supermarket here. (= There was a plan to build it.)
When I was younger I was going to be a ballet dancer. (= I expected to do this in the future.)
I wasn't going to work today, but the boss called me in. (= I didn't expect to work today.)

We often use this form

- to talk about something we expected to happen but in fact didn't happen:
I was going to study medicine but my grades weren't good enough for medical school.
- to make excuses about something we failed to do:
I was going to finish my homework but I didn't have time.
We were going to buy some more milk but we left our money at home. Sorry.

Past continuous for plans that did not happen ➤ Unit 31.4

2 Expressions with a future meaning

We use *am/is/are to* + infinitive in formal situations to talk about future events:

The president is to talk to the nation tomorrow.
The bridge is to be opened by the mayor on July 20th.

We often use this form in news reports and in instructions or orders:

The police are to start house-to-house enquiries this week.
The driver of the stolen car is to appear in court tomorrow.
These pills are to be taken three times a day.
You are to report for duty at 9.00 a.m.

We use *am/is/are about to* + infinitive to talk about an action that will happen in the immediate future:

Hurry up! The train's about to leave.
I can't talk now – my phone battery is about to run out.

Some verbs and other expressions also have a future meaning:

<i>be due to</i>	<i>The new computer is due to arrive tomorrow.</i>
<i>be sure/certain to</i>	<i>The test isn't difficult. I'm sure to pass it.</i>
<i>be likely to</i>	<i>I don't think we're likely to get a refund as we don't have a receipt.</i>
<i>expect</i>	<i>The company expects to announce its annual results next month.</i>
<i>hope</i>	<i>I hope to see you on Friday.</i>
<i>want</i>	<i>They want to visit us next summer.</i>

Practice

1 Match the sentences 1–5 with A or B.

- 0 She's certain to be promoted.
A I'm talking about the present. **B** I'm talking about the future.
- 1 We were going to go to their party.
A We went to their party. B We didn't go to their party.
- 2 I can't talk now, I'm about to go out.
A I'm going out in a few minutes. B I'm going out later this evening.
- 3 I wasn't going to wear that red dress.
A I didn't wear the red dress. B My friend persuaded me to wear the red dress.
- 4 Four heads of state are to attend the opening ceremony.
A I read this in a newspaper. B A friend said this.
- 5 The government was going to reduce taxes last year.
A They reduced taxes last year. B They didn't reduce taxes last year.

2 GRAMMAR IN USE Complete the the recorded phone messages with the words and phrases from the box. 3.25 Listen and check.

about to due to **hope** hope to likely to be sure to want was going to were going to

- A Hi Carla, it's Jane here. I (0) *hope*..... you get this message! Sorry I didn't call you earlier. I (1) phone, but it's been a really busy day. Anyway, I just wanted to tell you that I might be a bit late for the aerobics class this evening. I'm (2) finish a really important report for my boss for tomorrow and I need to spend a couple more hours on it to get it ready. But I'm (3) finish it by 7.00 so I'll see you around 7.30.
- B Hello. Mr Carlton? This is Anthea from the electrical shop. You (4) collect your repaired toaster this morning but you didn't come in to the shop. Do you (5) us to send it to you or do you still want to collect it yourself? The thing is, we're (6) close for our annual holidays so if you don't collect it before the weekend it'll be too late.
- C This is Karen from customer services with a message for Stephen Brook. I'm afraid we've had some problems with our suppliers and there's (7) a few weeks' delay in the delivery of your spare parts. I'm sorry about that. I (8) get a definite date from them in the next few days. I'll phone again when I've got a firm date for you.

3 Complete the second sentence so it means the same as the first, using the word in brackets. Use two to five words in your answer. 3.26 Listen and check.

- 0 They will definitely ask us about our holiday plans. (sure)
They *are sure to ask us*... about our holiday plans.
- 1 I planned to phone you but I didn't have time. (was)
I but I didn't have time.
- 2 The new hospital will open next September. (due)
The new hospital next September.
- 3 I think we're probably going to be there around 6.00. (likely)
We there around 6.00.
- 4 The Prime Minister will make an announcement this evening. (is)
The Prime Minister an announcement this evening.

Answers

UNIT 45

1 1 B 2 A 3 B 4 A 5 B

2 1 was going to 2 due to 3 sure to 4 were going to 5 want 6 about to 7 likely to be 8 hope to

3 1 was going to phone you 2 is due to open 3 are likely to be 4 is to make