

The Future Tense

Use the future tense for things that have not happened yet, but are going to happen. Use the verbs shall and will as helping verbs or auxiliary verbs to form the future tense.

For example,

1. They **will finished** the job next week.
2. We **are going to** bake a cake this afternoon.
3. I'm sure Mom and Dad **are going to be** proud of me.
4. When **are you going to** clean your room?
5. They **are going to wash** the car for Dad.
6. It **is going to get** dark very soon.

You can also use the simple present tense to talk about things that have been arranged for the future. For example,

1. The new supermarket **opens** tomorrow.
2. James **moves** to the second grade next year.
3. The bus **leaves** in ten minutes.

Can and Could

The verbs **can** and **could** are both helping and auxiliary verbs. Use can and could to talk about people's ability to do things. Can and could are used with the pronouns I, you, he, she, it, we and they, and with singular or plural nouns. Could is the past tense of can.

For example,

1. He **can run** faster than Arthur.
2. She **cannot afford** such an expensive ring.
3. I'm full. I **can't eat** any more.
4. **Can you help** me?
5. **Can I come** with you?
6. I knew you **could do** it if you tried.
7. She **could not come** because she was ill.

May

Use **may** to ask if you are allowed to do something, or to give someone permission to do something.

For example,

1. **May I watch** television now? Yes, you **may**.
2. **May I borrow** your pen?
3. You **may come** in.
4. You **may go** now.

May is also used to talk about things that are likely to happen.

For example,

1. Take an umbrella. It **may rain**.
2. If it continues to rain, there **may be** a flood.
3. I **may go** to Sue's birthday party if I'm free.
4. You **may fall** down if you aren't careful.

Might

Might is used as the past tense of may. For example,

1. He realized he **might catch** the earlier train if he hurried.
2. I knew my teacher **might find** out.

You can also use might to talk about things that are possible. For example,

1. Put your purse away or it **might get** stolen.
2. You **might slip**, so hold on to the railing.

Do, Does, and Did

Use **do**, **does** and **did** to talk about actions. Use "do" with the pronouns I, you, we and they, and with plural nouns. Use "does" with the pronouns he, she and it, and singular nouns. Did is the simple past tense of do and does.

For example,

1. Mon **does** the dishes.
2. Mom **does** the cooking.
3. We always **do** exercise together.

Would and Should

The verb **would** is another helping or auxiliary verb. Use would as the past tense of will.

For example,

1. We started running so we **would be** there in time.
2. Peter said he **would come**.
3. I knew you **would enjoy** Disneyland.

Should is a helping or auxiliary verb. Use should to talk about necessary actions or things that people ought to do.

For example,

1. Children **should not play** in traffic.
2. You **should** always **look** before crossing the street.
3. If you are tired you **should go** to bed early.
4. You **should know** how to spell your own name.
5. We **should** all **drink** more water.