

Электронное пособие

Тема: “Passive Voice”



Passive Voice

- The *Passive* is formed by using the appropriate tense of the verb
to be + past participle.
- Present Perfect Continuous, Future Continuous, Past Perfect Continuous are not normally used in the passive.

The Passive is used:

- When the **agent** (the person who does the action) is **unknown, unimportant** or **obvious** from the context;
- When we are interested more in the action than the agent, such as **in news reports, formal notices, instructions, processes, headlines, advertisements** etc.
- To make **statements** more **formal** or **polite**.
- To put **emphasis** on the agent.

Present Simple

- Active Voice:

They **serve** dinner at 6.00.

- Passive Voice:



Dinner **is served** at 6.00.

Present Continuous

- Active Voice:

He **is cooking** supper now.

- Passive Voice:

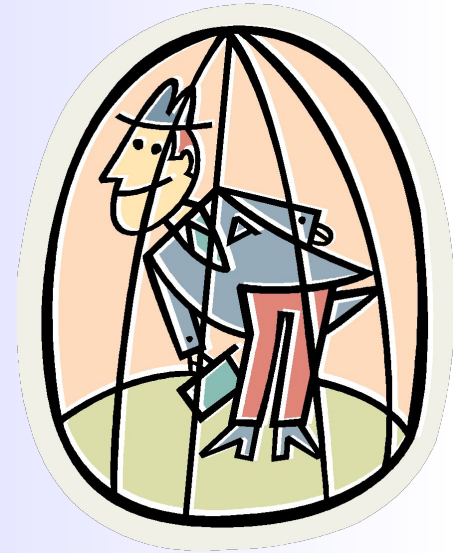
Supper **is being cooked** now



Past Simple

- Active Voice:

They **caught** him a year ago.



- Passive Voice:

He **was caught** a year ago.

Past Continuous

- Active Voice:



He **was writing** a letter.

- Passive Voice:

A letter **was writing** a letter

Future Simple

- Active Voice:

They **will build** a new house.



- Passive Voice:

A new house ~~They~~ **will be built** a new house

Present Perfect

- Active Voice:



They **have sold** the house.

- Passive Voice:

The house ~~They~~ **have sold** the house

Past Perfect

- Active Voice:

They **had celebrated** the New Year party.



- Passive Voice:

The New Year party **had been celebrated**.

Future Perfect

- Active Voice:

They **will have cooked** buns.



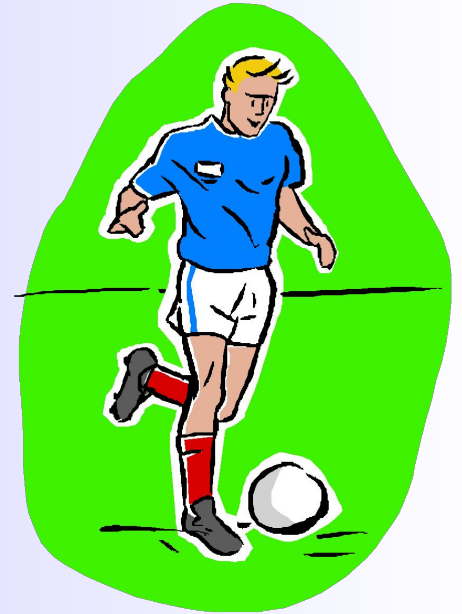
- Passive Voice:

Buns **will have been cooked**.

Present infinitive

- Active Voice:

They **should win** the game.



- Passive Voice:

The game **should be won**.

Perfect infinitive

- Active Voice:

He **should have collected** the toys.



- Passive Voice:

The toys **should have been collected**.

-ing form

- Active Voice:

She likes people **singing** her songs.



- Passive Voice:

She likes people ~~singing~~ **sung** her songs

Perfect –ing form

- Active Voice:

Having robbed the bank, ...



- Passive Voice:

The bank ~~Having been~~ **robbed** the bank

Modals + be + p.p.

- Active Voice:

You **must** arrest him.



- Passive Voice:

~~You must be arrested~~

Changing from Active into Passive

	Subject	Verb	Object	Agent
Active	A boy	fed	the cat	
Passive	The cat	was fed		by a boy

The object of the active 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 which is either introduced with “by” or is omitted. The Passive can be used only with transitive verbs (verbs which take an object such as give, write, take etc). Verbs such as happen, sleep, come, go, seem etc. are not used in the Passive.

- In the Passive we use **by + agent** to say who or what did the action.
- We use **with + instrument** or **material** to say what the agent used.
- The computer was broken **by** the clerk **with** a hammer.



- With verbs that take two objects, it is more usual to begin the Passive sentence with the person.

- Active Voice:

They gave **Jane** some money.

- Passive Voice:

Jane was given some money.

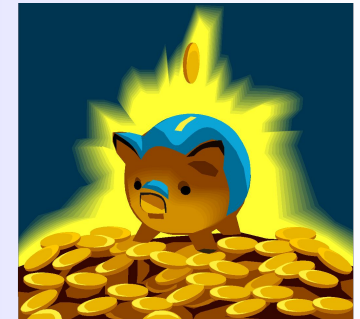
(more usual than: **Money** was given to Jane)



- We put the agent (= person who performs the action) in the Passive only if it **adds** information.
- When the agent is **unknown, unimportant** or **obvious** from the context, it is omitted.
- Agents such as **someone, people, I, you** etc are omitted.

1. The money was saved **by my sister**

(The agent is not omitted; it adds information)



2. Somebody cooked the soup. -> The soup was cooked

(unknown agent; by + agent are omitted)



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

She helped him plant a tree. ->

He **was helped to plant** a tree.



- **Hear, see, watch** can be followed by a present participle in the active and passive.

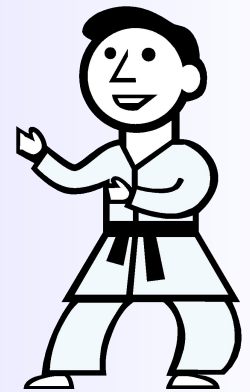
I heard him practicing the violin. ->

He **was heard practicing** the violin.



■ **Believe, expect, feel, hope, know, report, say, think** etc are used in the following passive patterns in personal and impersonal constructions.

People believe  he is a hero.



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

He is believed to be a hero.

b) **It + passive + that-clause** (*impersonal construction*)

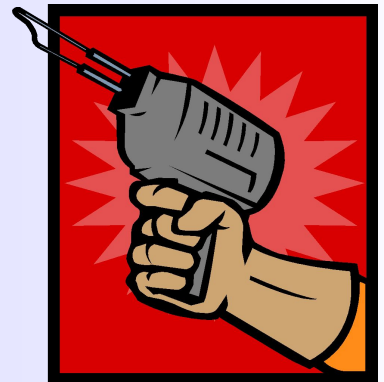
It is believed that he is a hero.

- We use ***be + past participle*** or ***have been + past participle*** after modal verbs (will, can, may etc).

I can't solve the task. ->
The task **can't be solved.**



They may have built the house. ->
The house **may have been built.**



- Verbs followed by a preposition (*accuse somebody of, look after etc*) take the preposition immediately after them when turned into passive.

They *accused* him *of* the murder.

->

He *was accused of* the murder.



- In **passive questions** with *who/whom/which* we do not omit **by**.



Who signed the letter? ->

Who was the letter signed **by**?

Who gave you these books? ->

Who were you given these books **by**?



- Participles like **amazed, broken, interested, pleased, worried** etc can be used either as adjectives or participles in the passive.
- If these participles are used as adjectives, they cannot be turned into the active.

Compare:

The first time I saw her I was **amazed**.

(“amazed” is used as an adjective)

I was **amazed** by her appearance.

(“amazed” is used as a past participle - Your appearance amazed me)

