



Unit 9 – The Future from the Past (*I was going to.. I was leaving.. I was told he would..*)

A) The Future in the past is used to express an event, action (*or intention*) that was in the future at a particular moment in the past. It does not matter if you are correct or not. There are three patterns used to express this idea.

Future From the Past			
Chart:			
Grammar Patterns:	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> 1) was/were + going to 2) was + verb(ing) 3) would + verb </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> 1) I was going to call Amy but I couldn't find her phone number. 2) I went to bed at 10pm because I was leaving early the next day. 3) I was told that the mechanic would fix my car by 5pm today. </td> </tr> </table>	1) was/were + going to 2) was + verb(ing) 3) would + verb	1) I was going to call Amy but I couldn't find her phone number. 2) I went to bed at 10pm because I was leaving early the next day. 3) I was told that the mechanic would fix my car by 5pm today.
1) was/were + going to 2) was + verb(ing) 3) would + verb	1) I was going to call Amy but I couldn't find her phone number. 2) I went to bed at 10pm because I was leaving early the next day. 3) I was told that the mechanic would fix my car by 5pm today.		

B) Was/were going to is used to talk about a past future firm plan, intention, or a prediction that didn't happen:

- We **were going to** start on Monday but we had to delay. → A future plan in the past.
- I **was going to** tell Mike the news but I didn't have the time → A future intention in the past.
- The team **was going to** win but actually lost 4-3 in the end. → A future prediction told in the past.

-> Note the difference between talking about the future from the present moment and the past (*was going to*):

- Traffic is terrible! I think I **'m going to** be late. → expresses the future from the present moment
- I thought I **was going to** be late, but I'm on time. → express the future from a point in the past

C) Was + verb(ing) is used to talk about an arranged future event from a time in the past. This is the same as for the present continuous for future arrangements:

- I was very nervous on Sunday night. I **was taking** a big test the next day.
- She had been cleaning the house all day. Her mother **was arriving** that evening.
- We had to leave early because we **were planning** to pick up Mr. Smith from the bus terminal.

D) Would + verb is used to talk about a past future promise or prediction that may or may not have evidence. It is often paired with verbs relating to the subject's thoughts (E.g.: *sure, think, suspect, know, hope*) in the simple past.

- I thought they **would win**, but the game ended in a tie. → a prediction without evidence
- The forecast said it **would rain** but it's been sunny all day. → a prediction with evidence
- She promised she **would call**, but she never did. → a past promise

-> Note the difference between talking about the future from the present moment (will) and the past (would):

- I think I **will finish** painting the room today. It shouldn't take long. → the future from the present
- I thought I **would finish** painting today but there wasn't enough time. → the future from a past point

E) Apologies & Excuses can introduce an excuse or an explanation why a situation did not unfold as planned:

- I **was going to buy** groceries but I completely forgot about it. I'm so sorry.
- I thought the order **would be complete** by now but there's been a problem with the network.

F) Passive voice – the passive voice is used to focus on an anticipated event or action (instead of the subject):

- The issue **was going to** be discussed at the meeting. *Active: 'We were going to discuss.'*
- I knew the washing machine **would** be fixed by Steve. *Active: 'I knew Steve would fix.'*

G) Time Clauses such as *before, after, by the time, as soon as*, etc. can be used to express the future from the past:

- I **was going to** pick you up before work but didn't have time. → expresses an intention
- I told Mark that when he arrived, we **would go out** to eat. → expresses a promise

H) Reported Speech is also used to report the future from the past: *'Mark said that he was going away tomorrow.'*



Unit 9 – Exercises:

9.1 – Match the following clauses to create sentences using the **be going to** form. (9-B/E)

- | | | |
|--|---------------|---|
| 1. I was going to pick you up from the bus station | <u> b </u> | a) but it just started to rain a moment ago. |
| 2. I was going to do some yard work outside | <u> </u> | b) but my car didn't start this morning. |
| 3. I was going to write some emails to friends | <u> </u> | c) but I didn't have my phone with me at the time. |
| 4. I was going to sing at the Christmas concert | <u> </u> | d) but I went to bed late and forgot to set my alarm. |
| 5. I was going to call you this afternoon | <u> </u> | e) but ended up watching YouTube videos instead. |
| 6. I was going to buy some groceries after work | <u> </u> | f) but I forgot my wallet at the office. |
| 7. I was going to get up early and go for a walk | <u> </u> | g) but my throat was sore and I had to drop out. |

9.2 – Determine if the underlined verbs are incorrect and then correct them, if necessary. (9-B/C/D/E/G)

- | | | |
|--|---------------|------------------|
| 1. We didn't expect we <u>will see</u> Kelly here so early this morning. | <u> </u> | would see |
| 2. I <u>was going to call</u> Mike when he suddenly walked in the door. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 3. The school <u>is going to announce</u> the exam schedule last week. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 4. We went to bed early because we <u>are flying</u> early the next morning. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 5. I am so sorry. I thought that we <u>would finish</u> the order by 3pm. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 6. I assumed that Jennifer <u>will have been</u> here already. Where is she? | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 7. Yesterday was stressful. The CEO <u>is arriving</u> soon and we had to prepare. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 8. We <u>are meeting</u> him right after lunch, so we took a taxi to save time. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |

9.3 – Complete each sentence with an appropriate verb while determining the most suitable tense. (9-B/C/D)

become / stay / arrive / leave / have / win Was going / would / were arriving / were going to have / was leaving / would

- When I was young, I decided I **was going to become** an engineer when I grew up but then changed my mind.
- Before the game, we thought they _____ but they ended up losing in the final minute.
- I was busy last Friday cleaning because my husband's parents _____ the next morning.
- This morning, we were told that we _____ a meeting at 2pm but it was canceled.
- It said on his ticket that his bus _____ at 10am so we had some extra time.
- We were going to the beach on Saturday and hoped the weather _____ warm and sunny.

9.4 – For each sentence, fill in the gaps with a verb pair from the box. Write one verb in the **simple past** tense and the other verb with **would** (e.g.: 'would go'). (9-D)

arrive/stop do/have need/miss make/listen buy/drive take/rain start/arrive

- We hoped that the new washing machine **would arrive** before the current one **stopped** working altogether.
- Mom asked me if I _____ the dishes after we _____ dinner together. She was feeling tired.
- After seeing the forecast, I told Lisa that I _____ an umbrella in case it _____ today.
- They told us they _____ a decision as soon as they _____ to the presentation.
- Dad told me that he _____ tickets to the game when he _____ to work yesterday.
- I knew that we _____ to sign the contract then or we _____ the deal completely.
- We promised Sam that we _____ lunch when he _____ but not beforehand.

9.5 – Change each sentence from the **active** to the **passive** form. (9-F)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. The crowd knew (he was going to break the record). | -> the record was going to be broken. |
| 2. I thought you couldn't come because (you sprained your ankle). | -> _____. |
| 3. The manager said (he was going to hire a new assistant). | -> _____. |
| 4. Mr. Smith mentioned that (they were reviewing the proposal). | -> _____. |
| 5. She promised that (she was going to deliver the letters). | -> _____. |
| 6. John mentioned that (he was about to return the books). | -> _____. |
| 7. My son promised that (he would take out the garbage today). | -> _____. |