



The Parthenon **was built** in the 5th century BC. It **is visited** by thousands of tourists every year.

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

**to be + past participle (pp)**

◆ The passive verb forms are:

present simple: am/is/are + pp

The office **is cleaned** twice a week.

present continuous: am/is/are being + pp

The office **is being cleaned** now.

past simple: was/were + pp

The office **was cleaned** last week.

past continuous: was/were being + pp

The office **was being cleaned** when the boss arrived.

present perfect simple: have/has been + pp

The office **has not been cleaned** yet.

past perfect simple: had been + pp

The office **had been cleaned** by two o'clock.

future simple: will be + pp

The office **will be cleaned** tomorrow.

◆ We form questions by putting the verb to be before the subject.

e.g. *Is your car being serviced?*

We form negations with the word not.

e.g. *The furniture has not been delivered yet.*

◆ We form the passive of infinitives like this:

**to be + past participle**

e.g. He wants **to be told** the truth.

◆ We form the passive of modal verbs like this:

**modal verb + be + past participle**

e.g. The roof of the house **must be repaired**.

**1**

Look at the pictures and the prompts and make sentences using the present simple passive, as in the example.

1 Volkswagen cars are made in Germany.



1 Volkswagen cars/  
make/Germany



2 a lot of rice/  
eat/India



3 snails/eat/  
France



4 Coca Cola/  
produce/the  
USA



5 coffee/grow/  
Brazil



6 cricket/play/  
England

**2**

Match Column A with Column B to make correct sentences using the past simple passive. Then, in pairs, ask and answer questions, as in the example.

e.g. SA: *Who was "Oliver Twist" written by?*  
SB: *It was written by Charles Dickens.*

### Column A

- 1 'Oliver Twist' (write)
- 2 The 'Mona Lisa' (paint)
- 3 The Eiffel Tower (build)
- 4 'Jurassic Park' (direct)
- 5 'Carmen' (compose)
- 6 Alexandria (found)
- 7 America (discover)
- 8 The telephone (invent)

### Column B

- a Leonardo da Vinci
- b Steven Spielberg
- c Alexander the Great
- d Charles Dickens
- e Georges Bizet
- f Gustave Eiffel
- g Christopher Columbus
- h Alexander Graham Bell

**3**

Mrs Edison is a businesswoman. She was away on a business trip but now she is back. She wants to know what has been done while she was away. Use the prompts and, in pairs, ask and answer questions, as in the example.

e.g. SA: *Have they delivered my new desk?*  
SB: *No, it hasn't been delivered yet.*  
SA: *Have you posted the invitations?*  
SB: *Yes, they have already been posted.*

- 1 they / deliver / my new desk? (No)
- 2 you / post / the invitations? (Yes)
- 3 they / repair / the photocopier? (Yes)
- 4 you / type / last month's reports? (No)
- 5 you / place / advertisement in the newspaper? (No)
- 6 you / pay / the bills? (Yes)



**4** Emma Doyle has got three children. Yesterday she had to go out. What had been done by the children by the time she got home? **Look at the prompts and make sentences using the past perfect passive, as in the example.**

e.g. *The beds had been made.*  
*The dishes had not been washed.*

a	beds / make	✓	e	cat / feed	✗
b	dishes / wash	✗	f	dinner / cook	✗
c	plants / water	✓	g	rubbish / take out	✓
d	carpet / Hoover	✓	h	windows / clean	✗

**5** Fill in the gaps with the correct passive tense of the verbs in brackets.

- A: These flowers are great.  
B: They ...*were sent*... (send) to me yesterday by one of my fans.
- A: Have you ever appeared on TV?  
B: Actually, I ..... (recently/ask) to take part in a show.
- A: When will I have my car?  
B: It ..... (deliver) to your house the day after tomorrow.
- A: So, when did they tell you about the robbery?  
B: I ..... (inform) by the police as soon as they found out.
- A: Why can't we go over the bridge?  
B: Because it ..... (repair) at the moment.
- A: I'm tired.  
B: So am I. But these reports must ..... (type) before we leave.
- A: Who looks after your baby when you're at work?  
B: Well, he ..... (look after) by my mother.
- A: Those pictures are beautiful.  
B: They ..... (paint) by my father while he was on holiday last summer.
- A: Who does the washing-up in your house?  
B: The dishes ..... (wash) by my brother and then they ..... (dry) by my sister.
- A: Why can't I use your car?  
B: Because it ..... (service) at the moment. You can take Mum's car if you want.
- A: Did you post the letters?  
B: No, they ..... (already/post) by the time I came in.
- A: What will happen to the criminals?  
B: They ..... (punish) for their crimes.
- A: That's a very pretty tablecloth.  
B: It ..... (give) to me last year for my birthday.
- A: Have you moved house yet?  
B: Yes. The last boxes ..... (just/move).
- A: Have you heard about Jack?  
B: Yes, he ..... (promote) to senior manager.

## Use

We use the passive when we want to show that the action of the verb is more important than the person who carries out the action.



The missing climber **was found** yesterday. (The action (was found) is more important than the person who found the climber.)

◆ The **agent** (the person who carries out the action) is introduced with the preposition **by** and is mentioned only when the identity of the agent is important or needs to be stated.

e.g. *Australia was discovered by Captain Cook.*  
*(by Captain Cook - The identity of the agent is important.)*

◆ The agent is not mentioned when:

a) it is unknown.



Jim's car **was stolen** last night. (We don't know who stole Jim's car.)

b) it is unimportant.



Olive oil **is produced** in Mediterranean countries. (The agent is unimportant.)

c) it is obvious from the context.



The bank robbers **are being chased**. (It is obvious that the police are chasing them.)



# Turning the active into the passive

To turn a sentence from the active into the passive:

- a) The **object** of the active sentence becomes the **subject** in the passive sentence.
- b) The active verb changes into a passive form.
- c) The **subject** of the active sentence becomes the **agent**.

	subject	verb	object		subject	verb	agent
active	Kim	baked	a cake.	passive	A cake	was baked	by Kim.

Study the following table:

	active	passive
present simple	She <b>types</b> the letters.	The letters <b>are typed</b> .
present continuous	She <b>is typing</b> the letters.	The letters <b>are being typed</b> .
past simple	She <b>typed</b> the letters.	The letters <b>were typed</b> .
past continuous	She <b>was typing</b> the letters.	The letters <b>were being typed</b> .
present perfect simple	She <b>has typed</b> the letters.	The letters <b>have been typed</b> .
past perfect simple	She <b>had typed</b> the letters.	The letters <b>had been typed</b> .
future simple	She <b>will type</b> the letters.	The letters <b>will be typed</b> .
infinitive	She has <b>to type</b> the letters.	The letters have <b>to be typed</b> .
modals (modal + be + pp)	She <b>may type</b> the letters.	The letters <b>may be typed</b> .

- ◆ Only the verbs that take an object can be turned into the passive. *e.g. Susan cleans the silver. The silver is cleaned by Susan. But: It is snowing today. (This sentence cannot be turned into the passive because the verb does not take an object.)*
- ◆ When the subject of the active sentence is one of the following words: **people, one, someone/somebody, they, he**, etc., the agent is often omitted in the passive sentence.  
*e.g. People watch TV all over the world. TV is watched all over the world (by people).*
- ◆ **Object pronouns** (me, you, him, etc.) become **subject pronouns** (I, you, he, etc.) in the passive.  
*e.g. He gave this book to me. I was given this book.*
- ◆ When the verb of the active sentence is followed by a preposition, the preposition is kept in the passive sentence as well. *e.g. Burglars broke into our house last night. Our house was broken into last night.*

## 6 Rewrite the sentences in the passive.

- 1 The pop star sang the song.  
*The song was sung by the pop star.*
- 2 The chef hasn't made dinner.  
.....
- 3 An explorer has found a dinosaur egg.  
.....
- 4 Mrs Gates will look after the baby.  
.....
- 5 They won't take him home after the party.  
.....

- 6 Someone left the front door open.  
.....
- 7 Jenny didn't break the window.  
.....
- 8 Someone is using the computer.  
.....
- 9 His brother taught him to drive.  
.....
- 10 Many people speak English.  
.....
- 11 The doctor had already told him to go on a diet.  
.....
- 12 The author is writing a new book.  
.....



**7 Turn the following questions into the passive.**

- 1 Do they make bread in this factory?  
*Is bread made in this factory?*
- 2 Will Susan decorate the bedroom tomorrow?  
.....
- 3 Did they find the ring in the garden?  
.....
- 4 Is Tom drawing the picture?  
.....
- 5 Has Simon sent the invitations yet?  
.....
- 6 Had Paul repaired the door before he left for work?  
.....

**Note:**  
When we want to find out who or what did something, then the passive is formed as follows: **Who/What ... by?**  
e.g. *Who was America discovered by?*

**8 Write questions in the passive to which the words in bold are the answers, as in the examples.**

- 1 **Captain Cook** discovered Australia.  
*Who was Australia discovered by?*
- 2 **A dog** was chasing Paul.  
*What was Paul being chased by?*
- 3 **Simon** is going to organise the party.  
.....
- 4 **A bee** stung him.  
.....
- 5 **Fiona** cooked this delicious turkey.  
.....
- 6 **An international company** publishes these books.  
.....
- 7 **A bomb** killed the soldier.  
.....

With verbs which take two objects, such as **ask, bring, tell, send, show, teach, promise, offer, give, pay, lend**, etc., we can form the passive in two ways.

**Active:** *Someone sent Helen some flowers.*

**Passive:** a) *Helen was sent some flowers.*  
b) *Some flowers were sent to Helen.*

The first way is used more often because we are more interested in the person (Helen) than the thing (some flowers).

**9 Rewrite the sentences in the passive in both ways, as in the example.**

- 1 His father gave Billy a new bicycle.  
a) *Billy was given a new bicycle by his father.*  
b) *A new bicycle was given to Billy by his father.*
- 2 Fred has offered Mary a watch.  
a) .....  
b) .....
- 3 Lisa is sending Tim an invitation.  
a) .....  
b) .....
- 4 She brought me some oranges.  
a) .....  
b) .....
- 5 Sonia is going to lend me some money.  
a) .....  
b) .....
- 6 Jack will show me the new car.  
a) .....  
b) .....
- 7 They paid him a lot of money for the job.  
a) .....  
b) .....

**10 Rewrite the sentences in the passive.**

- 1 They will not deliver the new sofa on Friday.  
*The new sofa will not be delivered on Friday.*
- 2 You can use this saucepan for cooking spaghetti.  
.....
- 3 I have to finish my homework tonight.  
.....
- 4 You must tidy your bedroom.  
.....
- 5 You ought to put these clothes away.  
.....
- 6 The boss gave the secretary some letters to type.  
.....
- 7 We should eat this cake immediately.  
.....
- 8 Sally sent Peter a birthday card.  
.....
- 9 You must take the dog for a walk.  
.....
- 10 The cat is not chasing the mouse.  
.....
- 11 Do they produce oil in Spain?  
.....
- 12 Did a dog bite him?  
.....
- 13 Edward has not recorded a new song.  
.....



**11** Rewrite the following passage in the passive.

Somebody sent me a bunch of flowers. The man from the flower shop delivered them to my house. He told me that they were a present. A young man had ordered them. He had put no card in the flowers. I still don't know who sent them.



.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**12** Rewrite the following passage in the passive.

Someone started a fire in the Courtney National Park early yesterday morning. They had used a match and some petrol to start the fire. The fire had burnt a lot of trees before someone called the fire brigade. The police have arrested a man. They are still questioning him.



.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**IN OTHER WORDS**

**Study these examples. The second sentence has a similar meaning to the first sentence.**

- A famous artist will paint his portrait.  
**be** His portrait **will be painted by** a famous artist.
- You must post these letters as soon as possible.  
**must** These letters **must be posted** as soon as possible.
- Somebody stole my wallet yesterday.  
**was** My wallet **was stolen** yesterday.

**13** Complete each sentence with two to five words including the word in bold.

- They built the house last year.  
**was** The house ...*was built*... last year.
- They are planting trees in the garden.  
**being** Trees ..... in the garden.
- The dog was chasing the cat around the house.  
**was** The cat ..... around the house by the dog.
- They haven't cleaned the floor yet.  
**been** The floor ..... yet.
- They had eaten all the food by the time I got there.  
**had** All the food ..... by the time I got there.
- You must finish the project by Wednesday afternoon.  
**be** The project ..... by Wednesday afternoon.
- Mr Brown sent us a wedding invitation.  
**was** A wedding invitation ..... to us by Mr Brown.
- They should inform the citizens as soon as possible.  
**should** The citizens ..... as soon as possible.

**14** Fill in the active or passive form of the verbs in brackets.



Mrs Wilson is a rich young lady. She (1) ...*lives*... (live) in a big house on the outskirts of the city with her husband and her two dogs. Every day, Mrs Wilson (2) ..... (take) into the city centre. Her car (3) ..... (drive) by her chauffeur. She then (4) ..... (go) shopping in her favourite shops. Her bags (5) ..... (carry) by the chauffeur. Mrs Wilson (6) ..... (buy) lots of things every week. She (7) ..... (need) lots of clothes because she goes to lots of parties. In fact, this week she (8) ..... (invite) to a big birthday party which (9) ..... (hold) in a large mansion in the country. All of her friends will be there, so Mrs Wilson (10) ..... (look forward) to it very much.

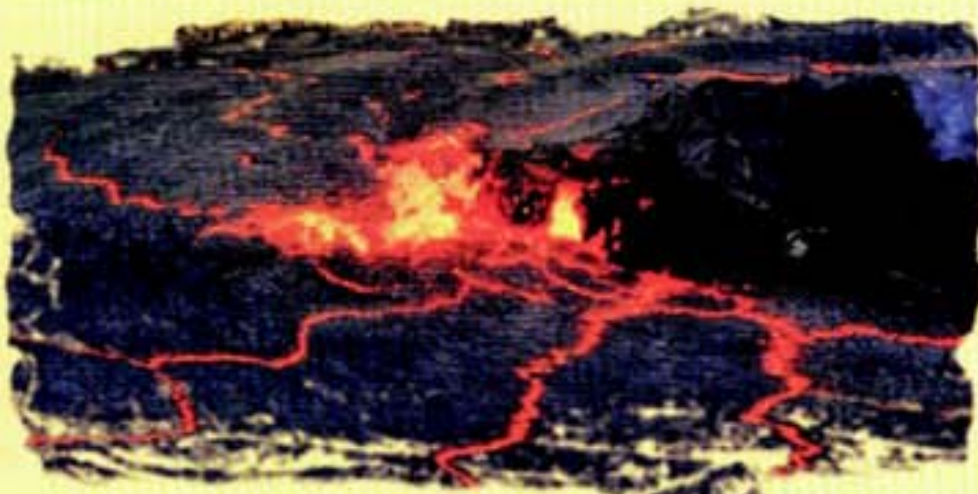


**15 Correct the mistakes.**

- 1 The dishes has been washed.
- 2 The letters are being opened every morning in the office.
- 3 Your homework must finished by Monday.
- 4 The woman seen taking the children to school.
- 5 Mike has been tell about the new job.
- 6 The cars stole from the car park.
- 7 The house is been decorated recently.
- 8 The centre will visit by the King next month.

**Revision Box**

**16 Choose the correct answer.**



Pompeii is an ancient town in Italy (1) ...C... was destroyed when a volcano (2) ..... in 79 AD. The lava and ash from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius buried the town along with everything and everyone in it. Most of the site (3) ..... studied by archaeologists (4) ..... have uncovered many objects among the ruins. The town is now a popular tourist attraction and is visited (5) ..... thousands of people each year. They (6) ..... walk along the streets which (7) ..... once a part of the busy market town and (8) ..... now an important part of history.

- |              |               |               |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 A where    | B who         | C which       |
| 2 A erupted  | B has erupted | C had erupted |
| 3 A has been | B was being   | C had been    |
| 4 A whose    | B they        | C who         |
| 5 A by       | B from        | C with        |
| 6 A could    | B can         | C are able    |
| 7 A was      | B have been   | C were        |
| 8 A were     | B are         | C has been    |

**ORAL Activity**

Max Hunter has inherited an old factory and he has decided to turn it into a club. Look at the pictures and the notes below, then make sentences in the passive, as in the example.

*the walls/painted, the windows/replaced, garden lights/put in, the roof/repared, trees/planted, the sign/put up, the door/fixd*

*e.g. The walls have been painted.*



**WRITING Activity**

Imagine you are Max Hunter. Look at your notes from the Oral Activity and write a letter to your friend telling him about the changes to the factory.

Dear Harry,

*I have some exciting news. I've recently inherited an old factory and I've decided to turn it into a club.*

*So far, the walls have been painted .....*

.....

.....

.....

.....