

## Introduction to the Passive Voice

Which of these sentences is passive? And how do we know?

- Paul broke his arm.
- The window was left open.
- I have been to Spain three times.
- Food is expensive in Australia.
- We were instructed to remove the catheter after three days.
- I have been asked to join the ICU team.
- Sarah ceased taking the antibiotics before the course had finished, despite being warned about the consequences.

What is the passive and why do we use it?

To switch focus away from the subject to the object:

1. we don't know the subject	My bike <u>has been stolen</u> .
2. when the authority is obvious - usually the law but it could be any authority  (When the subject is obvious too)	Smoking <u>is not allowed</u> . Ball games <u>are prohibited</u> .
3. we want to hide the subject	Some gatherings <u>were held</u> but they work events. Honest. Mistakes <u>were made</u> .
4. we want to focus on an action and not who did it	That bridge <u>was built</u> in 1987 <b>by</b> my grandfather.

### Rules

1. always use **be + past participle**
2. you can use the passive in different tenses
3. the passive changes form in different tenses
4. **be** changes in different tenses
5. the **past participle NEVER** changes
6. you can introduce the subject/agent after '**by**'
7. the verb is important in terms of direct/indirect objects:

<b>give</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Smith <b>was given</b> instructions regarding his operation.</li> <li>• Instructions <b>were given</b> to Mr Smith regarding his operation.</li> <li>• A nurse <b>gave</b> Mr Smith instructions regarding his operation.</li> <li>• A nurse <b>gave</b> instructions to Smith regarding his operation.</li> </ul>
<b>explain</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The instructions regarding his operation <b>were explained</b> to Mr Smith.</li> <li>• The nurse <b>explained</b> the instructions regarding his operation to Mr Smith.</li> <li>• <del>Mr Smith was explained</del></li> <li>• <del>The nurse explained Mr Smith</del></li> </ul>

## Exercise 2

**Use the correct form of the passive to make passive sentences:**

1. My homework was really difficult. Thank god for your brother!
2. I am training for the Olympics, with the help of my trainer, John Adams.
3. My brother is cleaning the windows. So they can't be fixed right now.
4. The alarm went off when we were in the museum with the guide!

## Exercise 3

get	waste	challenging	keep	prepare	take	have to
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I .....for this exam for a long time. It is ..... ! I .....awake at night by it! It involves a lot of different aspects of mathematics and I know that I will .....be really focused in order to .....the result I need. It will ..... a lot of concentration to make sure I don't ..... a single second in the exam!

monitor	have (2)	operate	observe	keep	realise. bring
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A man ..... to our ER department by an ambulance two months ago. He ..... by a truck and he ..... a range of injuries. We ..... he ..... severe internal bleeding, so we ..... . He ..... for two weeks. He ..... and ..... round the clock.

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## Answers

### Exercise 1

- Paul broke his arm. - active
- The window **was left** open. - passive
- I have been to Spain three times. - active
- Food is expensive in Australia. - active
- We **were instructed** to remove the catheter after three days. - passive
- I **have been asked** to join the ICU team. - passive
- Sarah ceased taking the antibiotics before the course had finished, despite **being warned** about the consequences. - 1<sup>st</sup> clause - active, 2<sup>nd</sup> clause passive
- The window was open.
- The door slammed shut.
- His blood pressure increased.

### Exercise 2

1. My homework was really difficult. Thank god for your brother!

- Your brother **helped** me with my homework.
- I **was helped** by your brother with my homework.

2. I am training for the Olympics, with the help of my trainer, John Adams.

John Adams is helping me with my training for the Olympics. John is training me for the Olympics.

I **am being helped** with my training for the Olympics by John Adams.

I **am being trained** for the Olympics by John Adams.

3. My brother is cleaning the windows. So they can't be fixed right now.

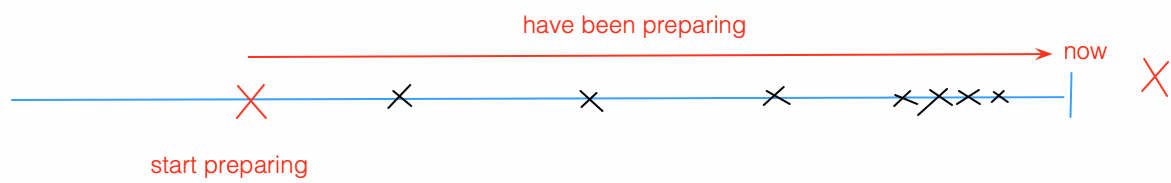
- The windows **cannot be fixed** right now because they **are being cleaned**.

4. The alarm went off when we were in the museum with the guide!
- The alarm went off when we **were being guided** round the museum!

### Exercise 3

get	waste	challenging	keep	prepare	take	have to
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I **have been preparing** for this exam for a long time. It is **challenging** ! I **have been kept** awake at night by it! It involves a lot of different aspects of mathematics and I know that I will **have to** be really focused in order to **get** the result I need. It will **take** a lot of concentration to make sure I don't **waste** a single second in the exam!



monitor	have (2)	operate	observe	keep	realise	bring
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A man **was brought** to our ER department by an ambulance two months ago. He **had been hit** by a truck and he **had** a range of injuries. We **realised** he **had** severe internal bleeding, so we **operated** . He **kept in** for two weeks. He **observed** and **monitored** round the clock.