

## Forming passive sentences (1)

- A** Verbs such as *give* take both a direct object (DO) and an indirect object (IO) in two patterns: V + IO + DO or V + DO + preposition + IO. These verbs have two corresponding passives:

active pattern: V+IO+DO/ V+DO+prep+IO	passive
Alice gave us that vase. ✓	We were given that vase (by Alice). ✓
Alice gave that vase to us. ✓	That vase was given (to) us (by Alice). ✓

The passive form you choose depends on which is more appropriate in a particular context. If we specify an agent (see Appendix 1), this follows *by* at the end of the clause. Note that in informal contexts 'to' can be left out in the second passive pattern. Many of these verbs are to do with 'giving', e.g. *award, hand, lend, offer, send, throw*, and 'telling' e.g. *ask, read, teach*.

Verbs that can't be followed by IO + DO in the active have only one of these passive forms:

active pattern: V + DO + prep + IO	passive
<del>He explained me the problem.</del> X	<del>I was explained the problem.</del> X
He explained the problem to me. ✓	The problem was explained to me. ✓

Many of these verbs are to do with reporting what was said or thought, including *announce, demonstrate, describe, introduce, mention, propose, report, suggest*.

- B** Verbs followed by object + complement (see Glossary) in the active have one passive form:

active pattern: V + object + complement	passive
They elected her president.	She was elected president.

Other verbs like this are to do with giving someone a particular position, e.g. *appoint, declare, make, nominate, vote*, and 'naming', e.g. *call, name, title*.

- C** Some verbs that are followed by object + bare infinitive (= an infinitive without 'to') in the active are followed by a to-infinitive in the passive.

active pattern: V + object + bare infinitive	passive
They have made him return the money.	He has been made to return the money.

Other verbs like this include *feel, hear, help* ('help' can also be followed by V + object + to-infinitive in the active), *observe, see* (see also Unit 23A).

- D** We can make a passive form of many transitive two- and three-word verbs (see also Unit 94).

active	passive
Kathy looks after him.	He is looked after (by Kathy).
They put the accident down to bad luck.	The accident was put down to bad luck.

Other examples include: *carry out* (= put into practice), *disapprove of*, *hold over* (= delay), *talk down to* (= patronise). However, some transitive two- and three-word verbs are not used in the passive (e.g. *brush up on* (= revise), *cast (your mind) back* (= try to remember), *come up against* (= encounter), *get (something) down* (= write), *take after* (= resemble)):

- We came up against a problem. (*not* A problem was come up against)

or only used in the passive in certain senses when it may not be important to mention the subject (e.g. *call (someone) up* (= ordered to join the army, etc., passive possible; = telephone, no passive), *call (someone) back* (= ask to return, passive possible; = telephone, no passive), *let in* (= allow into a place, passive possible; = allow rain, etc. in, no passive), *let out* (= allow to leave, passive possible; = let out a sound, no passive), *put out* (= put out a statement/light/fire, passive possible; = put out a hand/arm/foot/tongue, no passive)):

- I put out a hand to steady myself. (*not* A hand was put out...) *but*  
□ They put out the fire. (*or* The fire was put out.)

Grammar review: → Section D & Appendix 1

- 22.1 Make one corresponding passive sentence or two, if possible, as in 1. Look carefully at the tense in the sentences given. (A)
- Someone handed me a note. I was handed a note. / A note was handed to me.
  - Someone offered her a second-hand bicycle. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone has proposed improvements to the developers. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone suggested some interesting changes to me. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone awarded him a prize. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone will announce the President's arrival to the waiting journalists. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone had mentioned the password to the thieves. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone has lent me some skis. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone is sending him threatening letters. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Someone is going to explain the changes to the students. \_\_\_\_\_
- 22.2 Choose an appropriate form of one of these verbs to complete the sentences and write a corresponding passive sentence starting with the word(s) given. Use each verb once only. (A, B, C)
- appoint bring declare demonstrate ~~help~~ introduce see tell
- People helped Bobby to his feet after the accident.  
Bobby was helped to his feet after the accident.
  - Tony \_\_\_\_\_ me to Mrs Jennings at his birthday party. I
  - Has anyone \_\_\_\_\_ Chris this morning? Has Chris?
  - The Romans may \_\_\_\_\_ rabbits to Britain as a source of food. Rabbits
  - People \_\_\_\_\_ the story of Father Christmas to young children to explain the presents they receive. The story of Father Christmas
  - They \_\_\_\_\_ Martin Johnson team captain for the whole of the World Cup.  
Martin Johnson
  - I am certain that Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ her suitability as company director to those who still have any doubt. I am certain that Sarah's suitability as company director
  - They \_\_\_\_\_ Alan Watson winner of the election after a recount. Alan Watson
- 22.3 If possible, make a corresponding sentence with a passive form of the underlined two- or three-word verb, as in 1. If it is not possible, write 'No passive'. (D)
- Children often look up to strict teachers.  
Strict teachers are often looked up to by children.
  - The company phased out the product over a period of three years. \_\_\_\_\_
  - The students got the information down as fast as they could. \_\_\_\_\_
  - The decision has deprived many people of the right to vote. \_\_\_\_\_
  - People often brush up on a foreign language just before a holiday. \_\_\_\_\_
  - John called Mrs Jones back as soon as he got home. \_\_\_\_\_
  - The chairman held over the last two items until the next committee meeting. \_\_\_\_\_
  - The farmer prevented walkers from crossing the field after he fenced it off. \_\_\_\_\_

Forming passive sentences (2):  
verb + -ing or to-infinitive

## Active patterns with verb + -ing

**A** The active pattern verb + object + -ing is made passive with 'be' + past participle + -ing:

- ☐ They saw *the monkey* climbing over the fence. (= active)
- ☐ *The monkey* was seen climbing over the fence. (= passive)

Other verbs in this pattern include bring, catch, hear, find, keep, notice, observe, send, show:

- ☐ Everyone was brought running into the room by her screams.
- ☐ In the security video the burglars are seen entering the bank through a window.

**B** Some verbs that can be followed by an -ing form can be used with a passive form being + past participle:

- ☐ I really love being given presents.
- ☐ The children enjoyed being taken to the zoo.

Other verbs like this include avoid, deny, describe, dislike, face, hate, (not) imagine, like, remember, report, resent.

**C** Verbs which in the active are followed by an object consisting of a noun phrase and -ing clause usually have no passive:

- ☐ I dread him (or his) finding out. (*but not* He is dreaded finding out)

Other verbs like this include anticipate, appreciate, dislike, forget, hate, imagine, like, (not) mind, recall, remember.

## Active patterns with verb + to-infinitive

**D** The active pattern verb + object + to-infinitive is made passive with 'be' + past participle + to-infinitive. Compare:

- ☐ Mr Price has taught *Peter* to sing for many years. *and*
- ☐ *Peter* has been taught to sing (by Mr Price) for many years.

Other verbs in this pattern include advise, allow, ask, believe, consider, expect, feel, instruct, mean, order, require, tell, understand.

Notice that in some contexts it is possible to make both verbs passive:

- ☐ Changes to the taxation system are expected to be proposed. (*compare the active* We expect the government to propose changes to the taxation system.)

Some verbs followed by an object + to-infinitive in the active have no passive:

- ☐ Susan liked Tom to be there. (*but not* Tom was liked to be there.)

Verbs like this are to do with 'liking' and 'wanting', and include (can't) bear, hate, love, need, prefer, want, wish.

**E** The active pattern verb + to-infinitive + object is made passive with verb + to be + past participle. Compare:

- ☐ Supermarkets started to sell *fresh pasta* only in the 1990s. *and*
- ☐ *Fresh pasta* started to be sold by supermarkets only in the 1990s.

Other verbs in this pattern include appear, begin, come, continue, seem, tend; also agree, aim, arrange, attempt, hope, refuse, want. The verbs in the first group (and start) have corresponding meanings in active and passive sentences, but the verbs in the second group do not. Compare:

- ☐ People have come to regard her as the leading violinist of her generation. (active)  
*corresponds to*
- ☐ She has come to be regarded as the leading violinist of her generation. (passive)
- ☐ Mr Smith wanted to help me. (active) *does not correspond to*
- ☐ I wanted to be helped by Mr Smith. (passive)

23.1 Complete these sentences using one of these pairs of verbs. Use either *was/were + past participle + -ing* or *past simple + being + past participle*. (A & B)

avoid – take    deny – involve    face – expel    find – wander    keep – wait  
leave – hold    observe – hide    remember – bite    resent – give    send – tumble

- 1 Inger was kept waiting for over three hours when she went for her dental appointment.
- 2 When the police first questioned him, Wayne \_\_\_\_\_ in the robbery.
- 3 I \_\_\_\_\_ the baby while Karen went to answer the phone.
- 4 When I woke up in hospital, I \_\_\_\_\_ by the snake but nothing after that.
- 5 They \_\_\_\_\_ prisoner by pretending to be dead.
- 6 The man \_\_\_\_\_ a suspicious package under a seat in the train.
- 7 When the bike hit her, Ann \_\_\_\_\_ to the ground.
- 8 Two teenagers yesterday \_\_\_\_\_ from school after they were found with over a hundred stolen mobile phones.
- 9 The woman was taken to hospital when she \_\_\_\_\_ lost and alone in the forest.
- 10 Adam had worked in the company for 30 years and he rather \_\_\_\_\_ orders by people who had been there only weeks.

23.2 If possible, complete the sentences using the pair of verbs given. Make passive forms with *past participle + -ing*, *past participle + to-infinitive*, or *past simple + being + past participle*. If no passive is possible, write 'No passive'. (A–D)

- 1 Robert always hated being teased by other children. (hate – tease)
- 2 We \_\_\_\_\_ our passports at the border. (ask – show)
- 3 You \_\_\_\_\_ in two copies of the customs declaration. (require – fill)
- 4 The children \_\_\_\_\_ science lessons at school. (want – enjoy)
- 5 Jack and Martha could \_\_\_\_\_ in the next room. (hear – argue)
- 6 He \_\_\_\_\_ money out of the cash box. (catch – take)
- 7 I \_\_\_\_\_ me decorate the bedroom. (need – help)
- 8 I \_\_\_\_\_ furious when they found out the window was broken. (anticipate – be)
- 9 She phoned the police and \_\_\_\_\_ outside her home. (report – attack)
- 10 The pop concert \_\_\_\_\_ over 20,000 people. (expect – attract)

23.3 Make passive sentences beginning with the underlined word(s). Does the sentence you have written have a corresponding meaning to the original, or a different meaning? Look carefully at the tense in the sentences given. (E)

- 1 Kay's questions began to irritate Malcolm.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 The team captain hopes to select Kevin.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Alan arranged to take Kathy to the station.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Critics have come to recognise Galdos as one of Spain's greatest novelists.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 The south coast continues to attract holidaymakers.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Harris has agreed to interview the finance minister.  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Using passives

**A** Here are some situations where we typically choose a passive rather than an active.

- ☆ In an active sentence we need to include the agent as subject; using a passive allows us to omit the agent by leaving out the prepositional phrase with **by**. Consequently, we prefer passives when the agent:
  - is not known: ☐ My office **was broken into** when I was on holiday.
  - is 'people in general': ☐ An order form **can be found** on page 2.
  - is unimportant: ☐ He **is thought** to be somewhere in Russia.
  - is obvious: ☐ She **is being treated** in hospital. (the agent is clearly 'medical staff')
- ☆ In factual writing, particularly in describing procedures or processes, we often wish to omit the agent, and use passives:
  - ☐ Nuclear waste will still be radioactive even after 20,000 years, so it **must be disposed of** very carefully. It **can be stored** as a liquid in stainless-steel containers which **are encased** in concrete. The most dangerous nuclear waste **can be turned** into glass. It **is planned** to store this glass in deep underground mines.
- ☆ In informal contexts, particularly in conversation, we often use active sentences with a subject such as **people, somebody/someone, something, they, we, or you** even when we do not know who the agent is. In more formal contexts, we often prefer to use a passive so that we can avoid any mention of an agent. Compare:
  - ☐ **Somebody** will give you the questions a week before the exam. *and*
  - ☐ You **will be given** the questions a week before the exam. (*or The questions will be given to you...*) (*both more formal*)
  - ☐ **They're installing** the new computer system next month. *and*
  - ☐ The new computer system **is being installed** next month. (*more formal*)

**B** Notice also that some verbs have related nouns which express the same meaning. These nouns can be used as the subject of passive sentences, with a new passive verb introduced. Compare the example above *and*:

- ☐ The **installation** of the new computer system **will be completed** by next month.

**C** In English we usually prefer to put the topic (what is already being talked about) at the beginning of a sentence (or clause) and a comment on that topic at the end. Choosing the passive often allows us to do this. Compare these two texts and notice where the topic (in *italics*) is placed in the second sentence of each. The second text uses a passive where the emphasis is on the equipment:

- ☐ The three machines tested for the report contained different types of safety valve. The Boron Group in Germany manufactured *all the equipment*.
- ☐ The three machines tested for the report contained different types of safety valve. *All the equipment* was manufactured by the Boron Group in Germany.

It is often more natural to put long subjects at the end of a sentence. Using the passive allows us to do this. So, for example:

- ☐ **I was surprised** by *Don's decision to give up his job and move to Sydney*.

is more natural than '*Don's decision to give up his job and move to Sydney* surprised me', although the choice can depend on considerations of style and context.

**D** Instead of making a *that*-clause the subject of a passive sentence, it is normal to use an *it*-clause (see also Unit 25):

- ☐ Everybody **believed** (that) the plan would fail. (*active*)
- ☐ **It was believed** that the plan would fail. (*passive*) *is more natural than*
- ☐ *That the plan would fail* **was believed** by everybody. (*passive*)

Grammar review: → Section D & Appendix 1



24.1 Rewrite these sentences. Instead of using 'people', 'somebody', or 'they', write one corresponding passive sentence or two if possible (as in 1), beginning with the underlined words. Use an appropriate verb form and make any other necessary changes. (A & Appendix 1)

- 1 They presented Maria Svensson with the award last night. Maria Svensson was presented with the award last night. The award was presented to Maria Svensson last night.
- 2 People are blaming climate change for the recent flooding.
- 3 Somebody has described Keith Jones as the world's greatest guitarist.
- 4 Somebody had stolen the painting from the gallery.
- 5 They will have cleared the litter from the pitch before the match starts.
- 6 People were watching the game outside the stadium on a huge screen.
- 7 Somebody will spray the walls with green paint.
- 8 Somebody should have offered Mary a drink when she arrived.
- 9 People will provide you with food for the journey.
- 10 They have planted the fields with cotton.

24.2 Rewrite these sentences beginning with (The) + noun formed from the underlined verb and a passive verb. Use the verb given, and make any other necessary changes. (B)

- 1 They will consider the issue at next week's meeting. (*give*) Consideration will be given to the issue at next week's meeting.
- 2 They will appoint a new managing director next week. (*make*)
- 3 People have accused the local council of corruption. (*make*)
- 4 They demolished the building in only two days. (*complete*)
- 5 They will present the trophy after the speeches. (*make*)
- 6 Local residents will certainly resist the proposed new industrial area. (*show*)

24.3 Use appropriate forms of the verbs given to complete this text. In each case, decide whether an active or passive form is needed. (A-D)

Slowly but surely the coastline of Britain (1) is being worn away (*wear away*) by an advancing sea. The country which once 'ruled the waves' now (2) is ruled (*rule*) by them, with huge forces threatening to destroy vast areas of human and wildlife habitat. Already some of Britain's last wild, natural areas (3) have disappeared (*disappear*), and experts (4) fear (*fear*) that this is just the beginning. It (5) is estimated (*estimate*) that there will be a 38–55 cm rise in average sea levels by the year 2100. According to the Department of the Environment, during the next 50 years at least 10,000 hectares of farmland (6) will be turned into (*turn into*) mud flats and salt marshes by the increases in sea levels. Rather than trying to prevent the erosion, the present government (7) is using (*use*) a method of 'managed retreat' by creating new defences further inland and allowing low-lying coastal farm land (8) to be abandoned (*abandon*) to the sea. However, many of the country's major cities could also (9) be affected (*affect*). London, Bristol and Cardiff all (10) are expected to suffer (*expect*) severe flooding as our sea defences (11) will be destroyed (*destroy*) by the rising tides.

Unit 25	Reporting with passive verbs; It is said that...
A	<p>We often use a passive to report what people say, think, etc., particularly if it is not important to mention who is being reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> People in the area <b>have been told</b> that they should stay indoors.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Everyone <b>was asked</b> to bring some food to the party.</li> </ul>
B	<p>Another common way of reporting what is said by an unspecified group of people is to use <b>it + passive verb + that-clause</b> (see Unit 33 for more on <i>that</i>-clauses). Using this pattern can allow us to put important information at the end of the sentence (see Unit 24C):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>It is reported that</b> the damage is extensive. (<i>compare</i> The damage is extensive, according to government sources.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>It has been acknowledged that</b> underfunding contributed to the problem.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>It can be seen that</b> prices rose sharply in September.</li> </ul> <p>Other verbs that can be used in this pattern include:</p> <p>agree, allege, announce, assume, believe, calculate, claim, consider, decide, demonstrate, discover, establish, estimate, expect, feel, find, hope, intend, know, mention, plan, propose, recommend, reveal, say, show, suggest, suppose, think, understand.</p> <p>Notice that many other verbs connected with reporting are <i>not</i> used in this pattern, including encourage, inform, persuade, reassure, remind, tell, warn, but can be used as in A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> We <b>have been informed</b> that we have to leave the building. (<i>but not</i> It has been informed us...)</li> </ul> <p>These verbs need a personal object before the <i>that</i>-clause in an active form (e.g. They have informed us that...).</p>
C	<p>An alternative to <b>it + passive verb + that-clause</b> is to use <b>subject + passive verb + to-infinitive</b> if we want the subject to be the topic of the sentence (see Unit 24C). Compare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>It is reported that</b> the damage is extensive. <i>and</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>The damage is reported to be</b> extensive.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>It has been acknowledged that</b> underfunding contributed to the problem. <i>and</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Underfunding has been acknowledged to have contributed</b> to the problem.</li> </ul> <p>Most of the verbs listed in the box in B can also be used in this pattern except for announce, decide, mention, propose, recommend, suggest.</p> <p>We can only use tell in this pattern when it means 'order'. So we can say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>I was told (= ordered) to go</b> with them to the railway station.</li> </ul> <p>but not 'The accident was told (= said) to have happened just after midnight'.</p>
D	<p>With the verbs discover, establish, explain, find, know, reveal, show, understand we can also use <b>it + passive verb + wh-clause</b> to report information given or found out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>It has now been revealed who</b> was responsible for the accident.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The decision to build the bridge was taken before it was established <i>whether</i> it was actually needed.</li> </ul>
E	<p>When a <i>that</i>-clause begins <b>that + there...</b>, we can make a corresponding passive form <b>there + passive verb + to be/to have been</b>. Compare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>It is thought (that) there are</b> too many obstacles to peace. <i>and</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>There are thought to be</b> too many obstacles to peace.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In 1981 it was believed (that) <b>there were</b> only two experts on the disease in the country. <i>and</i></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In 1981 <b>there were believed to be</b> only two experts on the disease in the country.</li> </ul> <p>We can use the same verbs in this pattern as with <b>subject + passive verb + to-infinitive</b> (see C).</p>

25.1 Which of the verbs can complete the sentence? Underline one or both. (B & D)

- 1 It is \_\_\_\_\_ to employ 500 people in the factory. (*expected/ intended*)
- 2 It has been \_\_\_\_\_ that the crash was the result of pilot error. (*proposed/ shown*)
- 3 It was \_\_\_\_\_ that Mrs Ho would chair the meeting. (*hoped/ explained*)
- 4 It has been \_\_\_\_\_ to appoint Dr Smithers as head teacher. (*decided/ suggested*)
- 5 It has not yet been \_\_\_\_\_ who was responsible for the error. (*claimed/ explained*)
- 6 It has now been \_\_\_\_\_ that the president broke the law in sending troops into the city. (*established/ revealed*)
- 7 It was \_\_\_\_\_ to hold new negotiations next month. (*agreed/ announced*)
- 8 It is \_\_\_\_\_ to close the library permanently from next April. (*planned/ recommended*)
- 9 It is \_\_\_\_\_ that another Moon landing will take place next year. (*assumed/ thought*)
- 10 It has been \_\_\_\_\_ how spiders are able to travel across the sea. (*discovered/ said*)

25.2 If possible, rewrite these newspaper headlines as passive sentences with the pattern *It + passive verb + that*-clause, as in 1. If this is not possible, write X after the headline. (A & B)

- 1 **AGREEMENT THAT UN WILL SEND IN TROOPS** It has been agreed that the UN will send in troops.
- 2 **PATIENTS REASSURED ABOUT HOSPITAL SAFETY**
- 3 **WATER DISCOVERED ON MARS**
- 4 **TERRORISTS BELIEVED TO BE OPERATING IN BERLIN**
- 5 **SPACE SHUTTLE EXPECTED TO RETURN TODAY**
- 6 **EX-PRESIDENT JULIUS REVEALED AS SPY**
- 7 **WARNING GIVEN ABOUT COMPUTER VIRUS**
- 8 **KING SAID TO BE MAKING GOOD RECOVERY**
- 9 **RESTAURANT ESTABLISHED AS SOURCE OF DUBLIN FOOD POISONING OUTBREAK**
- 10 **POLICE TOLD TO WORK LONGER HOURS**

25.3 If possible, write two corresponding impersonal sentences from the pieces of information in the text using *it + passive verb + that*-clause in one and *subject + passive verb + to*-infinitive in the other, as in 1. In some cases the second pattern is not possible. (C)

(1) We have discovered that a mechanical fault caused the problem. (2) We don't think that the fault is serious. (3) We expect that it will take several weeks to correct the fault. (4) We have decided to postpone the next rocket launch, and (5) we suggest that the next launch should take place in May.

- 1 It has been discovered that a mechanical fault caused the problem. / A mechanical fault was discovered to have caused the problem.



## Wh-questions with who, whom, which, how and whose

- A** Who refers to people, and can be used as subject, object or complement:
- ☐ Who owns that car?      ☐ Who did you meet?      ☐ Who was her father?
- Whom is used as a formal alternative to who as object, and also directly after prepositions:
- ☐ Whom did you meet?      ☐ To whom were you talking?
- Which is used to refer to people when we want to identify somebody in a group (for example, in a crowded room or on a photograph):
- ☐ 'Which is your brother?' 'The one next to Ken.'
- and we can use which instead of who to talk about particular classes of people:
- ☐ Which do you think earns more, a teacher or a police officer? (or Who do you think...?)
- B** We usually use which, rather than who or what, in questions before one(s) and of, as which is commonly used to ask or talk about a choice between one or more things:
- ☐ I've decided to buy one of these sweaters. Which one do you think I should choose?
  - ☐ Which of you would like to go first? (rather than Who of...?)
- C** When we use who or what as subjects, the verb that follows is usually singular, even if a plural answer is expected:
- ☐ Who wants a cup of coffee? (said to a number of people; not Who want a cup of coffee?)
  - ☐ What is there to do in Birmingham at Christmas? (expects an answer giving a number of things to do; not What are there to do in Birmingham at Christmas?)
- However, the verb can be plural in echo questions (see Unit 27E) after a plural subject or a subject consisting of two or more noun phrases joined by and:
- ☐ 'Mr Smith and his family are here to see you.' 'Who are here?' (or Who's here?)
- and when who and what function as complements:
- ☐ Who are those people over there?      ☐ What are the consequences of the decision?
- D** We use how, not what, to ask –
- ☆ a general opinion on something:      ☐ How was the journey?
  - ☆ about general health:      ☐ How is your brother?
  - ☆ about preferences relating to food and drink:      ☐ How do you like your coffee?
- We use what, not how, to ask –
- ☆ a general opinion on something with What...like?      ☐ What was the journey like?
  - ☆ for details with What... like/hate (etc.) about...?      ☐ What do you like about the job?
  - ☆ about the consequences of something with What if...?      ☐ What if your plan doesn't work?
  - ☆ about the naming of something in the question      ☐ What's it called?
- We use either what or how –
- ☆ to make a suggestion with What/How about...?      ☐ How/What about having a swim?
  - ☆ to ask for more information in the question How/What do you mean?
  - ☐ 'There's something wrong with the car.' 'Something wrong? How/What do you mean?'
- E** We can use whose to ask about the person that owns or is responsible for something. Whose can be used either before a verb (as a pronoun):
- ☐ Whose are these boots?
- or before a noun or noun phrase (as a determiner) introducing direct or indirect questions:
- ☐ Whose boots are these?      ☐ She asked me whose coat I was wearing.
- In formal contexts we can use a preposition before whose (see also Unit 55B):
- ☐ In whose desk was it found? (less formally Whose desk was it found in?)
- However, in questions without a verb a preposition comes before whose:
- ☐ 'We're meeting at nine.' 'In whose house?' (not Whose house in?)