


Passive (1) (is done / was done)

A Study this example:



This house was **built** in 1930.

‘Was built’ is *passive*. Compare active and passive:

Somebody **built** this house in 1930. (*active*)

subject *object*

This house was **built** in 1930. (*passive*)

subject

We use an *active* verb to say *what the subject does*:

- My grandfather was a builder. **He built** this house in 1930.
- It's a big company. **It employs** two hundred people.

We use a *passive* verb to say *what happens to the subject*:

- This house is quite old. **It was built** in 1930.
- Two hundred people are employed by the company.

B When we use the passive, who or what causes the action is often unknown or unimportant:

- A lot of money was **stolen** in the robbery. (somebody stole it but we don't know *who*)
- Is this room **cleaned** every day? (does somebody clean it? – it's not important *who*)

If we want to say who does or what causes the action, we use **by**...:

- This house was built **by my grandfather**.
- Two hundred people are employed **by the company**.

C The passive is **be (is/was/have been etc.) + the past participle (done/cleaned/seen etc.)**:

(be) done (be) cleaned (be) seen (be) damaged (be) built etc.

For irregular past participles (done/known/seen etc.), see Appendix 1.

Study the active and passive forms of the *present simple* and *past simple*:

Present simple

active: clean(s)/see(s) etc. Somebody **cleans** this room every day.

passive: am/is/are cleaned/seen etc. This room is cleaned every day.

- Many accidents **are caused** by careless driving.
- I'm **not often invited** to parties.
- How is this word **pronounced**?

Past simple

active: cleaned/saw etc. Somebody **cleaned** this room yesterday.

passive: was/were cleaned/seen etc. This room was cleaned yesterday.

- We **were woken up** by a loud noise during the night.
- ‘Did you go to the party?’ ‘No, I **wasn't invited**.’
- How much money **was stolen**?

EXERCISES

41.1 Complete the sentences using one of these verbs in the correct form:

~~cause~~ damage hold include invite make overtake show
translate write

- 1 Many accidents are caused by dangerous driving.
- 2 Cheese from milk.
- 3 The roof of the building in a storm a few days ago.
- 4 There's no need to leave a tip. Service in the bill.
- 5 You to the wedding. Why didn't you go?
- 6 A cinema is a place where films
- 7 In the United States, elections for President every four years.
- 8 Originally the book in Spanish and a few years ago it
..... into English.
- 9 We were driving along quite fast but we by lots of other cars.

41.2 Write questions using the passive. Some are present and some are past.

- 1 Ask about the telephone. (when/invent?) When was the telephone invented?
- 2 Ask about glass. (how/make?) How
- 3 Ask about Australia. (when/discover?)
- 4 Ask about silver. (what/use for?)
- 5 Ask about television. (when/invent?)

41.3 Put the verb into the correct form, present simple or past simple, active or passive.

- 1 It's a big factory. Five hundred people are employed (employ) there.
- 2 Water (cover) most of the Earth's surface.
- 3 Most of the Earth's surface (cover) by water.
- 4 The park gates (lock) at 6.30 p.m. every evening.
- 5 The letter (post) a week ago and it (arrive) yesterday.
- 6 The boat (sink) quickly but fortunately everybody
..... (rescue).
- 7 Ron's parents (die) when he was very young. He and his sister
..... (bring) up by their grandparents.
- 8 I was born in London but I (grow) up in the north of England.
- 9 While I was on holiday, my camera (steal) from my hotel room.
- 10 While I was on holiday, my camera (disappear) from my hotel room.
- 11 Why (Sue/resign) from her job? Didn't she enjoy it?
- 12 Why (Bill/sack) from his job? What did he do wrong?
- 13 The company is not independent. It (own) by a much larger company.
- 14 I saw an accident last night. Somebody (call) an ambulance but
nobody (injure) so the ambulance (not/need).
- 15 Where (these photographs/take)? In London?
..... (you/take) them?

41.4 Rewrite these sentences. Instead of using 'somebody/they/people' etc. write a passive sentence.

- 1 Somebody cleans the room every day. The room is cleaned every day.
- 2 They cancelled all flights because of fog. All
- 3 People don't use this road very often.
- 4 Somebody accused me of stealing money. I
- 5 How do people learn languages? How
- 6 People advised us not to go out alone.

Passive (2) (be/been/being done)

Study the following active and passive forms:

A

Infinitive

active: (to) do/clean/see etc.

Somebody will clean the room later.

passive: (to) be done/cleaned/seen etc.

The room will be cleaned later.

- The situation is serious. Something must **be done** before it's too late.
- A mystery is something that can't **be explained**.
- The music was very loud and could **be heard** from a long way away.
- A new supermarket is going **to be built** next year.
- Please go away. I want **to be left** alone.

B

Perfect infinitive

active: have done/cleaned/seen etc.

Somebody should have cleaned the room.

passive: have been done/cleaned/seen etc.

The room should have been cleaned.

- I haven't received the letter yet. It might **have been** sent to the wrong address.
- If you hadn't left the car unlocked, it wouldn't **have been** stolen.
- There were some problems at first but they seem **to have been** solved.

C

Present perfect

active: have/has (done)

The room looks nice. Somebody **has cleaned** it.

passive: have/has been (done)

The room looks nice. It **has been** cleaned.

- Have you heard the news? The President **has been** shot!
- **Have you ever been** bitten by a dog?
- 'Are you going to the party?' 'No, I **haven't been** invited.'

Past perfect

active: had (done)

The room looked nice. Somebody **had cleaned** it.

passive: had been (done)

The room looked nice. It **had been** cleaned.

- The vegetables didn't taste very good. They **had been** cooked for too long.
- The car was three years old but **hadn't been** used very much.

D

Present continuous

active: am/is/are (do)ing

Somebody **is cleaning** the room at the moment.

passive: am/is/are being (done)

The room **is being** cleaned at the moment.

- There's somebody walking behind us. I think we **are being** followed.
- (*in a shop*) 'Can I help you, madam?' 'No, thank you. I'm **being** served.'

Past continuous

active: was/were (do)ing

Somebody **was cleaning** the room when I arrived.

passive: was/were being (done)

The room **was being** cleaned when I arrived.

- There was somebody walking behind us. We **were being** followed.

EXERCISES

42.1 *What do these words mean? Use it can... or it can't... Use a dictionary if necessary.*

If something is

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 washable, <i>it can be washed.</i> | 4 unusable, |
| 2 unbreakable, it | 5 invisible, |
| 3 edible, it | 6 portable, |

42.2 *Complete these sentences with one of the following verbs (in the correct form):*

carry cause ~~do~~ make repair ~~send~~ spend wake up

Sometimes you need have ('might have', 'could have' etc.).

- The situation is serious. Something must *be done* before it's too late.
- I haven't received the letter. It might *have been sent* to the wrong address.
- A decision will not until the next meeting.
- I told the hotel receptionist that I wanted to at 6.30 the next morning.
- Do you think that less money should on armaments?
- This road is in very bad condition. It should a long time ago.
- The injured man couldn't walk and had to
- It's not certain how the fire started but it might by an electrical fault.

42.3 *Rewrite these sentences. Instead of using 'somebody' or 'they', write a passive sentence.*

- Somebody has cleaned the room. *The room has been cleaned.*
- They have postponed the concert. The
- Somebody is using the computer at the moment. The computer
- I didn't realise that somebody was recording our conversation.
I didn't realise that
- When we got to the stadium we found that they had cancelled the game.
When we got to the stadium, we found that
- They are building a new ring road round the city.
.....
- They have built a new hospital near the airport.
.....

42.4 *Make sentences from the words in brackets. Sometimes the verb is active, sometimes passive. (This exercise also includes the past simple – see Unit 41C.)*

- There's somebody behind us. (I think / we / follow) *I think we're being followed.*
- This room looks different. (you / paint?) *Have you painted it?*
- My car has disappeared. (it / steal!) It
- My umbrella has disappeared. (somebody / take) Somebody
- Tom gets a higher salary now. (he / promote)
- Ann can't use her office at the moment. (it / redecorate)
- The photocopier broke down yesterday, but now it's OK. (it / work / again; it / repair)
.....
- The police have found the people they were looking for. (two people / arrest / last night)
.....
- A tree was lying across the road. (it / blow down / in the storm)
.....
- The man next door disappeared six months ago. (nobody / see / since then)
.....
- I was mugged on my way home a few nights ago. (you / ever / mug?)
.....

Passive (3)

A

I was born...

We say: I was born... (*not* 'I am born'):

- I was born in Chicago.
 - Where were you born? (*not* 'where are you born')
- } *past simple*
- but ● How many babies are born every day? *present simple*

B

Some verbs can have two objects. For example, give:

- We gave the police the information. (= We gave the information to the police.)
object 1 *object 2*

So it is possible to make two passive sentences:

- The police were given the information. or The information was given to the police.

Other verbs which can have two objects are: ask offer pay show teach tell

When we use these verbs in the passive, most often we begin with the *person*:

- I was offered the job but I refused it. (= they offered me the job)
- You will be given plenty of time to decide. (= we will give you plenty of time)
- Have you been shown the new machine? (= has anybody shown you...?)
- The men were paid £200 to do the work. (= somebody paid the men £200)

C

I don't like being...

The passive of doing/seeing etc. is being done / being seen etc. Compare:

active: I don't like people telling me what to do.

passive: I don't like being told what to do.

- I remember being given a toy drum on my fifth birthday. (= I remember somebody giving me a toy drum...)
- Mr Miller hates being kept waiting. (= he hates people keeping him waiting)
- We managed to climb over the wall without being seen. (= ...without anybody seeing us)

D

Get

Sometimes you can use get instead of be in the passive:

- There was a fight at the party but nobody got hurt. (= nobody was hurt)
- I don't often get invited to parties. (= I'm not often invited)
- I'm surprised Ann didn't get offered the job. (...Ann wasn't offered the job)

You can use get to say that something happens to somebody or something, especially if this is unplanned or unexpected:

- Our dog got run over by a car.

You can use get only when things happen or change. For example, you cannot use get in these sentences:

- Jill is liked by everybody. (*not* 'gets liked' – this is not a 'happening')
- He was a mystery man. Nothing was known about him. (*not* 'got known')

We use get mainly in informal spoken English. You can use be in all situations.

We also use get in the following expressions (which are not passive in meaning):

- get married get divorced
- get dressed (= put on your clothes) get changed (= change your clothes)

EXERCISES

43.1 *When were they born? Choose five of these people and write a sentence for each. (Two of them were born in the same year.)*

Beethoven	Galileo	Elvis Presley	1452	1869	1929
Agatha Christie	Mahatma Gandhi	Leonardo da Vinci	1564	1891	1935
Walt Disney	Martin Luther King	William Shakespeare	1770	1901	

- 1 Walt Disney was born in 1901.
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 And you? I

43.2 *Write these sentences in another way, beginning in the way shown.*

- 1 They didn't give me the money. I ~~wasn't given the money.~~
- 2 They asked me some difficult questions at the interview.
I
- 3 Janet's colleagues gave her a present when she retired.
Janet
- 4 Nobody told me that George was ill.
I wasn't
- 5 How much will they pay you?
How much will you
- 6 I think they should have offered Tom the job.
I think Tom
- 7 Has anybody shown you what to do?
Have you

43.3 *Complete the sentences using being + one of these verbs:*

ask attack give invite ~~keep~~ pay

- 1 Mr Miller doesn't like being kept waiting.
- 2 They went to the party without
- 3 Most people like presents.
- 4 It's a dangerous city. People won't go out after dark because they are afraid of
- 5 I don't like stupid questions.
- 6 Few people are prepared to work without

43.4 *Complete the sentences using get/got + one of these verbs (in the correct form):*

ask break damage ~~hurt~~ pay steal sting stop use

- 1 There was a fight at the party but nobody got hurt.
- 2 Ted by a bee while he was sitting in the garden.
- 3 How did that window?
- 4 These tennis courts don't very often. Not many people want to play.
- 5 I used to have a bicycle but it
- 6 Last night I by the police as I was driving home.
- 7 How much did you last month?
- 8 Please pack these things very carefully. I don't want them to
- 9 People often want to know what my job is. I often that question.

It is said that... He is said to... (be) supposed to...

A Study this example situation:



Henry is very old. Nobody knows exactly how old he is, but:

It is said that **he** is 108 years old.

or **He** is said to be 108 years old.

Both these sentences mean: 'People say that he is 108 years old.'

You can use these structures with a number of other verbs, especially:

thought believed considered reported known expected alleged understood

Compare the two structures:

- Cathy works very hard.
It is said that she works 16 hours a day. or She is said to work 16 hours a day.
- The police are looking for a missing boy.
It is believed that the boy is wearing a white pullover and blue jeans. or The boy is believed to be wearing a white pullover and blue jeans.
- The strike started three weeks ago.
It is expected that it will end soon. or The strike is expected to end soon.
- A friend of mine has been arrested.
It is alleged that he kicked a policeman. or He is alleged to have kicked a policeman.
- Those two houses belong to the same family.
It is said that there is a secret tunnel between them. or There is said to be a secret tunnel between them.

These structures are often used in news reports. For example, in a report about an accident:

- It is reported that two people were injured in the explosion. or Two people are reported to have been injured in the explosion.

B (Be) supposed to

Sometimes it is supposed to... = it is said to...:

- Let's go and see that film. It's supposed to be very good. (= it is said to be very good)
- 'Why was he arrested?' 'He's supposed to have kicked a policeman.' (= he is said to have kicked a policeman)

But sometimes **supposed to** has a different meaning. 'Something is supposed to happen' = it is planned, arranged or expected. Often this is different from what *really* happens:

- I'd better hurry. It's nearly 8 o'clock and I'm supposed to be meeting Ann at 8.15. (= I have arranged to meet Ann, I said I would meet her)
- The train was supposed to arrive at 11.30 but it was an hour late. (= the train was expected to arrive at 11.30 according to the timetable)
- You were supposed to clean the windows. Why didn't you do it?

'You're not supposed to do something' = it is not allowed or advisable for you to do it:

- You're not supposed to park your car here. It's private parking only.
- Mr Bond is much better after his illness but he's still not supposed to do any heavy work. (= his doctors have advised him not to...)

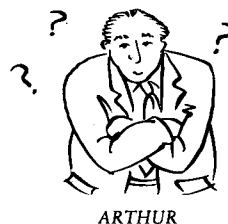
EXERCISES

44.1 Write these sentences in another way, beginning as shown. Use the underlined word in your sentence.

- 1 It is expected that the strike will end soon. The strike is expected to end soon.....
- 2 It is expected that the weather will be good tomorrow.
The weather is
- 3 It is believed that the thieves got in through the kitchen window.
The thieves
- 4 It is reported that many people are homeless after the floods.
Many people
- 5 It is thought that the prisoner escaped by climbing over a wall.
The prisoner
- 6 It is alleged that the man drove through the town at 90 miles an hour.
The man is
- 7 It is reported that the building has been badly damaged by fire.
The building
- 8 a It is said that the company is losing a lot of money.
The company
- b It is believed that the company lost a lot of money last year.
The company
- c It is expected that the company will lose money this year.
The company

44.2 People say a lot of things about Arthur. For example:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Arthur eats spiders. | 4 He has 12 children. |
| 2 He is very rich. | 5 He robbed a bank a long time ago. |
| 3 He writes poetry. | |



ARTHUR

Nobody knows for sure whether these things are true or not. Write sentences about Arthur using (be) supposed to.

- 1 ... Arthur is supposed to eat spiders.....
- 2 He
- 3
- 4
- 5

44.3 Now you have to use (be) supposed to with its other meaning. In each example what happens is different from what is supposed to happen. Use (be) supposed to + one of these verbs:

arrive be **block** come **park** phone **start**
Some of the sentences are negative (like the first example).

- 1 You re not supposed to park.. here. It's private parking only.
- 2 The train was supposed to arrive.. at 11.30, but it was an hour late.
- 3 What are the children doing at home? They at school at this time.
- 4 We work at 8.15, but we rarely do anything before 8.30.
- 5 This door is a fire exit. You it.
- 6 Oh dear! I Ann but I completely forgot.
- 7 They arrived very early – at 2 o'clock. They until 3.30.

UNIT 41

41.1

- 2 is made
- 3 was damaged
- 4 is included
- 5 were invited
- 6 are shown
- 7 are held
- 8 was written ... was translated
- 9 were overtaken

41.2

- 2 How is glass made?
- 3 When was Australia discovered?
- 4 What is silver used for?
- 5 When was television invented?

41.3

- 2 covers
- 3 is covered
- 4 are locked
- 5 was posted ... arrived
- 6 sank ... was rescued
- 7 died ... were brought
- 8 grew

- 9 was stolen
- 10 disappeared
- 11 did Sue resign
- 12 was Bill sacked
- 13 is owned
- 14 called ... was injured ... wasn't needed
- 15 were these photographs taken ... Did you take

41.4

- 2 All flights were cancelled because of fog.
- 3 This road isn't used very often.
- 4 I was accused of stealing money.
- 5 How are languages learnt?
- 6 We were advised not to go out alone.

UNIT 42**42.1**

- 2 can't be broken.
- 3 can be eaten.
- 4 it can't be used.
- 5 it can't be seen.
- 6 it can be carried.

42.2

- 3 be made
- 4 be woken up
- 5 be spent
- 6 have been repaired
- 7 be carried
- 8 have been caused

42.3

- 2 The concert has been postponed.
- 3 The computer is being used at the moment.
- 4 I didn't realise that our conversation was being recorded.
- 5 ...we found that the game had been cancelled.
- 6 A new ring road is being built round the city.
- 7 A new hospital has been built near the airport.

42.4

- 3 It has been stolen! / It's been stolen!
- 4 Somebody has taken it. *or* ...taken my umbrella.
- 5 He has been promoted. / He's been promoted. *or* He was promoted.
- 6 It is being redecorated. / It's being redecorated.
- 7 It is working again. / It's working again ... It has been repaired. / It's been repaired.
- 8 Two people were arrested last night.

- 9 It had been blown down in the storm. *or* It was blown down...
- 10 Nobody has seen him since then.
- 11 Have you ever been mugged?

UNIT 43**43.1**

2-6:

Beethoven was born in 1770.
 Agatha Christie was born in 1891.
 Galileo was born in 1564.
 Mahatma Gandhi was born in 1869.
 Martin Luther King was born in 1929.
 Elvis Presley was born in 1935.
 Leonardo da Vinci was born in 1452.
 William Shakespeare was born in 1564.

- 7 I was born in...

43.2

- 2 I was asked some difficult questions at the interview.
- 3 Janet was given a present by her colleagues when she retired.
- 4 I wasn't told that George was ill.
- 5 How much will you be paid?
- 6 I think Tom should have been offered the job.
- 7 Have you been shown what to do?

43.3

- | | |
|------------------|---------------|
| 2 being invited | 5 being asked |
| 3 being given | 6 being paid |
| 4 being attacked | |

43.4

- 2 got stung
- 3 get broken
- 4 get used
- 5 got stolen
- 6 got stopped
- 7 get paid
- 8 get damaged / get broken
- 9 get asked

UNIT 44**44.1**

- 2 The weather is expected to be good tomorrow.
- 3 The thieves are believed to have got in through the kitchen window.
- 4 Many people are reported to be homeless after the floods.
- 5 The prisoner is thought to have escaped by climbing over a wall.

- 6 The man is alleged to have driven through the town at 90 miles an hour.
- 7 The building is reported to have been badly damaged by fire.
- 8 a The company is said to be losing a lot of money.
 b The company is believed to have lost a lot of money last year.
 c The company is expected to lose money this year.

44.2

- 2 He is supposed to be very rich.
- 3 He is supposed to write poetry.
- 4 He is supposed to have 12 children.
- 5 He is supposed to have robbed a bank a long time ago.

44.3

- 3 are / 're supposed to be
- 4 are / 're supposed to start
- 5 aren't / 're not supposed to block
- 6 was supposed to phone
- 7 weren't supposed to arrive *or* ...supposed to come

UNIT 45**45.1**

- 1 b
- 2 a
- 3 a
- 4 b

45.2

- 2 To have it cleaned.
- 3 To have it repaired.
- 4 To have my hair cut.

45.3

- 2 I had it cut.
- 3 They had it painted.
- 4 She had them made.

45.4

- 2 have another key made
- 3 had your hair cut
- 4 Have you had your hair cut
- 5 Do you have a newspaper delivered
- 6 are having a swimming pool built
- 7 haven't had the film developed
- 8 have it cleaned
- 9 have your ears pierced

45.5

- 2 She had her bag stolen on a train.
- 3 He had his hat blown off in the wind.
- 4 She had her passport taken away from her by the police.