

# Mastering the passive voice

GRAMMAR

LEVEL  
Intermediate

NUMBER  
EN\_BE\_3825G

LANGUAGE  
English





## Goals

- Can use the passive voice with future tenses to make plans and predictions.
- Can use the passive voice to give information or make summaries and conclusions.







## Preview and warm-up

- In this lesson you are going to look at **advanced uses** of the **passive voice**.



A deal **was made** by the two business executives.



## Passive voice review – the basics

- We often form the passive voice with the verb **to be** + **past participle**.
- Note how the **object** of the active sentences **changes position** in the examples below.
- The **doer of the verb** is **optional** in the **passive voice**.

Active voice	→	Passive voice
I collected the parcel at 11am.	→	The parcel <b>was collected</b> at 11am.
The firm employs 9 staff.	→	9 staff <b>are employed</b> by the firm.
We interviewed 2 candidates.	→	2 candidates <b>were interviewed</b> .
He left the door wide open.	→	The door <b>was left</b> wide open.



## Transform the sentences from active to passive

1. Our company makes electrical products.



Electrical products are made (by our company).

2. We develop new devices every year.



\_\_\_\_\_

3. New devices have made older devices obsolete.



\_\_\_\_\_

4. We regularly release marketing campaigns for devices.



\_\_\_\_\_

5. Our marketing campaigns increase profits.



\_\_\_\_\_



## The passive using the future simple

- We can use the **passive** with all tenses.
- In the **future** we use the structure **will be + past participle**.
- Again, **the subject** of the **active construction** is **optional** in the **passive voice**.

active	passive
They will hold a meeting about product development.	A meeting about product development <b>will be held</b> .
They will develop a new product.	A new product will <b>be developed</b> .



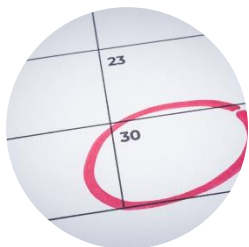
## The passive using the future simple

- Here are some more examples:



Next month, we expect that the app **will be used** by around half a million people.

The meeting **will be chaired** by the CEO.



The decision **will be made** by the end of the month.





## The passive using the future simple

Fill in the gaps with the verbs in the correct tense.

1. By the end of the century, these workers \_\_\_\_\_ (*replace*) by robots.
2. In the next few years, payment by card \_\_\_\_\_ (*accept*) by all of these businesses.
3. By 2025, the fax machine \_\_\_\_\_ (*make*) obsolete because of e-mail and the internet.





## The passive using the future simple

You find these notes on the desk of a shared working space, but you do not know who wrote them. Form sentences in the passive voice to describe what will happen and when.

**9:00**

Update team  
about pay rises

**11:00**

Take Marco to  
the airport

**12:15**

Place order for  
lunch

**13:30**

Pick up lunch  
from the deli



## Passive voice with two objects

- Some verbs in English can have **two objects**. In this case, the **passive voice** can be made in two ways depending on which **object** you wish to **concentrate** on.
- When a **direct object** is followed by an **indirect one**, we put **to** in front of the **indirect object**.
- In the examples below, *the wrong person* is the **indirect object** and *the email* is the **object**.



The email **was sent to** the wrong person.

The wrong person **was sent** the email.





## Passive voice with two objects

- What are the **direct** and **indirect objects** in the two pairs of examples below?



A discount **was given to** the customers.

The customers **were given** a discount.



Vouchers **will be given to** the winner of the competition.

The winner of the competition **will be given** vouchers.





## Passive voice with two objects

Read each of the sentences below. In each case, decide whether the noun phrase in **bold** is the direct or indirect object.

1. Free coffee was offered to **everyone at the conference**.

2. **An award** was presented to the employee.

3. The jury was shown **the evidence**.

4. **The new recruits** were shown an instructional video.

5. **The employee** was presented with an award.

6. The training was given to all of **the newly-hired staff**.

Direct object

---

---

---

Indirect object

---

---

---



## Verbs with two objects

**For each of the sentences, write two passive sentences with different subjects.**

The company has made Mike an offer.

Graham lent Faye some money.

Otis sent Maria some documents.

Blank lined area for writing passive sentences.



## Verbs with two objects and a preposition

**Make two passive sentences from these active sentences using different subjects.**



1

Reading books about startups gave Alice the idea to start her own business.

2

The contestants showed the judges ideas for a new business.

3

The judges awarded the best idea £10,000.



## Verbs with two objects and a preposition

- Some verbs have **two objects** and a **preposition**.
- When a sentence begins with the **direct object** in a passive sentence, we must use the preposition **to**. We do this with verbs like *ask, give, bring, hand, offer, take, show* and *pass*.



Your number was given **to** me by one of your colleagues.

I was given your number by one of your colleagues.







## Verbs with two objects and a preposition

- Notice how the prepositions change in the following pairs of examples.



Unfortunately, the mistake was shown **to** me by one of our clients.

Unfortunately, I was shown the mistake by one of our clients.



The board was presented **with** a number of different solutions.

A number of different solutions were presented **to** the board.





## Passive voice sentences beginning with *it*

- We can also use the **passive voice** to give a **summary** or when making **conclusions**.
- We often begin these sentences with ***it + to be + past participle + that***.
- You can use this construction with lots of verbs. It is especially useful with ***believe, say, think, expect, know, report*** and ***understand***.



**It is expected that** the increase will continue.

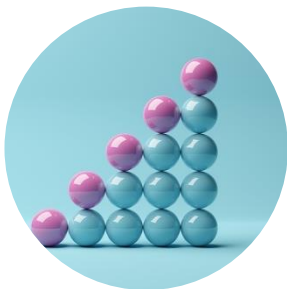
**It is believed that** their research will save many lives.





## The passive voice using sentences beginning with *it*

- We can also use the verbs on the previous slide with subjects other than *it*.
- This **changes** the **form** of the construction.
- Compare the first example below to the first example on the previous slide.
- The structure for this construction is **subject + to be + past participle + infinitive**.



The increase **is expected to continue**.

The rain **is reported to end** soon.





## Transform the sentences

Transform these sentences into the passive voice. Try to use the structures on pages 18 and 19.



The company is hiring a new accountant.

John might retire next year.

Her research has changed government policy.

More and more people are worried about climate change.



## Fill in the gaps with the correct verbs



**discovered**

1. Has the problem been \_\_\_\_\_?

**looked**

3. How quickly do you think a solution will be \_\_\_\_\_?

**found**

5. An alternative solution should be \_\_\_\_\_ into.

**seen**

7. Well either way, something must be \_\_\_\_\_ about this.

2. No, but a solution must be \_\_\_\_\_ pretty soon.

4. It is \_\_\_\_\_ that researchers will find it in the coming months.

6. I don't agree. It can be \_\_\_\_\_ from recent findings that this is the way forward.

**done**

**resolved**

**thought**



## Speaking

Now create a short dialogue like the one on page 21. React to one of the topics in the pink box below. Try to use as many of the expressions in the blue box as possible.

1. "The gig economy and growing job instability"

2. "Job losses caused by greater automation"



■ *It's thought that...*

■ *It's expected that...*

■ *It's known that...*

■ *It's said that...*





## Reflect on the goals

Go back to the second slide of the lesson and check if you have achieved all the goals of the lesson.

yes

no

---

---

---

---





## Reflect on this lesson

Think about everything you have seen in this lesson.  
What were the most difficult activities or words? The easiest?



If you have time, go over  
the most difficult slides again





## Answer key (1/2)

### Exercise p. 6

2. New devices are developed (by us) every year. 3. Older devices have been made obsolete (by newer devices). 4. Marketing campaigns for devices are regularly released (by us). 5. Profits are increased (by our marketing campaigns).

### Exercise p. 9

1. will be replaced, 2. will be accepted, 3. will be made

### Exercise p. 10

The team will be updated about pay rises at 9am.  
At 11 am, Marco will be taken to the airport.  
The order for lunch will be placed at 12:15.  
Lunch will be picked up at 13:30.

### Exercise p. 13

Direct object: 2, 3,  
Indirect object: 1, 4, 5, 6



## Answer key (2/2)

### Exercise p. 14

Mike has been made an offer by the company. // An offer has been made to Mike by the company.  
Faye was lent some money by Graham. // Some money was lent to Faye by Graham.  
Maria was sent some documents by Otis. // Some documents were sent to Maria by Otis.

### Exercise p. 15

1.1 Alice was given the idea to start her own business by reading books about startups.  
1.2 The idea to start her own business was given to Alice by reading books about startups.  
2.1 The ideas were shown to the judges.  
2.2 The judges were shown the ideas.  
3.1 £10,00 was awarded to the best idea.  
3.2 The best idea was awarded £10,000.

### Exercise p. 20 – suggested answers

It is understood that the company is hiring a new accountant.  
It is believed that John might retire next year.  
Her research is thought to have changed government policy.  
It is thought that more and more people are worried about climate change.  
Exercise p. 21  
1. resolved, 2. found, 3. discovered, 4. thought, 5. looked, 6. seen, 7. done





## Write passive sentences

**Rewrite these sentences in the passive.  
Remember that there might be more than one possible way of  
formulating it.**

1. John has given Eve a lot of work over the past few weeks.
2. The Head of Finance will give a presentation tomorrow in the main meeting room.
3. Lucy sold her share of the business to an investor.
4. I hope that my manager will have given me a promotion by next month.
5. Security will remove anyone who isn't supposed to be here.



## Writing

**Think about what you wrote for the exercise on p. 27.  
Now write a similar dialogue but for the other situation.**

<input type="radio"/>	It is believed that the gig economy will...
<input type="radio"/>	Job losses are reported to be caused by...
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	
<input type="radio"/>	



## Homework answer key

### Exercise p. 35

1. Eve has been given a lot of work by John over the past few weeks.  
A lot of work has been given to Eve by John over the past few weeks.
2. A speech will be given by the Head of Finance tomorrow in the main meeting room.
3. The investor was sold Lucy's share of the business.  
Lucy's share of the business was sold to the investor.
4. I hope that I will have been given a promotion by my manager by next month.  
I hope that a promotion will have been given to me by my manager by next month.
5. Anyone who isn't supposed to be here will be removed by security.



## About this material

Find out more at  
[www.lingoda.com](http://www.lingoda.com)



This material is provided by

**lingoda**

### **lingoda** Who are we?



Why learn English online?



What kinds of English classes do we offer?



Who are our English teachers?



How do our English certificates work?



We also have a language blog!