

Lesson 2.7 Future Tense

key words: verbs, future, modals, context

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.1e Form and use the simple (e.g., *I walked*; *I walk*; *I will walk*) verb tenses.
<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/3/1/e>

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.1c Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., *can*, *may*, *must*) to convey various conditions. <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/4/1/c>

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.1c Use verb tense to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions. <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/5/1/c>

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.1d Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.
<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/L/5/1/d>

English doesn't have a future tense form of the verb. A lot of languages do have a different form of the verb that indicates future. Spanish does, for example; you add one of six different endings to the **infinitive** form of the verb:

hablaré	'I will speak'	hablaremos	'we will speak'
hablarás	'you will speak'	hablaréis	'you (all) will speak'
hablará	'he/she will speak'	hablarán	'they will speak'

And in Arabic, you simply add the prefix "sa" to the present tense verb.

But in English, we indicate that something is happening in the future not by changing the main verb, but by adding a modal, usually *will*, to the verb string.

We will drive to Seattle tomorrow. (future tense)

We also use the combination of auxiliary and main verb *be + going*, a verb string that expresses future:

We are going to drive to Seattle tomorrow.

In speech, we have long (like, for hundreds of years) been using *am-going-to* as the single unit it functions as. Since these words have a single meaning indicating future, that tends to make it run together in our speech. Sometimes we write it this way too, as *gonna*. Eventually this form might become standard, but now *gonna* is still used only in informal writing.

Because English doesn't have a distinct marking for future on the main verb, the language sometimes allows context to suggest that something is happening in the future. Discuss these.

I can come over tomorrow.

She leaves on the noon train tomorrow.

We should learn about fractions soon.