

The Future Tense in English:

English forms the future tense in several ways:

1) by using the progressive present tense when the context makes the future meaning clear:

"I'm seeing her tomorrow."

"We're taking the test on Friday."

2) by combining the verbs "will" or, less frequently, "shall" with the infinitive, not including "to":

"I will do it tomorrow."

"We shall see."

3) by combining the verb "to go" in the progressive present form with the infinitive, including "to":

"I am going to pay you back when I get my allowance."

"Someday she's going to get her comeuppance."

The future tense can also indicate a present likelihood:

"You'll surely be surprised by what I just said."

"She will probably be wondering what has delayed us."

"Boys will be boys."

English has a future perfect tense to talk about a past event from the perspective of the future:

"I will have finished the paper by Monday."

"By the time you get this letter I will have gone to Rio."

The future perfect tense is also used to indicate a past likelihood, one that has consequences for the present or future:

"As you will have already heard, the gym will be closed today"

"You will have noticed that we no longer have a convertible."

The Future Tense in German:



Your parents will puke!

Like English, German can talk about future events in the present tense when the context is clear:

Wir essen heute Abend in der Küche.	<i>We're eating in the kitchen tonight.</i>
Wir sehen uns morgen.	<i>We're meeting tomorrow.</i>
Er macht das erst Samstag.	<i>He's not doing that until Saturday.</i>

Otherwise German uses the auxiliary verb "werden" with the infinitive:

Sie wird dir alles sagen.	<i>She'll tell you everything.</i>
In zehn Jahren werde ich zu alt sein.	<i>In ten years, I'll be too old.</i>
Die Kinder werden das nicht sehen wollen.	<i>The children won't want to see that.</i>

Like English, German can also express present probability with the future tense, often in combination with adverbs such as "bestimmt" (certainly), "sicher" (certainly), "vielleicht" (perhaps), "wahrscheinlich" (probably), or "wohl" (probably):

Die Kinder werden wohl schon zu Hause sein.	<i>The children will probably already be home.</i>
Du wirst uns vielleicht besuchen wollen.	<i>You will perhaps want to visit us.</i>
Er wird jetzt bestimmt vorm Fernseher sitzen.	<i>He'll surely be sitting in front of the television now.</i>

The Future Perfect Tense in German (Futur II):

Like English, German has a future perfect tense that is used to talk about what will in the future be a past event. It is constructed by putting the auxiliary verb of the perfect tense ("haben" or "sein") into a future form:

Bevor wir nach Hause kommen, werden sie alles aufgegessen haben.	<i>Before we get home they will have eaten everything up.</i>
Sie wird schon weggegangen sein.	<i>She will have already gone.</i>
Werden Sie das gemacht haben, bevor wir Sie abholen?	<i>Will you have already done that before we pick you up?</i>

The future perfect can also express a past probability:

Sie werden das sicher gründlich gelesen haben. *You will surely have read that thoroughly.*

Er wird das wohl gewusst haben. *He probably will have known that.*

Du wirst das bestimmt schon gehört haben. *You will certainly have already heard that.*