

# The Future Tenses

Take a look at the four future tenses in English and how they're used in a sentence:

**Future simple** : I **will live** in Paris

**Future progressive** : I **will be living** in Paris

**Future perfect** : I **will have lived** in Paris

**Future perfect progressive** : I **will have been living** in Paris

## 1. Future Simple

Let's start with the basics. The future simple is used to talk about a time later than now and can be used in lots of different ways.

### Form

- It is made up of the verb **will/won't + base infinitive** (infinitive without to).
- Because will is a modal verb it doesn't change depending on the person doing the action.
- We can use contractions e.g. I will = I'll.
- In the negative, we can also use will not for more emphasis.
- Won't is more common in speech.
- In short answers we say: yes X will or no X won't.

### Uses and examples

- **Instant or spontaneous decisions** – I'm hungry. I think I'll make a sandwich.
- **Future predictions based on a belief** – I'm sure you'll pass the test.
- **Promises** – I won't tell anyone your secret.
- **Offers** – I'll carry your bags for you.
- **Requests** – Will you tell Henry I called?
- **Threats** – If you do that again, I'll tell Mum.
- **Future facts** – I'll be back later tonight.

### Shall

We can use **shall** instead of **will** for future time references with *I* and *we*. However, it is slightly more formal.

E.g. We shall never forget this beautiful day.

It is also common to use shall in questions to make offers, suggestions or ask for advice.

E.g. Shall I carry these bags for you?

Shall I open the window?

What shall I tell Mary about the broken vase?

### *Be going to vs will*

It's important to note that for **predictions based on evidence** and for **future plans** we use *be going to* not *will*.

*E.g.* Look at those grey clouds. It's definitely going to rain!

– What are you doing after work?

– I'm going to the gym.

## 2. Future continuous

Now let's move on to the future continuous. Generally, we use this tense to talk about things in progress at a particular time in the future. Take a look at the form:

I will be working / I won't be working / Will I be working ?

### *Uses and examples*

- **An action in progress at a specific time in the future (at 5pm, this time tomorrow, in two weeks, in five years time etc.).** This time tomorrow, I'll be flying to Barbados.
- **An action we see as new or temporary.** I'll be working for my Dad until I find a new job.
- **Predictions or guesses about future events.** He'll be coming to the party, I guess.
- **Predictions about the present.** She'll be getting married right now, I imagine.
- **Polite enquiries.** Will you be joining us for dinner?

## 3. Future perfect

Once you've mastered the future continuous, it's time to learn the future perfect. The future perfect is used to talk about a completed action in the future. Here's a look at the form:

### Form

- The form of the future perfect is will/won't + have + past participle.
- Regular past participles end in -ed.
- Irregular past participles don't follow the common conjugation pattern.

I will have finished / I will not have finished / Will I have finished ?

### Uses and examples

- **An action that will be completed before a specific time in the future.** Next September, we'll have been married for 50 years.
- **Use by or by the time to mean some time before.** I'll have finished this report by the time you're home.

## 4. Future perfect continuous ( progressive)

We use the future perfect continuous to show that something will continue up until a particular event in the future. We normally use it to emphasise how long something will have been happening for.

## Form

The form of the future perfect continuous is will/won't + have + been + ing (present participle)

I will have been driving / I will not have been driving / Will I have been driving ?

## Uses and examples

- **To show that something will continue up until a particular event in the future.** In October, I'll have been working here for ten years.
- **To show something finished just before another time action (cause and effect).** When I arrive, I'll have been working all day, so I'll be tired.
- **With time expressions (by + then / tomorrow / next year etc., by the time, when).** By the time we arrive, we'll have been travelling for fifteen hours.

# Future Tenses Exercise

- 1- The train \_\_\_\_\_ (to arrive) at 12:30.
- 2- We \_\_\_\_\_ (to have) dinner at a seaside restaurant on Sunday.
- 3- It \_\_\_\_\_ (to snow) in Brighton tomorrow evening.
- 4- On Friday at 8 o'clock I \_\_\_\_\_ (to meet) my friend
- 5- Paul \_\_\_\_\_ (to fly) to London on Monday morning.
- 6- Wait! I \_\_\_\_\_ (to drive) you to the station.
- 7- The English lesson \_\_\_\_\_ (to start) at 8:45.
- 8- Are you still writing your essay? If you \_\_\_\_\_ (to finish) by 4pm, we can go for a walk
- 9- I \_\_\_\_\_ (to see) my mother in April.
- 10- Look at the clouds – it \_\_\_\_\_ (to rain) in a few minutes.
- 11- When they \_\_\_\_\_ (to get) married in March, they \_\_\_\_\_ (to be) together for six years.
- 12- You're carrying too much. I \_\_\_\_\_ (to open) the door for you
- 13- You're carrying too much. I \_\_\_\_\_ (to open) the door for you
- 14- When I \_\_\_\_\_ (to see) you tomorrow, I \_\_\_\_\_ (show) you my new book.
- 15- After you \_\_\_\_\_ (to take) a nap, you \_\_\_\_\_ (to feel) a lot better
- 16- I'm sorry but you need to stay in the office until you \_\_\_\_\_ (to finish) your work.
- 17- I \_\_\_\_\_ (to buy) the cigarettes from the corner shop when it \_\_\_\_\_ (to open).
- 18- I \_\_\_\_\_ (to buy) the cigarettes from the corner shop when it \_\_\_\_\_ (to open).
- 19- Before we \_\_\_\_\_ (to start) our lesson, we \_\_\_\_\_ (to have) a review.
- 20- We \_\_\_\_\_ (to wait) in the shelter until the bus \_\_\_\_\_ (to come)