

FUTURE TENSE

by Seda Sürel

INTRODUCTION

The future tense suffix -ecek / -acak attaches to the verb stem and marks events expected or planned to occur after the speech moment. The suffix follows two-way vowel harmony and combines with personal endings.

1. Function

The future tense expresses future actions, intentions, scheduled events, or predictions.
The tense marker is -ecek / -acak; person is encoded through personal endings.

2. Forms

a. Vowel Harmony (A → a / e)

Back vowels (a, ı, o, u) → -acak

Front vowels (e, i, ö, ü) → -ecek

b. Personal Endings

1st singular: -Im → -acağım / -eceğim

2nd singular: -sın → -acaksın / -eceksin

3rd singular: -Ø → -acak / -ecek

1st plural: -Iz → -acağız / -eceğiz

2nd plural: -sınız → -acaksınız / -eceksiniz

3rd plural: -IAr → -acaklar / -ecekler

3. Consonant Behavior

a. Stem-final alternation

Verb stems ending in t soften to d before the vowel-initial future suffix.

Examples:

git → gidecek

et → edecek

tat → tadacak

Other voiceless consonants do not soften:

bak → bakacak

çık → çıkacak

kok → kokacak

iç → içecek

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b. Suffix-final alternation

The final consonant k of the future suffix softens to ğ when followed by vowel-initial personal endings:

-ecek + im → eceğim

-ecek + iz → eceğiz

-acak + ım → acağım

-acak + ız → acağız

This alternation is internal to the future suffix.

4. Structure

The morphological sequence is:

verb stem → future suffix → personal ending

No external buffer consonant is inserted between the verb stem and the future suffix.

Examples:

gel + ecek → gelecek

oku + yacak → okuyacak (Forms such as okuyacak reflect regular surface alternations of the verb stem.)

5. Usage

The future tense is used for:

- planned actions
- expectations
- predictions
- arrangements and schedules

Its temporal reference is strictly future.

Examples

- Yarın gideceğim. — I will go tomorrow.
- Sen bakacaksın. — You will look.
- O başlayacak. — He/She/It will start.
- Biz yazacağız. — We will write.
- Siz konuşacaksınız. — You will speak.
- Onlar dönecekler. — They will return.
- Hava açacak. — The weather will clear up.

Notes

- The suffix undergoes vowel harmony and internal softening.
- Verb stems ending in t soften before the future suffix.
- Personal endings attach after the tense marker.