

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

Study the following active and passive forms:

A

Infinitive

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

Somebody **will clean** this room later.

passive (to) **be + done/cleaned/seen** etc.

This 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 (to) **have + done/cleaned/seen** etc.

Somebody **should have cleaned** the room.

passive (to) **have been + done/cleaned/seen** etc.

The room **should have been cleaned**.

- I should have received the letter by now. It might **have been sent** to the wrong address.
- If you had locked the car, 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** etc.

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

passive **have/has been + done** etc.

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

- Have you heard? The trip **has been cancelled**.
- 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** etc.

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

passive **had been + done** etc.

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

- The vegetables didn't taste good. They **had been cooked** 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?' 'No, thanks. 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. I think we **were being followed**.

Exercises

43.1 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, | 6 portable, |

43.2 Complete these sentences with the following verbs (in the correct form):

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

Sometimes you need **have** (**might have**, **should have** etc.).

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

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

- Somebody has cleaned the room.
The room has been cleaned.
- Somebody is using the computer right now.
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.
.....

43.4 Make sentences from the words in brackets. Sometimes the verb is active, sometimes passive.

- There's somebody behind us. (I think / we / follow) *I think we're being followed.*
- This room looks different. (you / paint / the walls?) *Have you painted the walls?*
- My car has disappeared. (it / steal!) It
- My umbrella has disappeared. (somebody / take) Somebody
- Sam gets a higher salary now. (he / promote) He
- Ann can't use her office this week. (it / redecorate) It
- There was a problem with the photocopier yesterday, but now it's OK.
(it / work) It again. (it / repair) It
- When I went into the room, I saw that the table and chairs were not in the same place.
(the furniture / move) The
- A neighbour of mine disappeared six months ago. (he / not / see / since then)
He
- I wonder how Jane is these days. (I / not / see / for ages)
I
- A friend of mine was mugged on his way home a few nights ago. (you / ever / mug?)
.....

A

I was offered ... / we were given ... etc.

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

- Somebody gave **the police the information**. (= somebody 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 tellWhen we use these verbs in the passive, most often we begin with the *person*:

- I've been offered** the job, but I don't think I'll accept it. (= they have offered me the job)
- You will be given** plenty of time to decide. (= we will give you plenty of time)
- I didn't see the original document but **I was shown** a copy. (= somebody showed me)
- Tim has an easy job – **he's paid** a lot of money to do very little. (= they pay him a lot)

B

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 taken** to the zoo when I was a child.
(= I remember somebody taking me to the zoo)
- Steve hates **being kept** waiting. (= he hates people keeping him waiting)
- We managed to climb over the wall without **being seen**. (= without anybody seeing us)

C

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*

but

- How many babies **are born** every day? *present*

D

Get

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 **get invited** to many parties. (= I'm not invited)
- I'm surprised Liz **didn't get offered** the job. (= Liz **wasn't offered** the job)

We use **get** only when things *happen*. For example, you cannot use **get** in these sentences:

- Jessica **is liked** by everybody. (not gets liked – this is not a 'happening')
- Peter was a mystery man. Very little **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 lost (= not know where you are) **get changed** (= change your clothes)

Exercises

441 Write these sentences in another way, beginning in the way shown.

- 1 They didn't give me the information I needed.
I wasn't given the information I needed.
- 2 They asked me some difficult questions at the interview.
I
- 3 Amy's colleagues gave her a present when she retired.
Amy
- 4 Nobody told me about the meeting.
I wasn't
- 5 How much will they pay you for your work?
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

442 Complete the sentences using **being** + the following verbs (in the correct form):

give invite ~~keep~~ knock down stick treat

- 1 Steve hates being kept waiting.
- 2 We went to the party without
- 3 I like giving presents and I also like them.
- 4 It's a busy road and I don't like crossing it. I'm afraid of
- 5 I'm an adult. I don't like like a child.
- 6 You can't do anything about in a traffic jam.

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

Ludwig van Beethoven	Mahatma Gandhi	Elvis Presley	1452	1869	1935
Walt Disney	Michael Jackson	William Shakespeare	1564	1901	1958
Galileo	Martin Luther King	Leonardo da Vinci	1770	1929	

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

444 Complete the sentences using **get/got** + the following verbs (in the correct form):

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

- 1 There was a fight at the party, but nobody got hurt.
- 2 Alex by a bee while he was sitting in the garden.
- 3 These tennis courts don't very often. Not many people want to play.
- 4 I used to have a bicycle, but it a few months ago.
- 5 Rachel works hard but doesn't very much.
- 6 Last night I by the police as I was driving home. One of the lights on my car wasn't working.
- 7 Please pack these things very carefully. I don't want them to
- 8 People often want to know what my job is. I that question a lot.