

### English Grammar: Active and passive voice

**The passive voice** in English is formed with the verb to be and the past participle, which is different for regular verbs (translated, showed) and irregular verbs (taken, thrown).

Tense	Passive
Present simple	The car is repaired
Present continuous	The car is being repaired
Past simple	The car was repaired
Past continuous	The car was being repaired

**Statement:** The letter is written. This shop was opened.

**Question:** Is the letter written? Was the shop opened?

**Negative:** The letter is not written. The shop was not opened.

#### Use

The passive voice is used:

- If the action is more important than the agent. The important thing is what happened, not who did it.  
A demonstration has been held. This theatre was built in 1868.  
The important thing is what happened, not who did it.
- If the agent is not known.  
He was offered a job. (Someone offered him the job)

#### Exercise 1:

Rewrite the sentences using Passive voice

- Julia rescued three cats. **Three cats were rescued by Julia**
- The students handed in the reports. **The reports were handed in by the students**
- Maria crashed into the blue car. **The blue car was crashed into by Maria**
- Alex learned the poem. **The poem was learned by Alex**
- Steven forgot the book. **The book was forgotten by Steven**
- The mechanic is repairing the DVD recorder. **The DVD recorder is being repaired by the mechanic**
- They were playing handball. **Handball was being played by them**
- Sue puts the rucksack on the floor. **The rucksack is put on the floor**
- The girls lost the match. **The match was lost by the girls**
- The teacher is not going to open the window. **The window is not going to be opened by the teacher**

#### Exercise 2:

- Everybody \_\_\_ by the terrible news yesterday.  
a. shocked  
**b. was shocked**
- A new book \_\_\_ by that company next year.  
a. Is going to publish  
**b. Is going to be published**
- He \_\_\_ the girl's name now.  
**a. remembers**  
b. is remembered

4. The secretary \_\_\_ to her new boss yesterday.
  - a. introduced
  - b. was introduced**
5. Our plan \_\_\_ by the members of the committee.
  - a. is being considered**
  - b. is considered
6. He \_\_\_ responsible for the accident.
  - a. was holding
  - b. was held**

### Exercise 3:

For each sentence, choose either the active or the passive form of the verb...and the correct tense

1. That door **was painted** (paint) yesterday.
2. Michelangelo **painted** (paint) the Sistine Chapel.
3. Michael Schumacher **drove** (drive) for Ferrari in 2003.
4. In the UK, everyone **drives** (drive) on the left.
5. Inter-city trains **are usually driven** (usually/drive) by men.
6. The 'La Stampa' newspaper **is read** (read) by two million people in Italy.
7. My car **is being stolen** (steal)! Call the police!!!!
8. The thieves **stole** (steal) the gold last week.
9. The Queen **will open** (open) the bridge tomorrow.
10. The bridge **was destroyed** (destroy) by the storm last night.
11. I **was taught** (teach) by an old Japanese man.
12. The new secretary **types** (type) at 100 wpm.

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