

-겠-

will, I guess, I'd say

An infix like -았/었-, but for what has not happened yet. It carries the speaker's own resolve, or a guess about someone else's situation.

How it attaches

Situation	Form	Example
Any stem	-겠- — no change	가다 → 가겠어요
ㄹ stems keep the ㄹ	-겠-	알다 → 알겠어요
Formal announcement	-겠습니다	제가 하겠습니다
Guess about others	-겠어요	맛있겠어요
Guess about the past	-았/었-	힘들었겠어요
Fixed phrases	learn whole	알겠습니다, 모르겠어요, 잘 먹겠습니다

Notes

The form is the easy part: 겠 attaches straight to any stem, with no vowel rule and no ㄹ dropping. 가겠어요, 먹겠어요, 알겠어요.

The meaning splits by person. With I it announces a decision, formally: 제가 하겠습니다. It is what you say volunteering in a meeting, not what you say offering a friend a coffee. With anyone or anything else it becomes a guess drawn from evidence in front of you: 맛있겠어요 (that looks delicious), 힘들겠어요 (that must be hard).

It also lives inside fixed phrases that no longer feel like future tense at all: 알겠습니다 (understood), 모르겠어요 (I don't know), 잘 먹겠습니다 (said before eating). Learn these as whole units.

Examples

- 제가 먼저 하겠습니다.**
I'll go first.
- 내일은 비가 오겠어요.**
It looks like it will rain tomorrow.
- 많이 피곤하시겠어요.**
You must be very tired.
- 잘 먹겠습니다.**
Thank you for the meal. (said before eating)
- 이거 정말 맛있겠다!**
This looks really tasty!
- 잠깐 도와주시겠어요?**
Could you help me for a moment?

Compared with

-(으)ㄹ 거예요

Both point forward, but -겠- is formal and declarative while -(으)ㄹ 거예요 is the ordinary way to state a plan. For "I'm going to the market tomorrow," use the second.

제가 가겠습니다. (I volunteer) / 내일 갈 거예요. (that's my plan)

-(으)ㄹ게요

-(으)ㄹ게요 is a promise made to the listener, warm and conversational. -겠- announces to a room. Both mean "I will," and picking the wrong one is a register error rather than a grammar one.

제가 하겠습니다. (in a meeting) / 제가 할게요. (to a friend)

-(으)ㄹ 것 같다

For a guess, -겠- is immediate and reactive — you are looking at the thing. -(으)ㄹ 것 같다 is a considered opinion and works without anything in front of you.

맛있겠어요. (seeing the dish) / 맛있을 것 같아요. (I imagine it's good)

Watch out

✗ 네, 알습니다.

○ 네, 알겠습니다.

The set response to an instruction always carries 겠. 압니다 exists but means "I know it as a fact," which is not what the situation calls for.

✗ 내일 친구를 만나겠어요.

○ 내일 친구를 만날 거예요.

-겠- makes an ordinary plan sound like a formal declaration. For everyday arrangements, use -(으)ㄹ 거예요.

✗ 저 커피 마시겠어요. — to a friend

○ 저 커피 마실게요.

Among friends, -(으)ㄹ게요 is the natural way to state what you are about to do. -겠- belongs to formal settings.