

Shall (and will) ★★☆☆

Will is used in several ways; shall is more limited.

1 Will is used for future predictions and polite requests, and in other ways (see GB 166 for more detail)



"The sun will be completely covered at 15.23, Greenwich Mean Time."



Will you wake me at 7 am?

2a Shall: offers and suggestions (with 'I' and 'we')



Shall I come for supper?

Cartoons: Holden-Hotopf

More examples

'Shall I come and pick it up or will it be OK in the morning?'

'Shall we go and see?'

2b 'I shall' and 'we shall': talking about the future in formal language



I shall discuss its historical origins at a later stage

More examples

In 8 to 11 we shall deal with separate levels of student discourse.

We shall begin by looking at the women's experiences of single-sex education.

2c 'He (etc) shall' in very formal (often legal) documents (usually in 3rd person)



The chairman's decision shall be considered as final...

More examples

The making of an award shall be a condition precedent to any action against the Corporation.

The Proprietor shall be responsible for the supply of the components...

Quick check

Tick one box in each row:

Column 1 = offer; column 2 = future (formal); column 3 = legal

	1	2	3
1 The sentence shall be directly related to the offence committed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 'Shall I carry your bag upstairs?'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 We shall examine the consequences in more detail later.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 The legal owner shall be responsible for maintenance...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 'Shall I open the window?'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>