

Future Tense

Hello and welcome back, in this lesson we will be exploring the future tense.

Looking back we can see that there are a number of different ways of referring to the future in English.

It is important to remember that we are expressing more than simply the time of the action or event.



What is the future tense used to express?

Obviously, any 'future' tense will always refer to a time 'later than now', but it may also express our attitude to the future event.

All of the following ideas can be expressed using different tenses:

Simple prediction:

There **will be** snow in many areas tomorrow.



Arrangements:

I'm meeting Jim at the airport.



Plans and intentions:

We're going to spend the summer abroad.



Time-tabled events: The plane **takes off** at 3 a.m.



Prediction based on present evidence:
I think **it's going to rain!**



Willingness: **We'll give you** a lift to the cinema.



An action in progress in the future:
This time next week **I'll be sun-bathing.**



An action or event that is a matter of routine:
You'll be seeing John in the office tomorrow, won't you?



Obligation: You **are to travel** directly to London.



An action or event that will take place immediately or very soon:
The train **is about to leave**.



Projecting ourselves into the future and looking back at a completed action:
A month from now he **will have finished** all his exams.



Which future tense to use?

It is clear from these examples that several tenses are used to express the future.

The future tense section shows the form and function of each of these uses of future tenses.

There are four future verb tenses in English.

time →	FUTURE
↓ aspect	
SIMPLE	<i>she will work</i>
CONTINUOUS	<i>she will be working</i>
PERFECT	<i>she will have worked</i>
PERFECT CONTINUOUS	<i>she will have been working</i>

Other uses

There are also several other ways to talk about the future without using a future verb tense.

Using the present continuous to talk about future arrangements

I'm meeting Jim at the airport.



I am leaving tomorrow.



We're having a staff meeting next Monday.



Using the simple present to talk about scheduled events

The plane **arrives** at 18.00 tomorrow.



She **has** a yoga class tomorrow morning.



Using "going" to talk about the future

Is Freddy going to buy a new car soon?



He's going to be a brilliant politician.

