


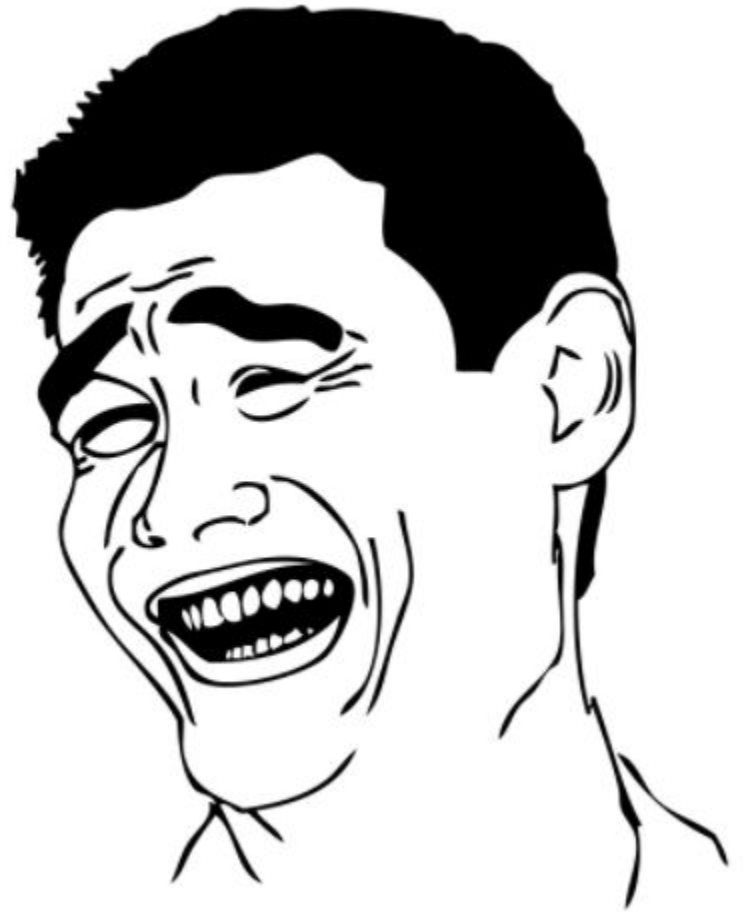
A woman in a red and white royal gown stands in a dusty room. The room is filled with dust and cobwebs, suggesting it has not been cleaned for a long time. The woman is looking towards the right.

Look at all the dust in here! It looks as if this room hasn't been cleaned for a month!

A man with a turban and a bundle of sticks on his back is shown in a close-up. He has a grumpy expression and is looking towards the left.

Well, don't blame me! I was only hired a week ago.

Let's learn
the Passive!



The Passive is used:



1. When the agent (=the person who does the action) is **unknown**, unimportant or obvious from the context.



This church was built in 1995.
(unimportant agent)



He has been arrested.
(obviously be the police)



Jane was called.
(we don't know who called)

The Passive is used:



The car hasn't been cleaned. (more polite)

2. To make more **polite** or **formal** statements.



You haven't cleaned the car. (less polite)

The Passive is used:



30 people were killed
in the earthquake.

3. When the **action is more important** than the agent, as in processes, instructions, events, reports, headlines, news items, and advertisements.



Taking pictures is not allowed.
(written notice)



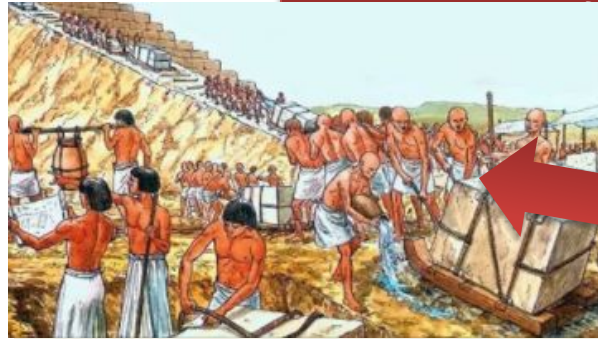
Bread is baked in an oven for 45 minutes.
(process)

The Passive is used:

The new library will be opened by the Queen.



The Pyramids were built by the ancient Egyptians.



4. To put **emphasis on the agent**.

Past
Simple

I drank tea.

Tea was drunk.

Present
Simple

I drink tea.

Tea is drunk.

Future
Simple

I will drink tea.

Tea will be drunk.

Simple

to be + V₃

Past
Continuous

I was drinking tea.

Tea was being
drunk.

Present
Continuous

I am drinking tea.

Tea is being
drunk.

Future
Continuous

I will be drinking tea.



Continuous

to be + being + V₃

Past
Perfect

I had drunk tea.

Tea had been
drunk.

Present
Perfect

I have drunk tea.

Tea has been
drunk.

Future
Perfect

I will have drunk tea.

Tea will have
been drunk.



Perfect

to have + been + V₃

Can

That painting can be seen in the Louvre.

Should

The work should be done on time.

Would

The tickets would be sold there if possible.

Might

It might be finished by next week.

Must

Employees must be paid on the last day of the month.

Modals

modal + be + V₃

**Infinitive /
Present
Infinitive**

He has to deliver the letters.

They will have to repair the car.

The letters have to be delivered.

The car will have to be repaired.

**Perfect
Infinitive**

They ought to have repaired the car.

The car ought to have been repaired.

Gerund

He likes people admiring his new car.

He likes people serving his dinner.

He likes his new car being admired.

He likes his dinner being served.

**Perfect
Gerund**

Having repaired the car, ...

Having served dinner, ...

The car, having been repaired, ...

Dinner, having been served, ...

We use the Passive transitive verbs (verbs with object).

They built that castle in 1600. It was built in 1600.

In colloquial English get is used instead of be to express something happening by itself.

She got sunburnt last week. (more correct: was sunburnt last week.)

ENGLISH GRAMMAR

Transitive & Intransitive VERBS

TRANSITIVE VERBS

NEED AN OBJECT

I bought a car.

transitive verb direct object

You **buy** *something* (an object).

What did you buy? *A car*.

You cannot just say "I bought."
(incomplete - incorrect)

You need a direct object after a transitive verb. (In this case **buy**)

INTRANSITIVE VERBS

CANNOT HAVE AN OBJECT

The baby smiled.

intransitive verb

You cannot have an object after an intransitive verb.

(In this case **smile**)

You cannot "smile *something*"

Another example:

We waited but nobody came.

intransitive

intransitive

Verbs that are Transitive and Intransitive

Some verbs can be transitive in one sentence and intransitive in another.

I stopped the car.

transitive verb direct object

The car stopped.

intransitive verb there is no object

Sometimes the **meaning** of a verb **changes** depending on whether that verb is transitive or intransitive (especially with phrasal verbs).

He runs a small grocery store.

(transitive: **run** = manage)

He runs along the beach every morning.

(intransitive: **run** – the sport)

Changing from Active into Passive

The object of the active verb becomes the subject in the new sentence. The active verb changes into a passive form and the subject of the active verb becomes the agent. The agent is introduced with **by** it is omitted.

1. Picasso painted that picture .

2. That picture was painted by Picasso .

1.



2.



by Picasso

After modal verbs (will, can, must, have to, should, may, ought to) we use be + past participle.

You can use the machine for cutting bread.

The machine can be used for cutting bread.



With verbs taking two objects it is more usual to begin the passive sentence with **the person**.

I sent **her** some roses.

She was sent some roses.

more usual

Some roses were sent to her.

less usual



We put the agent (=the person who does the action) into the passive only if it adds information. When the agent is unknown, unimportant or obvious it is omitted. Agents such as **people** (in general), **they**, **somebody** etc. are omitted.

Bell invented the telephone.



The telephone was invented **by Bell**.

(The agent is not omitted because it adds information.)

Somebody murdered him.



He was murdered (~~by somebody~~)

(Unknown agent is omitted.)

The police arrested him.



He was arrested (~~by the police~~)

(Obvious agent is omitted.)

We use **be+agent** to say who or what did the action.
We use **with+instrument** or **material** to say what instrument or material the agent used.

He was knocked down by a lorry
(The lorry did the action.)



The door was locked by a man
with a key.

(The key is the instrument the agent used.)

The cake was made with flour,
sugar and eggs.

(Flour, sugar and eggs are the materials
the agent used.)



After modal verbs (will, can, may etc) we use **be+past participle** or **have been+past participle**.

They **may close down** the supermarket.



The supermarket **may be closed down**.

They **may have reported** the bank robbery.



The bank robbery **may have been reported**.

Make, hear, see, help are followed by a **to-infinitive** in the passive.

She made me
apologise.



I was made to
apologise.

They helped
him tidy the
garage



He was helped
to tidy the
garage.



The verbs **believe, expect, feel, hope, know, report, say, think** etc can be used in the following passive patterns:

It + passive +
that-clause
(impersonal construction)



It is said that she is
rich

Subject (person) +
passive + to-infinitive
(personal construction)



She is said to be rich.

Turn from Active into Passive.



You **must leave** the bathroom tidy.

The bathroom **must be left** tidy.

You **should**

be watered

Modals

modal + be + V₃

Our neighbour **should paint** the garage.

The garage **should be painted** by our neighbour.

I **have to return** these books to the library.

These books **have to be returned** to the library.