**Present Continuous Tense Examples**

The present continuous tense is used for actions happening now or for an action that is unfinished. This tense is also used when the action is temporary.

**How to Form the Present Continuous Tense**

The present continuous tense is formed with the subject plus the present particle form (-ing) of the main verb and the present continuous tense of the verb to be: am, is, are.  
One simple example of this tense is: He is swimming. "He" is the subject, "is" is the present tense of the verb to be and "swimming" is the present participle verb form. Some other forms of this verb tense are:

* I am singing at school today.
* The boys are playing ball after school.

Examples of the Present Continuous Tense

The following are basic examples of the present continuous tense. The verb tense in each sentence is underlined.

* She is crying.
* He is talking to his friend.
* The baby is sleeping in his bed.
* We are visiting the museum in the afternoon.

Present continuous tense can be used to express something happening right now or to express something that is not happening right now. Examples of this use include:

* He is not standing.
* Anthony is sitting in the chair.
* You are not watching the movie.
* Rose is reading a book.

Present continuous tense can also be used to show that something will or will not happen in the near future. Examples of this use include:

* She is not going to the game tonight.
* He is meeting his friends after school.
* Are you visiting your cousin this weekend?
* I am not going to the meeting after work.
* Is John playing football today?

Present continuous tense can be used for actions that are still happening at the time of speaking. Examples of this use include:

* Marc is making pizza now.
* They are eating lunch right now.
* Frances is talking on the phone at the moment.

Past continous

The past continuous describes actions or events in a time **before now**, which began in the past and is **still going on** at the time of speaking. In other words, it expresses an **unfinished or incomplete action** in the past.

**It is used:**

* Often, to describe the background in a story written in the past tense, e.g. "The sun **was shining** and the birds **were singing** as the elephant came out of the jungle. The other animals **were relaxing** in the shade of the trees, but the elephant moved very quickly. She **was looking** for her baby, and she didn't notice the hunter who **was watching** her through his binoculars. When the shot rang out, she **was running** towards the river..."
* to describe an unfinished action that was interrupted by another event or action, e.g. "I **was having** a beautiful dream when the alarm clock rang."
* to express a change of mind: e.g. "I **was going** to spend the day at the beach but I've decided to get my homework done instead."
* with *'wonder'*, to make a very polite request: e.g. "I **was wondering** if you could baby-sit for me tonight."

**Example**:

1. They were waiting for the bus when the accident happened.
2. Caroline was skiing when she broke her leg.
3. When we arrived he was having a bath.
4. When the fire started I was watching television.

**Future Continuous Tense**

|  |
| --- |
| **I *will be singing*** |

**How do we make the Future Continuous Tense?**

The structure of the future continuous tense is:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| subject | + | auxiliary verb WILL | + | auxiliary verb BE | + | main verb |
|  | | invariable |  | invariable |  | present participle |
| **will** | **be** | **base + ing** |

For negative sentences in the future continuous tense, we insert **not** between **will** and **be**. For question sentences, we exchange the **subject** and **will**. Look at these example sentences with the future continuous tense:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **subject** | **auxiliary verb** |  | **auxiliary verb** | **main verb** |  |
| + | I | will |  | be | working | at 10am. |
| + | You | will |  | be | lying | on a beach tomorrow. |
| - | She | will | not | be | using | the car. |
| - | We | will | not | be | having | dinner at home. |
| ? | Will | you |  | be | playing | football? |
| ? | Will | they |  | be | watching | TV? |

When we use the future continuous tense in speaking, we often contract the subject and will:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I will | I'll |
| you will | you'll |
| he will she will it will | he'll she'll it'll |
| we will | we'll |
| they will | they'll |

For spoken negative sentences in the future continuous tense, we contract with **won't**, like this:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I will not | I won't |
| you will not | you won't |
| he will not she will not it will not | he won't she won't it won't |
| we will not | we won't |
| they will not | they won't |

We sometimes use **shall** instead of **will**, especially for I and we.

**How do we use the Future Continuous Tense?**

The future continuous tense expresses action at a **particular moment** in the future. The action will start before that moment but it will not have finished at that moment. For example, tomorrow I will start work at 2pm and stop work at 6pm:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| At 4pm tomorrow, I will be working. | | |
| **past** | **present** | **future** |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 4pm |  | | | |
|  |  | At 4pm, I will be in the middle of working. |

When we use the future continuous tense, our listener usually knows or understands what time we are talking about. Look at these examples:

* I **will be playing** tennis at 10am tomorrow.
* They **won't be watching** TV at 9pm tonight.
* What **will** you **be doing** at 10pm tonight?
* What **will** you **be doing** when I arrive?
* She **will** not **be sleeping** when you telephone her.
* We**'ll be having** dinner when the film starts.
* Take your umbrella. It **will be raining** when you return.

Future Continuous

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

Basic form

Subject + WILL + BE + Verb (continuous form)

**Quick examples**

* Tomorrow at this time, I will be taking my English langauge exam.
* Ben won't be eating the dinner now. He usually eats it around noon!
* Will you be comingto the party tonight?

We mainly use the **Future Continuous**to indicate that we will be in the middle of doing something in a specified time in the future. There are also two other uses, listed below:

**Use**

1. [Future actions in progress](http://www.englishtenses.com/tenses/future_continuous" \l "use1)
2. [Guesses about the present or the future](http://www.englishtenses.com/tenses/future_continuous" \l "use2)
3. [Polite questions about somebody's intention](http://www.englishtenses.com/tenses/future_continuous" \l "use3)

**Good to know**

If you want to learn about somebody's intentions, you should always use the Future Continuous rather than the Present Simple. Using the Future Simple implies that you want to influence somebody's decision. Questions become much more objective if formed in the Future Continuous.

**Compare**:

* Will you come home? (= I want you to come home)
* Will you be coming home? (= I just want to know)

**Use 1: Future actions in progress**

The first use of the Future Continuous is to express future action in progress.

* In an hour, I will be sitting in front of my TV.
* In the evening, I will be baking a birthday cake.

**Use 2: Guesses**

Use this tense also to make guesses about something in the present or future.

* He won't be coming any time soon. He is still at the office.
* Beatrice will be getting married very soon.

**Use 3: Questions**

And the last use of the tense is to make polite questions about something or somebody.

* Will you be coming home before or after 10 PM?
* Will you be goingto the supermarket? I have something to buy.

**Form**

**Contracted forms ([more](http://www.englishtenses.com/contractions.html))**

**Important**

The Future Perfect appears in two forms: "will" form and "going to" form which can be used interchangably.

**Example**:

* "She will have finished" means "she is going to have finished"

***Declarative Sentences***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **+** | **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Verb + ing** |
| e.g. *I*/*a dog*etc. | *will* | *be* | e.g.*working*/*going*/*making* |

* She'll be having a bath when I'm back home. (Use 1)
* Tomorrow at nine, I will be hosing off (=washing with a hose) my car. (Use 1)
* This time next week,I am going to be throwing a party. (Use 1)
* I'll be watching TV when my mother arrives. (Use 1)
* They will be geting home just about now. (Use 2)

Notice

Like any of the [Future Tenses](http://www.englishtenses.com/page/future_tenses), Future Continuous cannot be used in sentences beginning with: **while**, **when**,**before**, **by the time**, **if**, etc.

* ~~By the time, you will be finishing your paiting.~~

[ Tomorrow at this time, I **will be getting** bored at school! (Use 1) ]

***Questions***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Subject** | **+** | **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Verb + ing** | **?** |
| will | I/you/we etc. | be | dancing / taking |

* Is she going to be cooking when we knock at the door? (Use 1)
* Will Mark be playing football at 6 p.m.? (Use 1)
* Will you be using the screwdriver? (Use 3)

***Negative Sentences***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **+** | **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Auxiliary verb** | **+** | **Verb + ing** |
| e.g. *I*/*a dog*etc. | *will not* | *be* | e.g.*working*/*going*/*making* |

* We won't be having supper tomorrow before 8 o'clock. (Use 1)
* Iam not going to be learning English tomorrow at this time. (Use 1)
* John won't be sleeping now (= I think John isn't sleeping now) (Use 2)