

# UNIT 6

## The Passive - Have Something Done

### The Passive

The Forbidden City **is situated** in the centre of Beijing. It **was built** as the Imperial Palace for the emperors of China. It **was named** the Forbidden City because no common or foreign person **was allowed** to go inside without special permission.



We form the passive with the verb **to be** and the **past participle** of the main verb.

	Active	Passive
Present Simple	He <b>delivers</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>are delivered</b> .
Present Continuous	He <b>is delivering</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>are being delivered</b> .
Past Simple	He <b>delivered</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>were delivered</b> .
Past Continuous	He <b>was delivering</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>were being delivered</b> .
Future Simple	He <b>will deliver</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>will be delivered</b> .
Present Perfect	He <b>has delivered</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>have been delivered</b> .
Past Perfect	He <b>had delivered</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>had been delivered</b> .
Future Perfect	He <b>will have delivered</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>will have been delivered</b> .
Present Infinitive	He <b>must deliver</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>must be delivered</b> .
Perfect Infinitive	He <b>must have delivered</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>must have been delivered</b> .
Simple -ing form	I object to his <b>delivering</b> the parcels.	I object to the parcels <b>being delivered</b> .
Perfect -ing form	<b>Having delivered</b> the parcels, ...	The parcels <b>having been delivered</b> , ...
Modals + be + p.p.	He <b>should deliver</b> the parcels.	The parcels <b>should be delivered</b> .

- ◆ The present perfect continuous, the future continuous, the past perfect continuous and the future perfect continuous are not normally used in the passive.

- ◆ We can use the verb **to get** instead of the verb **to be** in everyday speech when we talk about things that **happen by accident or unexpectedly**.  
e.g. Four people **got hurt** in the car crash.  
(= Four people **were hurt** ...)

### Use

We use the passive:

- when the person who carries out the action is unknown, unimportant or obvious from the context.  
e.g. a) My flat **was broken into** last week. (We do not know who broke into the flat.)  
b) Coffee beans **are grown** in Brazil. (It is not important to know who grows the coffee.)  
c) My car **was serviced** yesterday. (It is obvious that a mechanic serviced it.)
- when the action itself is more important than the person who carries it out, as in news headlines, newspaper articles, formal notices, instructions, advertisements, processes, etc.  
e.g. a) The new hospital **will be opened** by the Queen on May 15th. (formal notice)  
b) Then, the milk **is taken** to a factory where it is **pasteurised**. (process)
- when we refer to an unpleasant event and we do not want to say who or what is to blame.  
e.g. A lot of mistakes **have been made**. (instead of 'You have made a lot of mistakes'.)



## The Passive - Have Something Done

## Changing from active into passive

To change a sentence from the active into the passive:

- the **object** of the active sentence becomes the **subject** in the passive sentence.
- the active verb remains in the same tense, but changes into a passive form.
- the subject of the active sentence becomes the **agent**, and is either introduced with the preposition **by** or omitted.

	subject	verb	object
active	Tom	invited	me.

	subject	verb	agent
passive	I	was invited	by Tom.

- Only transitive verbs (verbs followed by an object) can be changed into the passive.

e.g. active: Grandma **knitted** my jumper. (transitive verb)

passive: My jumper **was knitted** by Grandma.

But: They **travelled to** Lisbon last summer. (intransitive verb)

Some transitive verbs such as **have, fit, suit, resemble**, etc. cannot be changed into the passive.

e.g. I **have** a shower every morning. (NOT: ~~A shower is had by me...~~)

- We use **by + agent** to say who or what carries out the action. We use **with + instrument/material/ingredient** to say what the agent used.

e.g. The pancakes were **made by Claire**. They were made **with eggs, flour and milk**.

- The agent is often omitted in the passive sentence when the subject of the active sentence is one of the following words: **people, one, someone/somebody, they, he**, etc.

e.g. active: **Somebody** has rearranged the furniture.

passive: The furniture has been rearranged.

But: The agent is not omitted when it is a specific or important person or when it is essential to the meaning of the sentence.

e.g. a) The 'Mona Lisa' **was painted** by Leonardo da Vinci.

b) A new law **has been passed** by the government.

- Object pronouns** (me, you, him, etc.) become **subject pronouns** (I, you, he, etc.) in the passive.

e.g. active: They arrested **him**.

passive: **He** was arrested.

- With verbs which take two objects such as **bring, tell, send, show, teach, promise, buy, throw, write, award, hand, sell, owe, grant, allow, feed, pass, post, read, take, offer, give, pay** and **lend** we can make two different passive sentences.

active: Patrick gave **Laura** some flowers.

passive: a) **Laura** was given some flowers by Patrick. (more usual)

b) **Some flowers** were given to Laura by Patrick. (less usual)

- When the verb of the active sentence is followed by a preposition, the preposition is kept in the passive sentence as well.

e.g. active: They **presented** him **with** a medal.

passive: He **was presented with** a medal.

- When we want to find out who or what did something, then the passive question form is as follows: **Who/What ... by?**

e.g. **Who** was Australia discovered **by**?

**What** was the fire caused **by**?

- The verbs **hear, help, see** and **make** are followed by the bare infinitive in the active but by the to-infinitive in the passive.

e.g. active: They **saw** him **leave** the building.

passive: He **was seen to leave** the building.

But: **hear, see, watch + -ing form** (active and passive)

e.g. active: They **saw** him **running** down the stairs.

passive: He **was seen running** down the stairs.

## Personal/Impersonal Construction

The verbs **think, believe, say, report, know, expect, consider, understand**, etc. are used in the following passive patterns in personal and impersonal constructions.

active: People **believe** that he lied in court.

passive: a) **It is believed** (that) he lied in court.

(impersonal construction)

b) **He is believed to have lied** in court.

(personal construction)

active: They **expect** him to arrive soon.

passive: c) **It is expected** (that) he will arrive soon.

d) **He is expected to arrive** soon.



## UNIT 6

### The Passive - Have Something Done

1

What happens in Luigi's restaurant before it opens for the evening? Look at the prompts and make sentences using the present simple passive, as in the example.

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 the carpets/vacuum<br>...The carpets are vacuumed.... | 6 the food/prepare              |
| 2 the tables/wipe                                       | 7 the ovens/heat                |
| 3 the cutlery/polish                                    | 8 the flowers/arrange/in vases  |
| 4 the places/set  | 9 the salt and pepper pots/fill |
| 5 the menu/check  | 10 the candles/light            |

2

Put the verbs in brackets into the correct passive tense.

- A: That's a lovely shirt. Is it new?  
B: Yes. It *was bought* (buy) for me by my grandmother.
- A: When do you have to have this report ready?  
B: Well, it ..... (must/hand in) by Tuesday.
- A: Did you read the newspaper this morning?  
B: No. It ..... (not/deliver) by the time I left for work.
- A: Where is your car?  
B: At the garage. It ..... (repair).
- A: Do you know your exam results yet?  
B: No. They ..... (not/announce) yet.
- A: Are you going to make dinner tonight?  
B: No. It ..... (make) by Simon. He promised to do it.
- A: Have you finished your homework yet?  
B: No, but it ..... (finish) by eight o'clock.
- A: Who waters your plants for you when you're away?  
B: They ..... (water) by my neighbour.

3

Rewrite the newspaper headlines as complete sentences.

1 FIVE-DAY STRIKE TO BE HELD BY CUSTOMS OFFICERS

4 SHOPPING CENTRE TO BE OPENED BY MAYOR TOMORROW

2 MONEY BEING RAISED FOR CHILD'S OPERATION IN AMERICA

5 ESCAPED PRISONER STILL NOT CAUGHT

3 DECISION MADE ABOUT NEW EXAMS YESTERDAY

6 FAMILY RESCUED FROM BURNING HOUSE LAST NIGHT

- A five-day strike is to be held by customs officers.
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

4

Put the verbs in brackets into the correct passive tense.



The Academy Awards Presentation 1) *was first organised* (first/organise) in 1929 and since then, it 2) ..... (hold) every year. The presentation 3) ..... (attend) by those at the top of the film industry and 4) ..... (watch) on TV by millions of viewers who want to see who 5) ..... (present) with the golden statue which 6) ..... (desire) by everyone in the motion picture world.

The voting for the Academy Awards 7) ..... (conduct) secretly and the results 8) ..... (not/reveal) to anyone until the envelope 9) ..... (open) on stage in front of the audience. Awards 10) ..... (give) for the best individual or collective work and 11) ..... (separate) into different categories. Up to five nominations 12) ..... (make) in each category. The awards, which 13) ..... (know) as Oscars, 14) ..... (consider) to be the highest honour anyone in the film industry can 15) ..... (give).

5

Rewrite the sentences in the passive, where possible.

- Her mother drives her to school every day.  
...*She is driven to school by her mother every day.*...
- Paul drives to work every day.  
...*It cannot be changed.*...
- I woke up late on Sunday morning.  
.....
- Her mother woke her up at seven o'clock.  
.....
- Sue asked the waiter to bring some water.  
.....
- David asked for some help.  
.....
- Simon is moving house next month.  
.....
- Michael moved the boxes out of the way.  
.....
- Sandra walks on the beach regularly.  
.....
- The boys walk the dog every day.  
.....