

# THE WAITING GAME



## Lesson 17

### Future Continuous Tense

#### I. RULES AND EXAMPLES

##### IMPORTANT No Future in Time Clauses

Like all future forms, the Future Continuous cannot be used in clauses beginning with "when", "while", "before", "after", "by the time", "as soon as", "if" and "unless". In this lesson, all verbs in Time Clauses are *italicized*.

##### EXAMPLES:

While I am finishing my homework, she is going to make dinner.

**Correct**

While I will be finishing my homework, she is going to make dinner. **Not**

**Correct**

FORMAT Future Continuous

NOUN/PRONOUN + [WILL BE] + [VERB+ing]

##### EXAMPLE:

When your plane *arrives* tonight, I will be waiting for you.

NOUN/PRONOUN + [AM / IS / ARE] + [GOING TO] + [VERBing]

##### EXAMPLE:

When your plane *arrives* tonight, I am going to be waiting for you.

**NOTE:** It is possible to use either "will" or "going to" to create the Future Continuous with little or no difference in meaning.

### 1. Interrupted Action in the Future

Use the Future Continuous to indicate that a longer action in the future will be interrupted. The interruption is usually an action in the Simple Future. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

1. I will be watching TV when she *arrives* tonight.
2. I will be waiting for you when your bus *arrives*.
3. While I am working, Steve will make dinner. (NOTICE "am working" because of "while.")
4. I am going to be staying at the Madison Hotel, if anything *happens* and you need to contact me.
5. He will be studying at the library tonight, so he will not see Jennifer when she *arrives*.

**NOTE:** No future tenses can be used in Time Clauses therefore you must say "While I am working... ." See the warning at the top of the page.

### 2. Specific time as an interruption

In USE 1, described above, the Future Continuous is interrupted by an action in the Simple Future. However, you can also use a specific time as an interruption.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

1. Tonight at 6 p.m., I am going to be eating dinner.
2. At midnight tonight, we will still be driving through the desert.

### **IMPORTANT**

In the Simple Future a specific time is used to show the time an action will begin. In the Future Continuous, a specific time only interrupts the action.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

1. Tonight at 6 p.m., I am going to eat dinner.
  2. I am going to start eating at 6 p.m.
- 
1. Tonight at 6 p.m., I am going to be eating dinner.

2. I am going to start earlier and I will be in the process of eating dinner at 6 p.m.

### 3. Parallel Actions

When you use the Future Continuous with two actions in the same sentence, it expresses the idea that both actions will be happening at the same time. These are Parallel Actions.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

1. I am going to be studying while he is making dinner.
2. While Ellen is reading, Tim will be watching television.
3. Tonight, they will be eating dinner, discussing their plans, and having a good time.

### 4. Atmosphere

In English we often use a series of Parallel Actions to describe atmosphere in the future.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

When I arrive at the party everybody is going to be celebrating. Some will be dancing. Others are going to be talking. A few people will be eating pizza and several people are going to be drinking beer. They always do the same thing.

#### **IMPORTANT Non-Continuous Verbs / Mixed Verbs**

It is important to remember that Non-Continuous Verbs cannot be used in any "continuous" tenses. Also, certain "non-continuous" meanings for Mixed Verbs cannot be used in "continuous" tenses. To express the idea of Future Continuous with these verbs, you must use Simple Future.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

Jane will be being at my house when you arrive. **Not Correct**  
Jane will be at my house when you arrive. **Correct**

#### **ACTIVE / PASSIVE FORMS Future Continuous**

#### **EXAMPLES:**

1. At 8:00 PM tonight, John will be washing the dog. **ACTIVE**
2. At 8:00 PM tonight, the dog will be being washed by John. **PASSIVE**

**NOTE:** Passive forms of the Future Continuous are not common.

## II. EXERCISES

Read about Colin. Then choose the sentences which are true. In each group of sentences at least one is true.

Colin goes to work every day. He leaves home at 8 o'clock and arrives at work about 8:45. He starts work immediately and continues until 12:30 when he has lunch (which he takes about half an hour). He starts work again at 1:15 and goes home at exactly 4:30. Everyday he follows the same routine and tomorrow will be no exception.

Example:                      At 7:45

- a. he'll be leaving the house
- b. he'll have left the house
- c. he'll be at home
- d. he'll be having breakfast

Answers: letters c and d

**Start here:**

1. At 8:15 am

- a. he'll be leaving the house
- b. he'll have left the house
- c. he'll have arrived at work
- d. he'll be arriving at work

2. At 9:15

- a. he'll be working
- b. he'll start work
- c. he'll have started work
- d. he'll be arriving at work

3. At 12:45

- a. he'll have lunch
- b. he'll be having lunch
- c. he'll have finished lunch
- d. he'll have started his lunch

4. At 4 o'clock

- a. he'll have finished work
- b. he'll finish work
- c. he'll be working
- d. he won't have finished work

5. At 4:45

- a. he'll leave work
- b. he'll be leaving work
- c. he'll have left work
- d. he'll have arrived home

### III. WRITING

Write at least 10 sentences about your plans at your work or school. Use the future continuous tense in your verb.

### IV. FREE TALKING

Let's talk about transportation.

How do you usually get to work or school? How do people in your country get to where they want to go? Do you often take public transportation? What is your preferred means of getting around? What kind of vehicle would you like to drive? What type of transportation do you use when you are in a hurry? How do you travel when you go on vacation?

Pretend you are a travel agent. Try to sell your partner a bus/train/airplane ticket to a popular destination.



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