

Expressing the future

There are three basic ways to express future events in Spanish:

1. Immediate future. For things that will happen in the immediate future, one may state the event in the present and then indicate when it will occur simply by stating the proper word expressing the future (tomorrow, next week, etc.):

Mañana compro un coche nuevo. (Tomorrow I'll buy a new car.)

2. Ir + a. The most common way to express that something will happen in the future is to use the verb “ir” (to go) as in the English construction, “I am going to...” This use implies that the action will definitely take place at some later time (often specified). When using this construction, “ir” is conjugated and is followed by “a” and the infinitive of the next verb.

Vamos a comer a las seis. (We are going to eat at 6:00).

Él va a ir a Chile. (He is going to go to Chile.)

3. “Future” tense. The future tense is not as common as “ir+a” but it is used with events that are in the distant future and events which are not certain to occur (such as predicting or thinking about things in the future.) The future tense is formed by adding the appropriate ending on to the infinitive form of the verb, **without removing any letters**. There is no difference in the endings for -ar/-er or -ir verbs when using the future tense. The future tense is used to express the concept of “will” in English.

*No sé cuando él **trabajará**. (I don't know when he will work.)*

Iremos a México en unos años. (We will go to Mexico in a few years.)

Future tense endings	
-é	-emos
-ás	-éis
-á	-án

visitar	
visitaré	visitaremos
visitarás	visitaréis
visitará	visitarán

ser	
seré	seremos
serás	seréis
será	serán

Although the endings never vary, there are some verbs which do have a slight change in their roots when used in the future tense:

caber: cabr-	salir: saldr-
**haber: habr-	tener: tendr-
poder: podr-	valer: valdr-
querer: querr-	venir: vendr-
saber: sabr-	decir: dir-
poner: pondr-	hacer: har-

Sample conjugation: tener	
tendré	tendremos
tendrás	tendréis
tendra	tendrán

Sample conjugation: decir	
diré	diremos
dirás	diréis
dirá	dirán

** “haber” is used to form the future perfect (with the past participle, as with other perfect tenses): I will have visited (yo habré visitado)

The following websites will help you practice using the future in Spanish:

<http://www.spaleon.com/fut.php>

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/future.htm>

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/futureperfect.htm>

<http://www.conjuguemos.com> (#12)

<http://www.colby.edu/~bknelson/exercises/future.html>