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Grammar – Future Forms

Who on earth needs to use Future Perfect Continuous anyway? *Er, we all do!*

TOP 15 FACTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS (IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE)

1. Why use FPC? It is useful for the particular uses listed below. It may be the final tense (out of 12) that you learn, but it is good to use it as it shows a high level. Do we *need* to use it? Well, if you can communicate without it in your L1, so could we, so no, we don't *really* need it. But we have it, so we should know how to use it!
2. It describes two times: an earlier and a later time. An action will have been in progress before a later action
3. An FPC sentence is like a sandwich, with a time, then the FPC phrase, then for + number. The time can also come at the end, after for + number
4. FPC usually looks like this: TIME > FPC phrase > FOR + NUMBER
5. The action can be: in the past, from past to future, from present to future, or from future (earlier) to future (later)
6. The double contraction is important, because we need to reduce THREE auxiliary verbs: will have been > will've been > 'll've been > ulabin
7. The verbs that we often use with FPC inform us about its most common uses (see table below)
8. We can contrast FPC with Future Perfect, which describes an action that will finish in the future, while FPC describes an action that will continue in the future:
I will have eaten my sandwich by the time you get here. (it will be gone) / I will have been eating my sandwich... (eating will have been in progress)
9. As with all continuous tenses, we cannot use state verbs
10. We can swap WILL for GOING TO; it has the same meaning, but it is more awkward to pronounce (with the contraction: *gonna*)
I am going to have been... > I'm going to have been > I'm gonna have been > uhm g n r bin
11. Tip: you can find real examples on social media, e.g. Twitter. Search 'will have been + [your choice of present participle]'
12. Passive voice is possible but rather awkward, e.g. 'The car will have been being washed [by the kids] for half an hour by the time I get there'
13. It's odd how we use a *future* tense with *present* forms (will, have, present participle) to describe *past* actions! Often follows: I think / guess / reckon / suppose, etc.
14. In my favourite grammar book it is described, rather unfairly, as the 'least important' future tense. Why rank them? Why not learn to use them all?
15. It is also known as Future Perfect Progressive

WHEN DO WE USE FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS?

Use of FPC:	Category of Action:	Examples of Main Verbs (See also synonyms):
1. To predict the duration of a future action (short timescale)	<i>moving</i> <i>doing household tasks</i> <i>working</i> <i>hobbies / sport</i>	<i>walking, running, driving, flying, travelling</i> <i>cleaning, ironing, Hoovering, cooking, doing the washing</i> <i>teaching, studying, writing, photocopying, laying bricks</i> <i>fishing, swimming, surfing, working out, watching TV, reading, dancing, playing (sth)</i>
2. To mark an anniversary (long timescale)	<i>life events</i> <i>favourite places</i>	<i>living, working, attending, serving, representing, collecting</i> <i>coming / going (here / there), eating (at this restaurant), visiting / booking (this hotel)</i>
3. To mark how long sby has been waiting (short timescale)	<i>waiting</i>	<i>standing, sitting, hanging on, holding on, anticipating, killing time, wasting (my) time</i>
4. To speculate about a past action	ANY PAST ACTION IS POSSIBLE, APART FROM STATE VERBS	
5. To demonstrate cause and effect	AS 1. ABOVE	

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HOW FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS IS FORMED

Positive form:	subject / will / (adverb) / have / been / ing form	I will (probably) have been reading
Negative form:	subject / (adverb) / will / not / have / been / ing form	I (probably) will not (won't) have been reading
Yes / no questions:	will / subject / (adverb) / have / been / ing form?	Will he (probably) have been reading? / Yes, he (a) will (have). / No, he (a) won't (have).
Wh- questions:	wh- / will / subject / (adverb) / have / been / ing form?	What will he (probably) have been reading? / A book.

TYPICAL FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

TIME (BY / BEFORE / ON / AT / IN / WHEN) [unless the time is known] + FPC phrase + **FOR + NUMBER or TIME**

FUTURE:

Time Phrase:		Example:	
BY + TIME	TIME IS STATED	By the end of August we will have been living here for three years.	FOR + NUMBER or TIME
BY THE TIME + ACTION		By the time you get here, I will have been reading for two hours.	
BEFORE + ACTION		Before you get here, I will have been reading for two hours.	
ON + DAY / DATE		On January 18 th we will have been living here for three years.	
AT + CLOCK TIME		At 3pm I will have been reading for two hours.	
IN + MONTH / SEASON		In January we will have been living here for three years.	
WHEN + ACTION		When you get here I will have been reading for two hours.	
AS OF + TIME		As of Friday we will have been living here for three years.	
TIME		Tomorrow afternoon I will have been reading for two hours.	
MIXED CONDITIONAL: If + PRESENT SIMPLE + TIME / FPC		If you get here at 3pm I will have been reading for two hours.	
AT THAT TIME	TIME IS KNOWN	At that time [previously mentioned] we will have been living here for three years.	
BY THEN		By then I will have been reading for two hours.	
BY THAT POINT / STAGE		By that point we will have been living here for three years.	
TIME IS KNOWN		I will have been reading for two hours.	
TIME IS IMPLIED		I will have been reading for the whole / entire day.	

PAST:

Time Phrase:	Example:	
TIME	Yesterday Bill will have been reading (for two hours).	FOR IS OPTIONAL
TIME IS KNOWN	I will have been reading (for the last / past two hours).	