

English Usage (Collins CoBUILD)

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Rejecting ideas and proposals distancing yourself from a situation To distance yourself from an opinion, and therefore sound less direct, you can use the passive form of a reporting verb with it as the impersonal subject (see 7.6). <i>It was understood that if we were successful in securing the takeover, Sarong would become a part of International Ltd.</i> <i>It is assumed that share prices will rise as a result of the operation.</i> <i>It was agreed that the details would remain confidential.</i> being diplomatic You can use a qualifier such as <i>a little</i> , <i>a bit</i> , or <i>rather</i> to make a negative message seem less strong (see 2.162). <i>That sounds a little expensive.</i> <i>They may be a bit late, I'm afraid.</i> <i>Unfortunately, we were rather disappointed with the quality of the last delivery.</i> Expressions like <i>not very</i> , <i>not totally</i> , <i>not completely</i> , and <i>not entirely</i> followed by a positive adjective sound more diplomatic than using a negative adjective. <i>We aren't totally convinced by the idea of using road transport.</i> <i>I wouldn't be very happy with that arrangement.</i> <i>You don't seem absolutely certain about that.</i> the past progressive can be used to make a statement more indirect in order to be polite (see 4.3) and 4.3). <i>We were expecting to hear a new proposal today.</i> <i>I was aiming to establish a framework for further discussion.</i> <i>We were hoping to reach agreement about this before we go.</i>	Making predictions opinions about the future You can use will when you are certain about a situation in the future (see 4.53). <i>The outlook certainly has a negative effect on the economy.</i> <i>I believe this attitude will soon become the norm.</i> You can also use be going to instead of will to make predictions (see 4.58). <i>She predicts that earnings are going to come down sharply.</i> <i>We are trying to decide whether the economy is going to go into recession.</i> expressing a negative opinion about the future If you want to make a negative prediction, it sounds more polite to introduce an affirmative clause with a phrase like <i>I don't think</i> than to use a negative clause. <i>I don't think this will go down well with the union.</i> <i>I don't think it's going to be a great success.</i> degrees of certainty about the future You can use could , may , or might to say that it is possible that something will happen (see 5.124). <i>These economic problems could cause huge problems for the rest of Europe.</i> <i>New technology might be able to halve the amount of water we use.</i> <i>The market may eventually accomplish what environmentalists want.</i> You use be likely followed by a to -infinitive to say something will probably happen. <i>Emerging economies are likely to face continuing problems.</i> You use be bound followed by a to -infinitive to say strongly that something is certain to happen in the future (see 5.232). <i>The pressure on margins is bound to make success difficult.</i>
Presenting Describing change the past compared to the present You can use the present perfect simple to talk about events or situations that are still important in the present (see 4.33). <i>The FTSE index has strengthened further since this morning.</i> <i>We have made changes based on your concerns and feedback.</i> the present moment To talk about change that is still in progress at the present moment, you can use the present progressive (see 4.10). <i>The economy is growing, but I've looked closer there are some worrying trends in the country's major cities; the quality of life is improving.</i>	Contrasts and comparisons concessive clauses You use conjunctions like <i>while</i> , <i>although</i> , <i>in spite of</i> , and <i>despite</i> to contrast one idea with another (see 8.68). <i>Until now, only 8,000 people have registered with the site, although the company said the number is still increasing.</i> <i>In spite of the crisis, sales are actually up on last year.</i> <i>Retail sales are plummeting, while consumer prices are rising.</i> <i>Whilst and whereas are more formal.</i> <i>In France there was a small improvement, whereas there was no change in Germany.</i> <i>Micro's online store is almost empty, whilst Azar's has nearly 50,000 products.</i> making comparisons You can use an adjective with either <i>-er</i> added to the end (<i>cheaper</i> , <i>older</i>) or <i>more</i>

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