

Passive of present continuous, present perfect, future

If the agent (the person or thing doing the action) is unknown or obvious from the context, it's better to use a passive form. However, if the person or thing doing the action needs to be emphasized, it's better to use an active form.

The spyware is **being used** to collect information about college students. (Agent is unknown.) Social networking sites **have been used** in criminal investigations. (Agent is clear from context.) A criminal organization **has created** this virus, not an amateur hacker. (Agent is emphasized.)

The passive is very rarely used with the present perfect continuous. Use the passive of the present perfect instead.

People **have been posting** more videos to the Internet this year than ever before.

More videos **have been posted** to the Internet this year than ever before.

1 For each pair of sentences, is it better to use the passive or active form?

Choose a or b.

1. a. More U.S. employers will likely allow access to social networking sites.
 b. Access to social networking sites will likely be allowed.
2. a. Soon, inventors will invent smartphones that don't require a battery.
 b. Smartphones that don't require a battery will be invented soon.
3. a. Most cell phone companies are now offering unlimited-use plans.
 b. Unlimited-use plans are being offered now.
4. a. Teachers might be teaching more high school students with educational computer games.
 b. More high school students might be taught with educational computer games.

2 Complete the sentences with the correct active or passive form of the verb in parentheses.

1. Recently, social networking sites have become (become) popular with all age groups.
2. Every week, free software _____ (download) on computers everywhere.
3. In the years to come, podcasts _____ (use) more often in educational programs.
4. Lately, children _____ (ask) for cell phones at a younger and younger age.
5. More sophisticated viruses _____ (create) all the time.
6. For years, hackers _____ (try) to use spyware to commit identity theft.
7. In years to come, more and more data _____ (store) in the cloud.
8. I recently discovered that my neighbors _____ (use) my Wi-Fi many times.
9. In the next decade, more job interviews _____ (hold) online.
10. Since I last visited this blog, several older posts _____ (remove).