

The future in IELTS Speaking and Writing

First of all without any help, look at the lists below and try to guess which part or parts of the exam each list is most common in/ most likely for/ most useful for. The forms at the top of each list are those which are most common in that part of the exam.

will

is expected to/ It is expected that

is predicted to/ It is predicted that

is forecast to/ It is forecast that

is projected to/ It is projected that

will have + PP (= Future Perfect)

The expectation is that

will be + v+ing (= Future Continuous)

be v+ing (Present Continuous with future meaning)

want (to)/ would like (to)

would love to

be planning to

be going to + v

will probably

might/ may

might well/ may well

will (probably/ almost certainly) be + v+ing (= Future Continuous)

will (probably/ almost certainly) have + PP (= Future Perfect)

will probably

will almost certainly

want (to)/ would like (to)

could possibly

I predict that...

I expect... to...

might well/ may well

Use these more specific examples to help with the task above.

will reach a peak
is expected to rebound/ It is expected that it will level off
is predicted to bounce back/ It is predicted that it will plateau
is forecast to fluctuate/ It is forecast that it will continue to decline
is projected to peak/ It is projected that it will accelerate
will have overtaken...
The expectation is that it will maintain that high level until...
will be slowing down

I'm meeting an old school friend for dinner.
I want to set up my own business./ I would like to move abroad.
I would love to write a book.
I'm planning to have an overseas break next summer.
I'm going to move house next year.
I will probably move back to my hometown when I retire.
I don't have any plans, but I might/ may watch a movie on Netflix.
I'm not sure but I might well/ may well be invited to an end of year party.
I will probably still be doing the same job at that time.
I hope that I will have got married and had kids.

Economic growth will probably slow down as the population shrinks.
Pollution will almost certainly get worse before it gets better.
We all want to live in a world safe from crime./ I would like the government to invest more money in this area.
The birth rate could possible recover.
I predict that there will be no more petrol cars in thirty years.
I expect politics to become more aggressive.
Paper books might well/ may well be with us forever.

-----fold, cover or cut-----

Match the sections above to these parts of the exam:

- Speaking Part One (personal questions)
- Writing Part One (describing diagrams/ data)
- Speaking Part Three (discussion questions)
- Writing Part Two (discursive essay)

One section above matches two parts of the exam.

Check your answers as a class.

Ask about any examples that you matched wrongly, forms that you are not sure how to use, etc.

Without looking above, brainstorm suitable future forms for each of those parts of the exam into the gaps below, with the most common/ most likely/ most useful top. Other forms not above may also be possible.

The future in IELTS Speaking Part One (personal questions)

The future in IELTS Writing Part One (describing diagrams/ data)

The future in IELTS Speaking Part Three (discussion questions) and IELTS Writing Part Two (discursive essay)

Mixed answers

Use this mixed list to help with the brainstorming task above. Some can go in more than one place.

- be going to + v
- be planning to
- be v+ing (Present Continuous with future meaning)
- could possibly
- I expect... to...
- I predict that...
- is expected to/ It is expected that
- is forecast to/ It is forecast that
- is predicted to/ It is predicted that
- is projected to/ It is projected that
- might well/ may well
- might/ may
- The expectation is that
- want (to)/ would like (to)
- will
- will (probably/ almost certainly) be + v+ing (= Future Continuous)
- will (probably/ almost certainly) have + PP (= Future Perfect)
- will almost certainly
- will be + v+ing (= Future Continuous)
- will have + PP (= Future Perfect)
- will probably
- would love to

Check with the first page above. Other answers may be possible, so please check with your teacher if you put something different or something in a different order.

Try to make personal statements with all of the Speaking Part One future forms, then try to make opinions with all of the Speaking Part Three/ Writing Part Two forms.

Try to use all of the Writing Part One forms with some future data that your teacher gives you, e.g. a Writing Part One line graph.

Look at a line graph including the future and try to find data that you could describe with Future Perfect and Future Continuous. Then discuss if that information should be included in an answer to that question or not (when you select and summarise the data).