

Composition- 2nd year- 2nd semester

Third lecture

Book: Understanding and Using English Grammar- third edition

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Chapter 11: The Passive (2)

Using the passive:

You might use the passive in the following cases:

1. The actor is unknown → The glass was broken.
2. The actor is irrelevant → An experimental solar power plant will be built in the Australian desert. [We are not interested in who is building it.]
3. You want to be vague about who is responsible → Mistakes were made.
4. You are talking about a general truth → Rules are made to be broken. [By whomever, whenever.]
5. You want to emphasize the person or thing acted on. For example, it may be your main topic:

Insulin was first discovered in 1921 by researchers at the University of Toronto.

Exercise 12. (p. 220)

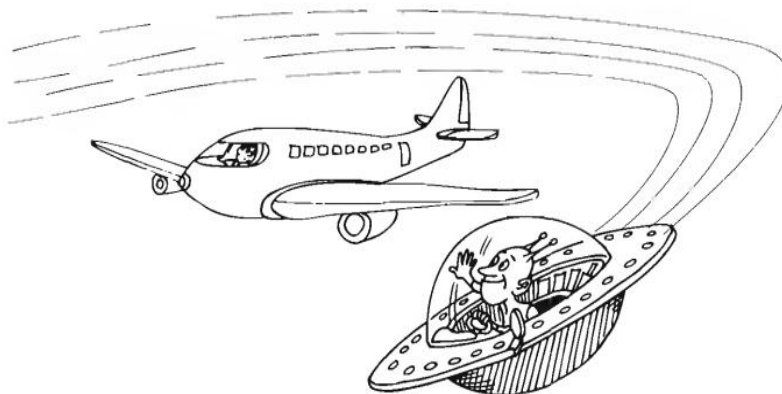
□ EXERCISE 12. Passive modals. (Chart 11-4)

Directions: Use the verb in parentheses with the modal or phrasal modal that sounds best to you. All of the sentences are passive.

1. The entire valley (*see*) can be seen from their mountain home.
2. He is wearing a gold band on his fourth finger. He (*marry*) _____.
3. According to our teacher, all of our compositions (*write*) _____ in ink. He won't accept papers written in pencil.
4. I found this book on my desk when I came to class. It (*leave*) _____ by one of the students in the earlier class.
5. Five of the committee members will be unable to attend the next meeting. In my opinion, the meeting (*postpone*) _____.
6. A child (*give, not*) _____ everything he or she wants.
7. Your daughter has a good voice. Her interest in singing (*encourage*) _____.
8. Try to speak slowly when you give your speech. If you don't, some of your words (*misunderstand*) _____.

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9. Some UFO sightings (*explain, not*) _____ easily. They are inexplicable.



10. What? You tripped over a chair at the party and dropped your plate of food into a woman's lap? You (*embarrass*) _____.
11. She is very lazy. If you want her to do anything, she (*push*) _____.
12. The hospital in that small town is very old and can no longer serve the needs of the community. A new hospital (*build*) _____ years ago.
13. Blue whales and other endangered species (*save*) _____ from extinction. Do you agree?

Check your answers:

1. can be seen.
2. must be married.
3. must be written.
4. must have been left.
5. should be postponed.
6. should not be given.
7. should be encouraged.
8. might be misunderstood.
9. cannot be explained.
10. must have been embarrassed.
11. must be pushed.
12. should have been built.
13. must be saved.
14. must be done.
15. could be elected.

Verbs with two objects:

Some verbs have two objects (direct and indirect). Here you can choose either of the two objects to be the subject of the passive sentence.

Ex. He gave me the book.

Me: indirect object.

The book: direct object.

Ex. He gave the book to me.

The book: direct object.

Me: indirect object.

Stative passive:

Stative passives are verb-like words that follow “be” in sentences and function as adjectives.

He is *hungry*. (Adjective)

He is *interested* (Stative passive)

His leg is *broken* (Stative passive)

Stative passives indicate a status or condition which may exist over a period of time.

In contrast, action verbs often indicate a change from one status to another.

Examples:

We *got married* in 1998. (Action: We changed from “single” to “married.”)

We *are married* now. Status: Our current condition is “married.”)

Jack *broke* the window. (Action: Indicates what happened at a given moment.)

The window *is broken*.

Stative passives are often used with prepositional expressions.

Examples:

She *is interested in* photography.

Everyone *was caught up in* the excitement.

Some adjectives also fit in the same pattern:

Examples:

Karen *is fond of* chocolates.

I'm *crazy about* sports cars

Brad *was worried about* his mother.

Carmen *is terrified of* snakes.

The passive with get:

We use "get" in a passive sentence when we talk about something that happened or something that changed, so it is NOT used for verbs such as '*like*', '*believe*' or '*say*'.

Examples:

That tree was/got blown over in the storm last night.

This criminal is known to police in five different countries. (gets known isn't possible here.)

Participle adjectives:

Some participles (like 'bored' or 'boring') can be used as adjectives. These are used in a slightly different way from normal adjectives. We usually use the past participle (ending in -ed) to talk about how someone feels:

- I was really **bored** during the flight (NOT: I was really boring during the flight).
- She's **interested** in history (NOT: She's really interesting in history).
- John's **frightened** of spiders (NOT: John's frightening of spiders).

We usually use the present participle (ending in -ing) to talk about the person, thing, or situation which has caused the feeling:

- It was such a long, **boring** flight (so I was bored).
- I read a really **interesting** book about history (so I was interested).
- Many people find spiders **frightening** (so they're frightened when they see spiders).

Be careful! 'I'm boring' is very different from 'I'm bored'! 'I'm boring' means I cause other people to be bored. Here are some examples of when one person causes a feeling in another person:

- I was talking to such a **boring** guy at the party. He talked about himself for an hour!

- She's a really **interesting** woman. She's lived all over the world and speaks five languages.
- My maths teacher at school was really **frightening**! He was always shouting at the students.