



By This Time Next Year...

Setting goals, imagining the future, and mastering future tenses

B2

Reading

Grammar

40 min

Lesson Objectives

- Read an article about goal-setting and future planning
- Learn vocabulary related to ambition and personal growth
- Use the future perfect for completed actions before a future time
- Use the future continuous for ongoing actions at a future time
- Discuss your own goals and where you see yourself in 5 years
- Write about your future plans using both tenses

1 Before You Read

- Where do you see yourself in five years? What will you be doing?
- Do you usually set goals for the new year? How often do you achieve them?
- Does planning the future carefully lead to a better life, or does it add pressure?

2 Reading: Where Will You Be in Five Years?

Ask someone where they will be in five years and watch their expression change. It is a question that excites some and terrifies others.

Every January, millions write resolutions. They promise that by year-end, they **will have lost** ten kilos, **will have saved** enough for a holiday, or **will have learned** guitar. By February, most promises are broken. A behavioural study found only 12% of people achieve their resolutions. So what goes wrong?

Dr. Amara Okafor, a psychologist specialising in motivation, says the problem isn't willpower but specificity. "Most people set vague goals. 'I want to get fit' means nothing. By next year, will you **be running** 5km daily? Will you **have completed** a marathon? The more concrete the picture, the more likely your brain will work towards it."

She recommends "future snapshots" — imagining a single day five years ahead. What **will you be doing** when you wake up? Where **will you be living**? Then work backwards, identifying milestones. "By that day, you **will have taken** hundreds of small steps. Each one matters."

Lena, a 28-year-old from Berlin, used this technique. "I imagined myself as a freelance illustrator near the sea. By year one, I had saved enough to quit my office job. By year two, I had built a portfolio. Now I live in Lisbon. Next month, I **will be flying** to Tokyo. By December, I **will have visited** six countries this year."

Life throws setbacks — illness, money problems. The key is flexibility. "Your snapshot is a compass, not a map," says Dr. Okafor. "It shows the direction, not every turn. Adjust the route, not the destination."

Sharing goals increases accountability. Tell a friend: "By June, I **will have finished** my course." This creates obligation that makes you follow through.

So close your eyes. Picture a Tuesday five years from now. What **will you be doing**? What **will you have achieved**? The answer might change how you spend tomorrow.

3 Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Example
resolution	firm decision, often New Year	<i>My resolution is to read more.</i>
behavioural	relating to how people act	<i>Behavioural science studies habits.</i>
psychologist	mind and behaviour specialist	<i>She consulted a psychologist.</i>
motivation	reason to do something	<i>His motivation is helping others.</i>
willpower	ability to control actions	<i>Dieting requires willpower.</i>
specificity	being detailed and exact	<i>Goals need specificity.</i>
vague	not clear or detailed	<i>His plans were vague.</i>
concrete	clear and definite	<i>Give a concrete example.</i>
snapshot	quick picture of a moment	<i>A snapshot of the economy.</i>
milestone	important stage in a process	<i>Finishing was a milestone.</i>
freelance	working independently	<i>A freelance photographer.</i>
portfolio	collection of work samples	<i>She showed her portfolio.</i>
setback	problem that delays progress	<i>A major setback.</i>
flexibility	ability to adapt	<i>Flexibility is essential.</i>
accountability	responsibility for actions	<i>Increases accountability.</i>
destination	place you're going to	<i>The destination is less important.</i>

Collocations: set a goal • achieve a target • work towards • follow through • make progress • long-term plan • five-year plan • personal growth

4 Grammar: Future Perfect & Future Continuous

□ In the Text, You Saw...

- Future Perfect: "By year-end, they **will have lost** ten kilos."
- Future Perfect: "By December, I **will have visited** six countries."
- Future Continuous: "Next month, I **will be flying** to Tokyo."
- Future Continuous: "What **will you be doing** when you wake up?"

Tense	Structure	Use	Example
Future Perfect	will + have + pp	Completed BEFORE	By 2027, I will have graduated.
Future Continuous	will + be + -ing	In progress AT	At 8pm, I will be studying.

□ Quick Comparison

Future Perfect = action DONE: "By 10pm, I will have eaten dinner." (finished)

Future Continuous = action HAPPENING: "At 8pm, I will be eating dinner." (in the middle)

△ Common Mistakes

- "By next year, I will finish..." → □ "...I will have finished..." (need "have")
- "This time tomorrow, I will fly..." → □ "...I will be flying..." (in progress)
- "I will have been working at 6pm." → □ "I will be working at 6pm."

5 □ Exercise: Choose the Right Tense

1. By next June, I ___ my exams.
→ will have finished (BY = completed → future perfect)
2. This time tomorrow, she ___ on a beach.
→ will be relaxing (THIS TIME = in progress → future continuous)
3. By the time you arrive, we ___ dinner.
→ will have cooked (BY THE TIME = completed → future perfect)
4. At 9pm tonight, they ___ the match.
→ will be watching (AT 9PM = in progress → future continuous)
5. By 2030, scientists ___ a cure.
→ will have developed (BY 2030 = completed → future perfect)
6. In ten years, I ___ my own company.
→ will be running (IN TEN YEARS = ongoing → future continuous)
7. By Friday, he ___ the report.

→ will have submitted (BY FRIDAY = completed → future perfect)

8. This time next week, we ___ through Italy.

→ will be driving (THIS TIME = in progress → future continuous)

9. Before the concert, they ___ the equipment.

→ will have set up (BEFORE = completed → future perfect)

10. At midnight, people ___ the new year.

→ will be celebrating (AT MIDNIGHT = in progress → future continuous)

6 Comprehension Quiz

1. What % of people achieve New Year's resolutions?

Answer: 12%

2. What is the main problem according to Dr. Okafor?

Answer: Goals are too vague

3. What is a 'future snapshot'?

Answer: An imagined single day in your future life

4. What happened to Lena?

Answer: She became a freelance illustrator in Lisbon

5. 'By December, I ___ six countries.' — tense?

Answer: Future Perfect: will have visited

6. 'This time tomorrow, I ___ to work.' — tense?

Answer: Future Continuous: will be driving

7. Which uses future perfect correctly?

Answer: By Friday I will have finished the project.

8. Which time marker signals future continuous?

Answer: This time next week

7 Fill in the Blanks

Phrases: will have started learning • will be giving • will have built • will be dancing • will have cleaned • will be travelling • will have bought • will be lying

1. By year-end, I ___ three new languages.

2. This time next Monday, she ___ her presentation.

3. By 2030, they ___ a new hospital.

4. At midnight Saturday, we ___ at the party.

5. Before the guests arrive, I ___ the house.

6. In twenty years, people ___ to Mars.
7. By the time the film starts, we ___ our popcorn.
8. This time next summer, I ___ on the beach.

Answers: 1. will have started learning • 2. will be giving • 3. will have built • 4. will be dancing • 5. will have cleaned • 6. will be travelling • 7. will have bought • 8. will be lying

8 Speaking & Writing

Discussion Questions

1. By this time next year, what will you have achieved?
2. Are five-year plans realistic, or does life change too quickly?
3. What goal did you actually achieve? How did it feel?
4. Is it better to set ambitious or small, achievable goals?
5. How will technology have changed our lives by 2035?

Example Dialogue

- A: Where do you see yourself in five years?
 B: By then I will have finished my master's degree.
 A: What will you be doing for work?
 B: I'll probably be working for an environmental organisation.
 A: Will you have moved to a different city?
 B: Maybe! This time next year, I will be living in Copenhagen for my exchange.

Writing Task

Write 80–120 words about your life in five years:

- What will you have achieved by then?
- What will you be doing on a typical day?
- What milestones will you have reached?

Use future perfect at least 3 times and future continuous at least 2 times.

9 Review Checklist

I can now...

- understand an article about goal-setting and future planning
- use vocabulary related to ambition and personal growth
- use the future perfect for completed actions before a future time
- use the future continuous for ongoing actions at a future time
- distinguish between future perfect and future continuous
- discuss and write about my goals and future plans



Congratulations!

You have completed Lesson 7: By This Time Next Year.