

Grammar Bank

Forecasting and Making Predictions



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Grammar Bank: Forecasting & Making Predictions

At the start of a new year or trimester, many of you will no doubt be holding meetings to plan, discuss forecasting, and predict what the future has in store for the coming year. Whilst predictions are often based on clear facts and figures, none of us have a crystal ball and we can often only speculate.

With this in mind, we have put together a Grammar Bank to help you talk about probability in a clear and concise way.

Making Predictions: Will and Won't

When we're sure about what we are forecasting, the simplest way to make predictions about the future is to use '**will**' or '**won't**':



Degrees of Future Probability

There are many ways that we can express differing degrees of probability.

Emphasising 100% Certainty:

Language	Example
Will definitely...	We will definitely hit our targets.
Will certainly...	The launch will certainly be a success.
Bound to...	This year is bound to be our best yet.
I'm sure there will/won't...	I'm sure there will be some organisational restructuring.
It's clear that...	It's clear that the department is expanding.
Without a doubt,...	Without a doubt, new products will be on the market by June.
It is undeniable that...	It's undeniable that we will hit some obstacles on the way.

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Likely:

Language	Example
Will likely...	We will likely hit our targets.
Pretty sure...	I'm pretty sure the launch will be a success.
Might well...	This year might well be our best yet.
Quite probable...	It's quite probable that new products will be on the market soon.

Possible:

Language	Example
Will possibly...	We will possibly hit our targets.
Could possibly...	The launch could possibly be a success.
Could/might/may	This year could/might/may be our best yet.

Unlikely:

Language	Example
Probably won't...	We probably won't hit our targets.
It is unlikely that...	It is unlikely that the launch will be a success.
May not...	This may not be our best yet.

Impossible:

Language	Example
Definitely won't...	We definitely won't hit our targets.
Absolutely won't...	The launch absolutely won't be a success.
It is impossible that...	It is impossible that this year will be our best yet.

Note: *Will* goes **before** the adverb
Won't goes **after** the adverb.

Making Predictions Conditionally

The following structure is appropriate when expressing a possible or probable condition and its future result:

Condition (if + present simple)	Will/Won't, Might/Could (modal + infinitive)
If we meet targets,	you will all get your bonus
If we don't plan well,	the launch won't be a success
If we contract new clients,	This year might/could be our best yet.