

Future Tenses: Progress vs. Completion

INTERMEDIATE

Focus: Actions in progress vs. Completed actions, Time markers (At, By, Between)

In English, when we talk about the future, we often need to distinguish between an action that will be **happening** (in progress) and an action that will be **finished** (completed) at a specific time.

1. Future Continuous (will be doing)

We use this tense to describe an action that will be **in progress** at a specific moment in the future. It emphasizes duration.

- **Structure:** Subject + will be + verb-ing
- **Key Time Markers:** at 8:00, this time tomorrow, between 7 and 9, in a few years.
- **Comparison:** Just like the Past Continuous describes an action in progress in the past (*I was eating at 7*), this describes one in the future (*I will be eating at 7*).
- **Examples:**
 - (+) *At 8:00 tonight, I **will be watching** a movie.* (I will be in the middle of it).
 - (-) *She **won't be working** tomorrow; it's her day off.*
 - (?) *Where **will you be staying** in London?*

2. Future Perfect (will have done)

We use this tense to describe an action that will be **completed** (finished) **before** a specific moment in the future. It looks back from a future point.

- **Structure:** Subject + will have + past participle
- **Key Time Markers:** by 5:00, by the time, by next week, before.
- **The Power of "By":** "By" means "not later than" or "before".
- **Examples:**
 - (+) *By 8:00 tonight, I **will have finished** my homework.* (It will be done).
 - (-) *We **won't have arrived** by lunch time.*
 - (?) ***Will you have fixed** the car by Friday?*

3. Summary of Difference

- **At 5:00, I will be cooking.** (I start before 5:00, and at 5:00 I am busy cooking).
- **By 5:00, I will have cooked.** (I finish cooking before 5:00. At 5:00, the food is ready).

Practice: Fill in the Blanks

Instruction: Complete the sentences using either the **Future Continuous** (*will be doing*) or the **Future Perfect** (*will have done*). Pay close attention to the time markers (at, by, by the time, etc.) to decide which form to use.

1. Don't call me between 7:00 and 8:00. We _____ (have) dinner then.
2. _____ (you/finish) the report by the time the meeting starts?
3. This time next week, I _____ (lie) on a beach in Spain.
4. The mechanics _____ (not/repair) your car by Tuesday; they need more time.
5. _____ (she/stay) with her parents when she goes to Rome?
6. By the end of this year, we _____ (live) in this house for ten years.
7. I _____ (not/use) the computer for the next hour, so you can borrow it.
8. The train _____ (leave) by the time we get to the station if we don't hurry!
9. What _____ (you/do) at this time tomorrow afternoon?
10. Hopefully, the rain _____ (stop) before the picnic begins.
11. We _____ (not/drive) through the city center because the traffic is too bad.
12. How many pages _____ (he/write) by 5:00 PM today?
13. Please don't be late. The presentation _____ (start) by the time you arrive.
14. They _____ (not/complete) the project by the deadline next Monday.
15. _____ (you/use) the conference room tomorrow morning, or is it free?

Answer Key

1. will be having (Focus: Action in progress 'between' times)
2. Will you have finished (Focus: Completion 'by the time')
3. will be lying (Focus: Action in progress 'this time next week')
4. won't have repaired (Focus: Completion 'by Tuesday' - Negative)
5. Will she be staying (Focus: Future arrangement/progress)
6. will have lived (Focus: Duration/Completion 'by the end of')
7. won't be using (Focus: Action in progress - Negative)
8. will have left (Focus: Completion 'by the time')
9. will you be doing (Focus: Action in progress 'at this time')
10. will have stopped (Focus: Completion 'before')
11. won't be driving (Focus: Action in progress/Plan - Negative)
12. will he have written (Focus: Completion/Quantity 'by 5:00')
13. will have started (Focus: Completion 'by the time')
14. won't have completed (Focus: Completion 'by the deadline' - Negative)
15. Will you be using (Focus: Action in progress/Polite inquiry)