

90 The passive

A number of verbs are commonly used in the passive, especially in certain contexts (see the spotlight).

The man **is said to be** carrying a weapon.
The boat **is reported to be** a mile from shore.
The teenager **is known as** a troublemaker.
She **is known for** her work as a therapist.
They **were meant to** stay together.
The meeting **is scheduled for** next week.
Four **have been short-listed** for the prize.
Residents **are empowered by** the new law.
The body **will be cremated**, not buried.
The man **has been jailed** for the robbery.
I **was overcome with** grief.
Two girls **have been suspended from** school.
We **were caught up in** a traffic jam.

GLOSSARY

be known as sth/sb OR for sth	have a reputation as sth/sb or for sth
be meant (for sth / to do sth)	be intended for sth / to do sth
be scheduled (for sth)	be arranged to happen at a particular time
be short-listed (for sth)	be part of a small list for a prize, award, etc, chosen from all the people who applied for it. The winner is sb from that list.
be empowered (to do sth) formal	have or be given the power or authority to do sth SYN be authorized (to do sth)
be cremated	(of a dead body) be burnt, especially as part of a funeral ceremony
be jailed	be sent to prison
be overcome (with sth)	be strongly affected by sth, especially sth emotional
be suspended sb (from sth)	be officially stopped from doing your job, going to school, etc.
be caught up (in sth)	be involved in sth, especially when you do not want to be

SPOTLIGHT using passives

The use of the passive is more impersonal and commonly found in news reports, etc, where these passive phrases are common.

- The minister **is said to be** considering resignation.
- Food supplies **are reported to be** arriving in the country.

1 Complete the sentences with a suitable verb.

- The helicopter carrying the prince is to be nearing the country.
- Most of the survivors were with emotion when they greeted their families.
- The civil servants were for giving secret information to journalists.
- When I die, I want to be , not buried.
- The courts are to give longer prison sentences if they wish.
- She is as a rather difficult boss.
- The meeting is not to start until 2 p.m.
- Sorry I'm late. I was in the debate about education and couldn't leave.

2 Rewrite the sentences in the passive, using a suitable verb from the top of the page.

- People tell me he is dangerous. He is
- The judge sent him to prison for five years. He was
- They're going to put the film on at 9.00 p.m. The film is
- They considered four people from the nominations. Four people were
- We spent ages in a traffic jam. We were
- The school told the girls to leave. The girls were
- People know her because of her charity work. She is
- It wasn't my plan to join the army. I wasn't
- He was very emotional when he saw her. He was

3 Other verbs, taught elsewhere in the book, are also commonly used in the passive. Use the Word List if you don't know these verbs or can't remember what they mean.

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|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| be charged (with sth) | be entitled to sth | be surrounded (by sth) | be accused of sth |
| be wounded | be stranded | be convicted (of sth) | be trapped |



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