

Passive 1 (is done / was done)

A Study this example:

This house **was built** in 1981.'This house **was built**' is *passive*.

Compare active and passive:

Somebody **built** **this house** in 1981. (*active*)

subject *object*

This house **was built** in 1981. (*passive*)

subject

When we use an *active* verb, we say *what the subject does*:

- ☐ My grandfather was a builder. **He built** this house in 1981.
- ☐ It's a big company. **It employs** two hundred people.

When we use a *passive* verb, we say *what happens to the subject*:

- ☐ 'How old is this house?' **'It was built** in 1981.'
- ☐ **Two hundred people are employed** by the company.

B When we use the passive, who or what causes the action is often unknown or unimportant:

- ☐ A lot of money **was stolen** in the robbery. (somebody stole it, but we don't know who)
- ☐ **Is** this room **cleaned** every day? (does somebody clean it? – it's not important who)

If we want to say who does or what causes the action, we use **by**:

- ☐ This house was built **by my grandfather**.
- ☐ Two hundred people are employed **by the company**.

C The passive is **be (is/was etc.) + past participle (done/cleaned/seen etc.)**:
(be) done (be) cleaned (be) damaged (be) built (be) seen etc.The *past participle* often ends in **-ed** (cleaned/damaged etc.), but many important verbs are *irregular* (**built/done/stolen** etc.). See Appendix 1.Compare active and passive, *present simple* and *past simple*:*Present simple**active*: **clean(s) / see(s)** etc.Somebody **cleans** **this room** every day.*passive*: **am/is/are + cleaned/seen** etc.**This room** **is cleaned** every day.

- ☐ Many accidents **are caused** by careless driving.
- ☐ I'm **not invited** to parties very often.
- ☐ How **is** this word **pronounced**?

*Past simple**active*: **cleaned/saw** etc.Somebody **cleaned** **this room** yesterday.*passive*: **was/were + cleaned/seen** etc.**This room** **was cleaned** yesterday.

- ☐ We **were woken** up by a loud noise during the night.
- ☐ 'Did you go to the party?' 'No, I **wasn't invited**.'
- ☐ How much money **was stolen** in the robbery?

ACTIVITY 1: Put the verbs in brackets into the Present Passive form of the verbs in brackets.

1. Many accidents (cause) _____ by careless driving.
2. Cheese (make) _____ from milk.
3. A cinema is a place where films(show) _____ .
4. This plant is very rare, it (find) _____ in very few places.
5. In Argentina, elections for president (hold) _____ every four years.
6. You can't see the house from the road. It (surround) _____ by trees.

ACTIVITY 2: Put the verbs in brackets into the Past Passive form of the verbs in brackets.

1. The roof of the building (damage) _____ in a storm a few days ago.
2. You (invite) _____ to the party. Why didn't you go?
3. Although we were driving fast, we (overtake) _____ by a lot of other cars.
4. There was an accident last night, but fortunately nobody (injure) _____ .
5. I never received the letter, it (send) _____ to the wrong address.

ACTIVITY 3: Choose the correct alternative,

1. Two hundred people **are employed / employs** the company.
2. Water **covers / is covered** most of the earth's surface.
3. While I was on holiday, my camera **stole / was stolen** from my hotel room.
4. Robert's parents **died / were died** when he was very young.
5. The boat hit a rock and **sank / was sunk** quickly.
6. It can be noisy living here, but it **does not bother / is not bothered** me.
7. I haven't seen these flowers before. What **are they called / do they call?**