

Futur I

DAS FUTUR I

Futur I is the German future construction: a form of werden plus an infinitive at the end of the clause (Ich werde gehen).

“Ich werde gehen” does not have to be the future — it can be a guess. English *will* does the same thing (“He’ll be in the office by now”), and German **werden** does even more jobs than that.

CONTENTS

- 01 Right now: the future tense actually does two jobs
- 02 The build: the werden you know, infinitive at the end
- 03 Two places where people go wrong
- 04 The part nobody tells you: wird often means “probably”
- 05 What to do this week
- 06 Test yourself

01 00:10

Right now: the future tense actually does two jobs

 **SHORTCUT** If there is a time word, the **Präsens** is enough (morgen · nächste Woche). Save **werden** + infinitive for **guesses, promises** and **formal announcements**.

SENTENCE	WHAT IT SAYS	WHEN TO USE IT
Morgen gehe ich zum Arzt .	I'm going to the doctor tomorrow .	this is what people say in daily life
Morgen werde ich zum Arzt gehen .	Same meaning , more formal / firmer	writing - promises
Er wird jetzt wohl schlafen .	He's probably asleep right now . — not the future!	a guess

The third row is the most important thing on this page. When the sentence contains a word meaning “**now**” and a guessing word like **wohl, werden** + infinitive is not about the future but about **the present** — and it is a guess. Without **wohl** it depends on context: **Er wird jetzt schlafen.** can also mean “he is going to sleep now”.

The build: the werden you know, infinitive at the end

The structure is exactly the same as with modal verbs: **conjugated verb in second position, infinitive at the end**.

You are not learning anything new — **werden** just steps into the slot. Think of English “will go”, except that it changes with the person.

PERSON	WERDEN	EXAMPLE
ich	werde	Ich werde es machen .
du	wirst	Du wirst es schaffen .
er / sie / es	wird	Er wird kommen .
wir	werden	Wir werden sehen .
ihr	werdet	Ihr werdet euch freuen .
sie / Sie	werden	Sie werden es bald sehen .

In a subordinate clause the order changes and **werden** slides to the very end: ..., **dass er morgen kommen wird**.

It has four separate jobs, and all four use the same pattern — **the other words in the sentence** tell you which one it is:

Two places where people go wrong



TRAP 1

Putting werden in every future sentence

English speakers reach for *will* or *going to* almost automatically, and so they match it one-to-one with **werden** and stick it into every sentence. It is not an error, but it sounds **heavy and artificial** — Germans do not talk like this in daily conversation. (In English you also say “I’m going to the doctor tomorrow”, not “I will go to the doctor tomorrow”. German does the same with the present.)

✗ Morgen ~~werde~~ ich einkaufen ~~gehen~~ und dann ~~werde~~ ich kochen.

Grammatically correct, but nobody talks like this.

✓ Morgen **gehe** ich einkaufen und dann **koche** ich.

Tomorrow I’m going shopping, and then I’m cooking.

The rule: **if the sentence has a time word** (morgen • später • nächste Woche • in zwei Tagen • bald), the Präsens is enough. The future information is already in that word.



TRAP 2

Mixing up the different jobs of werden

werden does three different things, and its meaning changes completely depending on what comes after it. The table makes the split clear:

WHAT FOLLOWS IT	MEANING	EXAMPLE
infinitive	future / guess	Er wird kommen . — He will come.
noun / adjective	to become	Er wird Arzt . — He’s becoming a doctor.
Partizip II	passive	Er wird gefragt . — He is being asked.

Three meanings, one verb. The way not to mix them up when reading is to **look at the end of the sentence**: infinitive, noun, or Partizip II? The passive side lives on the [Passiv page](#).

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The part nobody tells you: wird often means “probably”

Textbooks put “future tense” in the heading and leave it there. In real German, **most of the places where you will hear werden + infinitive have nothing to do with the future** — it is the same as English “**must be**” or “**will be**” used as a guess (“That’ll be the postman.”).

- ✓ **Wo ist Ali? — Er wird im Büro sein.**

He’ll be in the office. → right now, a guess.

- ✓ **Sie wird das wissen.**

She’ll know that. / She must know that.

Three words strengthen this meaning, and if one of them is in the sentence you should **definitely read it as a guess**: wohl · wahrscheinlich · sicher.

- ✓ **Er wird wohl krank sein.**

He’s probably ill.

The same guess can be built **about the past**, and that is called **Futur II**. At B1 you are not expected to produce it, but you do need to **recognise** it, because it turns up in news language:

- ✓ **Er wird es vergessen haben.**

He must have forgotten it. / He’ll have forgotten it.

- ① One last use, and you should be careful with it: a sentence built with **werden** can turn into **a harsh order** — **Du wirst jetzt sofort schlafen!** That is a parent’s tone (“You will go to sleep. Now.”). Said to an adult you don’t know, it lands far too heavily.

What to do this week

This topic settles in when you learn **when NOT to use it**. Five minutes a day:

- Write tomorrow’s plan in five sentences — all in the **Präsens**, no **werden** at all: **Morgen stehe ich früh auf...**
- Then add one **promise** sentence and use **werden** there: **Ich werde dich anrufen, versprochen.**
- Build three **guess** sentences: **Er wird wohl ... sein.**
- Write one weather sentence — that is the language of German news: **Morgen wird es regnen.**
- Once a week, write the three meanings of **werden** side by side: infinitive · noun · Partizip II.

- ① Next up is Genitiv: the case of written German, how speakers dodge it, and the prepositions **wegen** · **trotz** · **während**.

Build the sentence yourself

Tap the words and put them in order. This is the hardest part of German — and there are no options to pick from, **you** build it.

TAP THE WORDS

TAP THE WORDS

TAP THE WORDS

TIPS

Know this before the test

The core of the topic in three lines, then the mistakes people make most often.

01

With a time word, the Präsens is enough

If the sentence has a time word (**morgen** · **später** · **bald** · **nächste Woche**), the future information is already there; Germans use the Präsens in daily speech. Save **werden** + infinitive for **guesses**, **promises** and **formal announcements** — and with an adverb that means “right now”, the same pattern turns into a harsh order.

Morgen gehe ich zum Arzt. ·
Ich werde dich anrufen.

02

Conjugated werden second, infinitive last

The build is exactly the same as with modal verbs, and **werden** is irregular: **ich werde** · **du wirst** · **er wird** · **wir werden** · **ihr werdet** · **sie werden**. In a subordinate clause the order changes: the conjugated **werden** slides to the end and the infinitive stands right before it.

Wir werden das Problem
lösen. · ..., dass er
kommen wird.

03

wird often means “must be”

The meaning comes from **the word that follows**: infinitive → future or guess, noun or adjective → “to become”, Partizip II → passive. Most of the places where you will hear this pattern are guesses about the present, not the future; **wohl** · **wahrscheinlich** · **sicher** confirm that reading. The same guess about the past is called Futur II — at B1, recognising it is enough.

Er wird wohl krank sein. · Er
wird Arzt. · Er wird gefragt.

✗ ~~Morgen werde ich
einkaufen gehen.~~

✓ Morgen gehe ich einkaufen.

✗ ~~Ihr werden euch freuen.~~

✓ Ihr werdet euch freuen.

Not wrong grammatically, but it sounds heavy and artificial — Germans don't talk like this. Because the future feels obligatory, *werden* gets stuck onto every future sentence; with *morgen* in the sentence, the Präsens is enough.

werden is irregular. The form *werden* belongs to *wir* and *sie/Sie*; *ihr* needs *werdet*.

✗ ~~..., dass er morgen wird kommen.~~

✓ ..., dass er morgen kommen wird.

The main-clause order is being carried into the subordinate clause. After **dass** the conjugated verb slides to the very end, and the infinitive stands right before it.

✗ ~~Er wird gefragt. (= “He will ask”)~~

✓ Er wird fragen. (= “He will ask”)

Both sentences are correct German — what is wrong is the **reading**. A Partizip II at the end builds a **passive**, not a future: **Er wird gefragt** = “he is being asked”. For the future you need the infinitive.

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Test yourself

Tap an answer — we will look at why together.

+7

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