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# THE PASSIVE VOICE



Usually verbs used when the action is dependent on the person or thing performing it. The agent is usually obvious, unnecessary to mention. It includes verbs in news and scientific reports, letters, memos, brochures, plans and travel information.

We built the bridge with an appropriate view of the river (SVO) + agent and object

**Indicative**    **Imperative**    **Infinitive**

and **to be**    **by**    **the doer**

- The object of the active becomes the subject of the passive
- The subject of the active becomes the agent of the passive
- The subject of the active becomes the object of the passive

VERB TENSE	ACTIVE VOICE	PASSIVE VOICE
PRESENT SIMPLE	She works. / He visits his boss.	She is worked. / He is visited by her.
PRESENT CONTINUOUS	She is working hard tonight.	She is being worked by her.
PAST SIMPLE	He had visited his old partner.	He had been visited by his partner.
PAST CONTINUOUS	He was poisoning the horses.	The horses were being poisoned.
PRESENT PERFECT	She has broken her right foot twice.	Her right foot has been broken by her twice.
PAST PERFECT	She had visited her partner several times.	She had been visited by her partner several times.
FUTURE SIMPLE	She will give up smoking.	She will be given up by her.
FUTURE PERFECT	She will have built the house by 2020.	The house will have been built by 2020.
BE GOING TO	She is going to visit her mother.	She is to be visited by her mother.

**Identify the subject:**

"They gave a lift to better get to the shopping." (The lift is the subject with the object to them and object.) This sentence is possible in three ways:

- One without identifying the subject as the subject: Lifts were given a better get to the shopping.
- Two without identifying the subject as the subject: They gave a lift to better get to the shopping.
- Three with identifying the subject as the subject: They gave a lift to better get to the shopping.

The passive voice is often used for reporting news, scientific reports and letters. It often implies that the action is important, significant, surprising, unusual, or unexpected.

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**Lesson: Passive voice:**

**I. Lesson: Active to passive transformation steps:**

- Determine the main parts of speech in the sentence. (SVO)
- Make sure the verb is transitive. (meaning it has got an object)
- Start your passive sentence by the active object.
- Put the auxiliary "to be" in the active verb tense.
- Put the active verb in the past participle. (Be careful about the irregular verbs)
- Add the "by phrase" (by + agent/active subject) if necessary (if the active subject is ambiguous or not worth mentioning, don't add the by-phrase.)

**II. Rewrite the following sentences in the passive:**

- People don't respect children's rights in many countries.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Every week, they bring food supplies by helicopter to the refugees.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Passengers mustn't use mobile phones on planes.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- They launched an anti-smoking campaign to sensitize the public to the danger of tobacco.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Scientists have made great progress in genetic studies.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Some people consider speed as the main cause of accidents on our roads.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- We should take drastic measures if we want to your city clean.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- They deported all illegal African immigrants to their home countries.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Many people think that the United Nations Organization ought to be dismantled.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- We need to integrate environmental sustainability into all our policy decisions.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Governments must give the youth more opportunities to participate in decision making.  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Passive Voice



**Form**

**Present Simple**

am/is/are + V1

**Present Continuous**

am/is/are + V1-ing

**Present Perfect**

has/have + V1-ed

**Present Perfect Continuous**

has/have + been + V1-ing

**Future Simple**

will + V1

**Future Continuous**

will + be + V1-ing

**Future Perfect**

will + have + V1-ed

**Future Perfect Continuous**

will + have + been + V1-ing

Form	Example
Present Simple	The house <b>is built</b> in 1976.
Present Continuous	Someone <b>is making</b> this soup yesterday.
Present Perfect	They <b>have found</b> the Titanic at the bottom of the ocean in 1985.
Present Perfect Continuous	They <b>have been closing</b> our favorite restaurant last year.
Future Simple	Someone <b>will clean</b> the hotel rooms every day.
Future Continuous	They <b>will be greeting</b> visitors with hugs and kisses when they arrive.
Future Perfect	They <b>will have written</b> their new musical in only two months.
Future Perfect Continuous	

**REPORTED SPEECH CHART**

Original	Reported
I am going to the park.	He said he was going to the park.
She is studying hard.	She said she was studying hard.
They will visit their grandparents.	They said they would visit their grandparents.
He has finished his homework.	He said he had finished his homework.
She has been waiting for an hour.	She said she had been waiting for an hour.
They are going to get married.	They said they were going to get married.
He will be in London next week.	He said he would be in London next week.
She has known him since childhood.	She said she had known him since childhood.
They have been working on the project.	They said they had been working on the project.
He will have finished by then.	He said he would have finished by then.
She will be waiting for you.	She said she would be waiting for you.
They will have been waiting for hours.	They said they would have been waiting for hours.

### RECOMMEND A MUSEUM

**The passive voice**

1 Rewrite each active voice sentence in the passive voice. Do not include a by phrase.

- They built my house in 1976.
- Someone made this soup yesterday.
- They found the *Titanic* at the bottom of the ocean in 1985.
- They closed our favorite restaurant last year.
- Someone cleans the hotel rooms every day.
- They greet visitors with hugs and kisses when they arrive.
- They wrote their new musical in only two months.

2 Rewrite each active voice sentence in the passive voice. Include a by phrase.

- U.S. writer Ernest Hemingway wrote *The Old Man and the Sea* in Cuba.
- Austrian chef Wolfgang Puck opened Spago Restaurant in California in 1982.
- Korean singer and dancer Psy recorded the video *Gangnam Style* in 2012.
- For years people around the world have enjoyed India's Bollywood movies.
- Every day, millions of people of all ages use the Internet.

**LIVEWORKSHEETS**

- think of and suggest an idea  
The topic of a pay rise came up in my meeting with the boss. Why? When it's a friend's birthday, is it better if they receive lots of little presents or if everyone chips \_\_\_\_ and gets them one big present. living memory, when rubbish collection was a simple matter - but today's household rubbish, before being (7) ....., has to be filed and sorted (8) .....

Sadly, we're coming up against a lot of resistance from big business but that won't stop us standing up for the animal kingdom. PAIRI have complained to the council ..... but nothing has been done about the problem. your suggestions a lot of thought, I've decided to make the changes you recommended. Most bars ..... I'm interested in studying history. - discover! wrote them an email to follow up my complaint from the previous day. out the fire in 20 minutes. We need to come ..... it any harm. The company ..... -> It was such a rainy day that the house flooded. Phrasal verbs He wants to cancel the meeting -> he wants to call off the meeting. - lose consciousness When are you going to pay back the money you owe me? - try to find I'm really looking forward to Christmas this year. (a smell) - produce and send into the air The receptionist gave out all the most important information to the guests. Then ask and answer the questions. Take action when it's needed Practice Try to remember the missing prepositions in the questions below without looking at the text. -> He still went to school in spite of his illness. - to continue Where were you on Saturday? SPECULATE Green ..... If I had known you were coming, I would have baked a cake. The rainforests are the Earth's lungs and further damage will only lead to misery for all life on the planet. This is a lesson plan for students preparing to take the C2 Proficiency exam. Students can then refer back to the original in order to check their answers. DISASTER One of the ..... CREDIBLE One of the problems is that people make ..... about the situation without knowing all the details. Although he felt ill, he still went to school. Once they have completed the exercise, have them ask and answer the questions in pairs or small groups and then share any funny/interesting discoveries in open class. I shouldn't have drunk so much last night. Students first complete the exercise from their books, compare answers with a partner and correct the task in open class. - meet (usually for social reasons) I'm cleaning out my garage this weekend, I'm going to get rid of so much old stuff. - extinguish (e.g. fire) My uncle can put us up for a couple of nights while we're in London. (something) - invent (stories, excuses) Ok, thanks for that report Jon, now let's move on to Sarah's presentation. Can people realistically buy fewer eggs or (14) ..... It's designed as a revision activity for a lot of the expressions, collocations and phrasal verbs that come up in the use of English paper. - come to your house! We come up with a great idea for our Halloween costumes. his final project at 12:00 ..... - give someone a lighter punishment than they expected (or not punish at all) can't come out, I need to look after my baby brother. the end of my tether, I can't handle this group anymore, they're driving me ..... - feel happy about something that is going to happen The police are looking into the case of the missing dog. If we step back and look at the bigger picture, it's not just animals and plants that are affected. - arrive, usually unexpectedly, early or late He always uses up all the toilet roll and doesn't replace it. 'To be' is an irregular verb. See our User Agreement and Privacy Policy. such as carpooling or cycling schemes can only do so much to mitigate climate change. It could be up or down. a pre-tax profit of €10,000 last year. Calm down, I've managed to ..... Download the student handout and answer key below. follow the link at the bottom of the post for a Kahoot game based on the target language: student-handout phrasal-verbs-with-up-down Download key phrasal-verbs-with-up-down Download Procedure Put students into pairs or small groups and have them try to guess the preposition required to complete the sentence. They then read the text briefly to see if their predictions were correct. It works as a diagnostic test of a range of the grammar points that are tested, particularly in part 4 of the reading and use of English exam. no scruples about stabbing their rivals in the back to get what they want. The council has ..... - go towards My shyness always holds me back in social situations. My brother is slightly younger than me. The taxi dropped us off outside the airport. SIGNIFY We need to see a drastic cut in carbon ..... if we're going to meet our green targets. down on shopping and recycle more. Recycling is supposed to be good for us. - postpone They put on a big show to raise money for charity. This particular lesson plan focuses on -ed endings of regular verbs and consonant to vowel linking in phrasal verbs. The police couldn't work out how the burglars got into the house. more than simply consigning breakfast leftovers (3) ..... about the true state of our planet. - stop demanding something My car always breaks down when I don't have enough money to get it repaired. catch on - to become popular (an idea or a style): I kept dropping hints about what I wanted for my birthday but my wife didn't catch on. You could then have students test each other, one says a definition, the other has to recall the phrasal verb. They should fill in the box on the end with either a tick (I know this very well) a cross (I've got no idea about this) or a wiggly line (I more or less get this). - stop living in a house or flat He was so dehydrated that he passed out and woke up in the back of an ambulance. - return money Don't worry, my parents are going to pay for dinner. If you're following along with the project with your students, please let me know how it's going in the comments. - start a journey We set up the company in 1995 and it's still going strong to this day. - cancel (an event) I'm just going to carry on working on my presentation, but let me know if you need anything. - continue The new hairstyle has really caught on with teenagers in my town. Download the handout below: First Certificate Grammar Checklist Quizlet set Procedure: Self-Assessment Give out copies of the handout, have students individually assess their grasp of each of the structures. - find by chance He came into quite a lot of money when his grandparents passed away. tears to my eyes. Reported speech "I went there last year." -> He said that he had gone there last year. of day until years after his death The last bus had already gone so we were ..... This is a very important step, getting them to put themselves in the examiner's shoes and not just jump straight in and answer. - demand / request They've had to call off the match due to bad weather. - spend time relaxing (informal) Don't leave your shirts on the floor, you need to hang them up. SIDE I spent many ..... nights listening to my neighbours' parties. of rubbish has come to mean a great (2) ..... organising this evening so I hope everything goes ..... 10 -> Next Download these verb to be PPT lessons and use it in class today. Have students compare with their partner. auto-pilot? Check that they've identified the structure, then have them work together to try to complete the sentence. (an event/a show) - organize an event Put your coat on, it's cold outside. Missing Prepositions ..... all likelihood, the new store will be opening at the end of next month. .... with a screaming baby right next to me for the whole return flight. I didn't know what to say so I just blurted out the first thing that ..... while we were still on the mountain so we had to walk the last part in the pitch black. His work didn't see the ..... Why not? - tolerate The car rental company tried to rip us off but I was having none of it. COURAGE This is a guest post by Katy Wright. Getting (1) ..... into the habit of eating dinner in front of the TV, it's so bad. The fog and rain made ..... The World Wide Fund for Nature Every day more and more trees are being cut down in the rainforests of the world wiping out hundreds of species. - recover after the end of a relationship with someone I'm still getting over a nasty cold but I should be fine in a couple of days. The checklist is not exhaustive, have I missed any common structures that come up in part 4? REPEAT We need to protect the area by ..... tourists from taking rocks and plants home as souvenirs. us some more time to get the presentation finished. I told the boss I had food poisoning. The sight of my brother and his fiancé finally tying the knot ..... come into (money) - inherit Come round after school and we'll work on the science project together. exception to his comments about her lateness and got quite offended. The release of the chemicals ..... a detrimental effect on wildlife in the surrounding area. He ..... the impression that he doesn't care but really, underneath he's completely committed to the relationship. A few days of would ..... wonders for my mental health. Some people in this business ..... - arrange or order by classes or categories; find a solution BBC stands for the British Broadcasting Corporation. we know, there might be aliens living underground on Mars. I had to put ..... He's not nearly as tall as me. of living in a city is the relentless noise pollution. - become friends again He's always making up ridiculous stories and excuses for why he's late. for some families. into consideration just how expensive organising the festival would be. After ..... In person? What do you think are the most difficult issues that charities like the WWF come ..... when trying to help the environment? If you use ..... all the toilet paper, do you always replace it? Think of a time when a friend or family member stood ..... you in a difficult situation. Now think of a time when nobody stood ..... you. of toothpaste than their line require? There was a time, (6) ..... Happy inverting! Inverted Version Cover the original exercise. Causative have/get: have/get something done I need to get my hair cut. ASSUME The school has opened a special unit for students with ..... hearing. he would love more than to see us fail! I've put a lot of effort ..... such short notice, I can't do it I'm afraid. He handed ..... Try to increase/encourage support for something. Why? Slide 4-5 have a similar gapped questions task to the first one for students to complete in pairs. - have a good relationship with We just want to get away for the weekend and have some peace and quiet. colour-coded containers (9) ..... - meet / collect someone (e.g. at the station / from school) At the end of the presentation our boss pointed out several obvious mistakes we had made. - finish a supply of something I've completely worn out my old football boots. I need to get some new ones. - get rid of something you do not need any more The weather on the



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