



# WILL / WOULD

## Expressing willingness and unwillingness

**Will and won't** are used most often in English to talk about the future.

However, they also have other functions, one of which is to express **willingness and unwillingness**.

Likewise, **would and wouldn't** are not only used for conditional sentences, but can also be used to express willingness when speaking about the past.

## Expressing willingness, unwillingness: will, won't, would, wouldn't

### In the present: will, won't

We can use **will** to say that someone is **willing** to do something:  
Mike is a nice person; **he will always help** you if you need him.

We can use **will not / won't** to express an **unwillingness** to do something:  
There is no point in talking to him – **he won't listen**.  
My car **won't start** – I'll have to take the bus.

### In the past: would, wouldn't

When speaking about **the past**, we can use **would** to express that someone was generally willing to do things:

Mike was a really nice person; **he'd** (he would) **always help** anyone in any situation.

We **don't** use **would** to speak about single occasions in the past:

She agreed to help me.

~~He would help me.~~

However, we can use **would not / wouldn't** to express an unwillingness to do something (both generally and on single occasions):

My dad always helped with the cooking, but **he wouldn't wash** the dishes. (generally)

I was late for work today because my car **wouldn't start**. (single occasion)