



Lesson 15. Mastering the verbs 10

An advanced student knows what kind of future structure he has to use in every context.

Future tenses

Theoretically, intermediate students should know all the future tenses, but there are many important details unknown to most English learners. We'll review them in this lesson.

The different ways to express the future

1. Present Continuous and “Going to”.

I'll repeat what I said in Lesson 7.

a) Present continuous structure + future reference

Example: She **is having** lunch with her sister **tomorrow** (future reference).

Use: Very planned future, usually for specific, personal events in the near future. For example, I have written down all the details, place and hour of my appointment on my calendar.

Example “Present Continuous + future reference” audiobook Chapter 4: **She is playing Juliet tomorrow.**

b) Subject+ going to + v. infinitive

Example: She **is going to have** lunch with her sister tomorrow.

Use: Planned future, but not as planned as the “present continuous” described in point 1 above.

Example “Present Continuous with going to” audiobook chapter 4: **I am going to tell you Harry.**

Spanish equivalent tenses:

The Present continuous is often translated into Spanish as the “Presente Simple” with a future reference.

For example:

- I'm having dinner with my brother tomorrow evening. *Ceno con mi hermano mañana por la noche.*

The formula "going to + v. infinitive" is often translated as "Voy/vas/va/vamos/van a + verbo en infinitivo".

Example:

- She is going to go to Paris on Monday. *Va a ir a París el lunes.*

2. Will

"Will" is a modal verb that expresses the future when:

- We talk about a future event

- They **will** start working with us on Monday. *Empezarán a trabajar con nosotros el lunes.*

What is the difference between "will" and the Present Continuous and the "going to" formula?

Basically, the future with "will" is NOT as planned as when you use the present continuous or the "going to" formula. It is also used to make general statements about future facts.

- We make a prediction based on our opinions

- I think it **will** rain. *Creo que lloverá.*

- We make an instant decision

I have just seen a pair of shoes in a shop and I say:

- I'll buy them- *Los compraré*

When "will" doesn't express future

There are situations in which "will" doesn't express future.

For example:

- "Will" can be used to make a request, invitation or order

Examples:

- **Will** you close the door please? *¿Puedes cerrar la puerta por favor?- Request*
 - **Will** you join us? *¿Viene con nosotros? Invitation*
 - **Will** you please shut up? *¿Te callas? Order*
- **Will can be used to express a habit or behaviour that is sometimes annoying.**

Examples

- My cat **will** always lie on that cushion. *Mi gato siempre se tumba en ese cojín.* (Habit)
- She **won't** stop talking. *Ella no para de hablar.* (Annoying behaviour)

Structure of sentences with will:

- **Affirmative:** Subject + will+ verb+ object. Example: I will study at the library tomorrow.
- **Negative:** Subject + will+ **not** (won't) + verb+ object. Example: They won't do anything until Monday.
- **Question:** Will+ subject + verb+ object? Will you come to our party?
- **Negative question:** Won't+ subject + verb+ object? Example: Won't you join us tomorrow?
- **Answers:** Yes, + subject + will- No, +subject + won't. Examples: Yes, I will- No, I won't.

Contraction

The contraction of will is "ll. Notice this is the same contraction we use with "shall".

| Contraction | Phonetics | Approximate pronunciation |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| I'll | aɪl | ail |
| You'll | ju:l | iul |
| He'll | hi:l | hil |
| She'll | ʃi:l | shil |
| We'll | wi:l | wuil |
| They'll | ˈðeɪl | deil |
| Won't (negative) | wəʊnt | Wuónt |

Spanish equivalent tenses

When in English we use “will” to talk about future events, make a prediction or an instant decision, we use “futuro simple”.

Examples:

- *Comeré con mi hermana el sábado*- I'll have lunch with my sister on Saturday (future event)
- *Creo que lloverá*. I think it will rain (prediction)
- *Me compraré esos zapatos*. I'll buy those shoes (instant decision)

If “will” is used in English to express a request, order, invitation, offer, habit or behaviour, we usually use the present tense.

Examples:

- *¿Cierras la puerta por favor?* Will you close the door please? *Request*
- *¿Vienes a nuestra fiesta?* Will you come to our party? *Invitation*
- *Él siempre duerme la siesta después de la comida?* He will always take a nap after lunch. *Habit*

3. Shall

“Shall” is also used to express the future but not as often as “will”.

It's more commonly used with “I” and “they”.

Examples:

- They **shall** do it. *Ellos lo harán.*
- I **shall** cook. *Yo cocinaré.*

“Shall” is extensively used in contracts and other formal or legal documents to express obligations. This is not so with “will” which denotes future in legal language.

Example:

- The parties **shall** be jointly and severally liable. *Las partes serán solidariamente responsables.*

“Shall” is also used to make suggestions or invitations, promises or predictions.

Examples:

- **Shall** we have a coffee? *¿Nos tomamos un café?* *Invitation*
- I **shall** do what you told me to do. *Haré lo que me dijiste.* *Promise*

- They **shall** overcome all the obstacles. *Superarán todos los obstáculos.*
Prediction

Structure: See “will” above. Replace “will” by “shall” as it is the same structure.

Spanish equivalent tense

“Shall” is often translated as “Futuro simple”, when talking about future, obligations, promises or predictions. But when “shall” is used to make a suggestion or an invitation, in Spanish the “Presente simple” is used. Example:
Shall we dance? *¿Bailamos?*

4. The Simple Present Tense

The Simple Present Tense is only used to refer to the future in very few occasions.

Due to the fact that in Spanish the Simple Present Tense is very often used to talk about the future, you should be very careful when attempting to use the Simple Present Tense in English to express the future.

You can **ONLY** use the Simple Present Tense to talk about official timetables that were planned and imposed to you by someone else such as airlines or theatres.

Let’s see some examples:

Your timetable

- Mr Deck **travels** to Paris tomorrow- *El Sr. Deck viaja a París mañana.*

Train, airports

- The train **arrives** at 5 o’clock. *El tren llega a las 5.*

Shows or events

- The show **starts** at 8 o’clock. *El show empieza a las 8.*

I often see intermediate students writing emails mistakenly using the Present Tense instead of using a future tense.

For example:

“Hello,
I **send** you my homework,” INCORRECT

It should be: **I’m sending** you my homework. CORRECT

If you say or write, "I send you my homework", you're referring to an habitual action, that is to say something that you always or sometimes do.

For example: I send you my homework every Friday.

Can you see the difference?

Remember that an advanced student doesn't make this kind of mistakes.

Spanish equivalent tense

In this case there is almost a total coincidence. When we use the Simple Present Tense in English to speak about the future we use el Presente Simple in Spanish.

Example:

-Mr. Smith **flies** to Rome tomorrow. *El Sr. Smith **vuela** a Roma mañana*

5. Future perfect

The future perfect is used to talk about actions that will happen in the future before another action.

For example:

- By the time you arrive (**will happen after**) home **I will have finished** (**will happen before**) my homework. *Para cuando llegues a casa, yo habré terminado mis deberes.*
- **Will they have painted** the house by Saturday? *¿Habrán pintado la casa para el sábado?*
- **Will you have mowed** the lawn by the time we get there? *¿Habrás cortado el césped para cuando lleguemos allí?*

The future perfect can be made with will + have + pp of the main verb and "going to" + have + pp of the main verb, with little or no difference in meaning.

Compare:

- **Will you have painted** the house by Saturday?
- **Are you going to have** the house **painted** by Saturday?

Structure:

- **Affirmative:** Subject + will+ have + pp of the main verb+ object. Example: I will have read the newspaper by the time you arrive to the office.
- **Negative:** Subject + will+ **not** (won't) + have + pp of the main verb+ object. Example: They won't have finished their work by Friday.
- **Question:** Will+ subject + have + pp of the main verb+ object? Will you have cleaned the kitchen by the time we are home?
- **Negative question:** Won't+ subject + have+ pp. of the main verb+ object? Example: Won't you have finished your project next month?
- **Answers:** Yes, + subject + will + have- No, +subject + won't +have. Examples: Yes, I will have- No, I won't have.

Spanish equivalent tense

In Spanish the “futuro perfecto” (habré/habrà/habrás + verbo principal in participio pasado) is used to speak about actions that happen before another action in the future.

Example:

Ellos **habrán llegado** a París para cuando él les llame. They will have arrived in Paris by the time he calls them.

6. The future in the past

The “future in the past” is used when we talk in the past about actions that we thought were going to happen in the future .

The future in the past can be expressed with two similar structures:

- Subject + was/were + going to + main verb in infinitive + object.
- Subject + would + main verb + object

Before this structure, we will often find the simple past tense.

For example:

Henry thought that I was going to call him after the meeting and so he says, after I called him:

- I knew (past tense) **you were going to call** (future in the past) me. *Sabía que me ibas a llamar.*

- I knew (past tense) you **would call** (future in the past) me. *Sabía que me llamarías*

What is the difference between the was/were + going to and would structure?

Normally, we use the structure “was/were + going to” when we want to talk about actions that were planned or when we want to make a prediction.

We use the would structure when we are talking about unplanned future events. Sometimes, however, these structures are interchangeable with little difference in meaning.

Compare:

- They agreed they were going to go out. *Ellos acordaron que iban a salir.*
Planned
- I knew she was going to show up- *Sabía que ella se iba a presentar.*
Prediction
- I thought she would help- *Pensé que ella ayudaría.* Unplanned future event

Structure with was/were + going to:

- **Affirmative:** Subject + verb in the past tense + subject + was/were + going to+ main verb in infinitive+ object. **Note:** The subject and the verb in the simple past tense can go at the beginning or at the end of the sentence.
Example: He **was going to do** it, but he didn't do it. *Él iba a hacerlo, pero no lo hizo.*
- **Negative:** Subject + verb in the past tense + subject +was/were+ **not** + going to + main verb in infinitive+ object.
Example: I thought he **was not going to stick** to his word. *Pensé que no iba a cumplir con su palabra.*
- **Question:** Question in the simple past tense + subject +was/were+ going to + main verb in infinitive+ object?
Example: Did you think he **was going to come**? *¿Pensaste que él iba a venir?*
- **Negative question:** Negative question in the simple past tense + subject + was/were + going to + main verb in infinitive?
Example: Didn't you know (that) we **were going to go** out? *¿No sabías que íbamos a salir?*
- **Answers:** Yes, + subject + did- No, +subject + didn't. Examples: Yes, I did - No, I didn't.

Structure with would:

- **Affirmative:** Subject + verb in the past tense + subject + would + main verb in infinitive+ object
- Example: I knew he **would work** with us. *Yo sabía que él trabajaría con nosotros.*

- **Negative:** Subject + verb in the past tense + subject + would + **not** + main verb in infinitive+ object.
Example: I thought they **wouldn't come**. *Yo pensé que ellos no vendrían.*
- **Question:** Did+ subject + main verb in infinitive + **would** + verb in infinitive +object?
Example: Did you think he **would come**? *¿Pensaste que él vendría?*
- **Negative question:** Didn't+ subject + main verb in infinitive + **would** + verb in infinitive +object?
Example: Didn't you know that we **would go out**? *¿No sabías que saldríamos?*
- **Answers:** Yes, + subject + did- No, +subject + didn't
Examples: Yes, I did - No, I didn't.

Spanish equivalent tense

The future in the past is expressed in Spanish with: Sujeto + iba/ibas/iba....+ a + verbo en infinitivo.

Example:

- Te dije (verbo en pasado simple) que te íbamos a invitar. I told you we **were going to invite** you.

In the case of “would”, the future in the past is expressed with a conditional.

Example:

- *Sabía que lo haría* (conditional). I knew he **would do** it

Mastering the future tenses

We will now focus our attention on learning sentences using future tenses.

I have listed sentences in this tense below that can be found in chapters 1 to 4 of the audiobook.

Please, listen to them and repeat them aloud.

| Spanish | English | Phonetics | Approximate Pronunciation |
|------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| Nunca enviaré esto a ninguna parte | I will never send this anywhere (Chap. 1) | ¹ aɪ wɪl, ¹ nevə send ðɪs ¹ eniweə | Ai wuɪl send dis éniwuer |
| Sé que usted se va a reír | I know you are going to laugh (Chap. 1) | ¹ aɪ nəʊ ju ə ¹ gəʊɪŋ tə lɑ:f | Ai nóu iu ar góing tu laf |
| Se lo voy a decir (a usted) | I'm going to tell you (Chap. 1) | aɪm ¹ gəʊɪŋ tə tel ju | Aim góing tu tel iu |
| Yo también saldré al jardín | I will also go out to the garden (Chap. 2) | ¹ aɪ wɪl, ¹ ɔ:lsəʊ gəʊ aʊt tə ðə ¹ gɑ:dn | Ai wuɪl ólso góu áut tu de gárden |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Me reuniré con ustedes (ambos) más tarde | I will meet you both later (Chap. 2) | 'aɪ wɪl mi:t ju bæθ θ 'leɪtə | Ai wuɪl mit iu bóuz léiter |
| Va a ser mi obra maestra | It's going to be my masterpiece (Chap. 2) | ɪts 'gəʊɪŋ tə bi maɪ 'mɑ:stəpi:s | Its góing tu bi mai másterpis |
| Algún día usted será viejo y feo y tendrá arrugas | One day you will be old and ugly and you'll have wrinkles (Chap 2) | wʌn deɪ ju wɪl bi əʊld ənd 'ʌɡli ənd ju l hæv 'rɪŋkl z | Wuan déi iu wuɪl bi óuld and ágli and iul hav rínkols |
| No será siempre así | It won't always be like that (Chap 2) | ɪt wəʊnt 'ɔ:lweɪz bi 'laɪk ðət | It wuónt ólwueiss bi láik dát |
| Me haré viejo, horrible, espantoso | I will become old, horrible, hideous (Chap. 2) | 'aɪ wɪl bi 'kʌm əʊld 'hɒrəbl , ɒrəbhɪdɪ əs | Ai wuɪl bíkom ould, hóríbol, hídios |
| Pero este cuadro siempre será joven | But this picture will always be young (Chap. 2) | bət ðɪs 'pɪktʃə wɪl , 'ɔ:lweɪz bi jʌŋ | Bat dis píkcher wuɪl ólwueis bi íang |
| Odio este retrato y lo voy a destruir | I hate this portrait and I'm going to destroy it (Chap. 2) | 'aɪ heɪt ðɪs 'pɔ:trɪt ənd aɪm 'gəʊɪŋ tə dɪ 'stroɪ ɪt | Ai héit dis pórtreit and áim góing tu dí'stroit |
| Tan pronto como esté seco, lo enviaré a su casa | As soon as it's dry, I will send it to your house (Chap 2) | əz su:n əz ɪts draɪ 'aɪ wɪl , send ɪt tə jə 'haʊs | Ass sun ass its dráɪ ai wuɪl sendit tu ior háus |
| Bien; en ese caso iremos usted y yo solos, señor Gray | Well, in that case, you and I will go alone, Mr. Gray (Chap 2) | wel ɪn ðət keɪs ju ənd 'aɪ wɪl , gəʊ ə 'ləʊn 'mɪstə greɪ | Wuel in dat kéis iu andai wuɪl góu a'loun míster gréi |
| Me quedaré con el verdadero Dorian-dijo tristemente | I will stay with the real Dorian, he said sadly (Chap. 2) | 'aɪ wɪl , steɪ wɪð ðə rɪəl 'dɔ:ɪən hi 'sed 'sædli | Ai wuɪl sstéi wuiz de rial dórían, hi séd sádli |
| Él lo habrá heredado | He will have inherited it (Chap. 3) | hi wɪl , hæv ɪn 'herɪtɪd ɪt | Hi wuɪl hav inhéritit |
| ¿Dónde comes hoy Harry? | Where are you eating today, Harry? (Chap. 3) | wɛər ə ju 'i:tɪŋ tə 'deɪ 'hæri | Wuér ar iu íting tu'dei hári? |
| También estará el Sr. Gray | Mr. Gray will also be there (Chap. 3) | 'mɪstə greɪ wɪl , 'ɔ:lsəʊ bi ðə | Míster gréi wuɪl ólso bí der |
| Lo haré | I will do it (Chap. 3) | 'aɪ wɪl , də ɪt | Ai wuɪl duit |
| Voy al parque | I'm going to the park (Chap. 3) | aɪm 'gəʊɪŋ tə ðə pɑ:k | Aim góing tu de párk |
| ¿Me promete que hablará todo el tiempo? | Do you promise you will talk the whole time? (Chap. 3) | də ju 'prɒmɪs ju wɪl , 'tɔ:k ðə həʊl 'taɪm | Du iú prómis iu wuɪl tok de hól táim? |
| Se lo voy a contar, Harry | I am going to tell you Harry (Chap. 4) | 'aɪ əm 'gəʊɪŋ tə tel ju 'hæri | Ai am góing tu tel iu hári |
| Usted se va a reír de mí. | You are going to laugh at me (Chap. 4) | ju ə 'gəʊɪŋ tə lɑ:f ət mi: | Iu ar góing tu laf at me |
| ¿Al menos usted habrá hablado con ella? | At least you will have talked to her? (Chap. 4) | ət li:st ju wɪl , hæv 'tɔ:kt tə hə | At list iu wuɪl have tókt tu her? |
| Voy a verla actuar todas las noches. | I'm going to see her act every night (Chap. 4) | aɪm 'gəʊɪŋ tə 'si: hə ækt 'evri naɪt | Ai am going tu si her akt évri náit |
| Bien, ¿qué noche iremos? | "Good, which night shall we go? (Chap. 4) | gʊd wɪtʃ naɪt ʃə wi gəʊ | Gúd wuich náit shál wuí góu? |

To sum up:

There are many ways to express the future in English.

These are some of the most common options:

Present Continuous + future reference. Example: I'm leaving to Scotland tonight.
Very planned action

"Going to +v. infinitive" . Example: I'm going to play football next week. Planned action

Will. Example: I'll go to the party. "Will" expresses future events, predictions and instant decisions, but it can also express requests, invitations, orders, offers and habits. Example: He won't listen to me.

Less frequent ways to express the future:

Simple Present Tense. This is used when we refer to what we have in our calendar, timetables and shows. Example: The film starts at 5 o'clock

Shall. This is used in the same way that will is used to express the future (predictions, future events) but is less frequent in spoken English. It is used to make invitations, suggestions. Example: Shall we go by bus?

Future perfect.

This is used to talk about actions that will happen in the future before another action. Example: By the time you get to the office, I will have finished the report. The future perfect can also be expressed with "going to" + have + pp. main verb. Example: By the time you get to the office, I am going to have finished the report.

Future in the past. We talk about future in the past when we refer to a past action that had a future element. For example: I knew (past action) he was going to win (future element). "Would" can also be used to say the same with a slight different meaning. I knew (past action) you would win.

Homework

Continue looking for the future tenses from chapters 11 to 14.

Try to ask and answer questions aloud using the sentences that you find in the future for example:

- Will he have inherited it?
- Yes, he will
- No, he won't

Translate the following sentences

The answers are found at the end. Once you have corrected any mistakes, say the sentences aloud. If you have doubts, always use IVONA or similar software.

1. Para cuando ellos lleguen yo me habré marchado
2. No habrá ningún problema
3. Yo sabía que él no vendría
4. ¿Cuándo vendrás?
5. ¿Te habrás leído todo el libro para cuando yo vuelva?
6. Voy a París
7. No sabemos cuándo él vendrá
8. Él sabía que no me iba a gustar (cosa)
9. Lloverá
10. Me lo comparé

Answers

1. By the time they arrive I will have left
2. There won't be any problem
3. I knew he wouldn't come
4. When will you come?
5. Will you have read the whole book by the time I come back?/Are you going to have read the whole book by the time I come back?
6. I'm going to Paris
7. We don't know when he will come
8. He knew I was not going to like it
9. It will rain
10. I will buy it