

# Passive voice - Impersonal report structures

Special Passive Structures such as ***It is believed that.../ It is agreed to... He is said to.../She is thought to...*** are used when we cannot say or do not need to say who the source of information was.

This type of sentence structure is **formal** and is mainly used in written English.

❖ There are some verbs that can have **two constructions** in Passive Voice:

1) **Impersonal construction** and 2) **Personal construction**.

❖ These verbs are:

Accept/ admit/ agree/ allege/ announce/ assure/ assume/ believe/ claim/ consider/ comment/ decide/ declare/ discover/ estimate/ expect/ explain/find/ know/ mention/ predict/ suggest/ realize/ report/ say/ recommend/ show/state/ suppose/ suggest/think/ understand

## 1) Impersonal Construction: (no person – with *it*)

**It + verb in passive (present or past) + that + clause**

Examples:

- ✓ **People say that she is a millionaire.** ⇒ ***It is said that she is*** a millionaire.
- ✓ **People believe that the President will resign.** ⇒ ***It is believed that the President will*** resign.
- ✓ **They don't believe his health is terrible.** ⇒ ***It is not believed that his health is*** very terrible.
- ✓ **They thought he was responsible.** ⇒ ***It was thought that he was*** responsible.

## 2) Personal Construction: (person / subject)

**Subject + verb in passive (present or past) + full infinitive form**

Examples:

- ✓ **They believe his health is terrible.** ⇒ ***His health is believed to be*** terrible.
- ✓ **They say that she isn't a millionaire.** ⇒ ***She isn't said to be*** a millionaire.
- ✓ **People say that Dr Lewis is a good doctor.** ⇒ ***Dr Lewis is said to be*** a good doctor.
- ✓ **Someone reported that the actor suffered an overdose.** ⇒ ***The actor was reported to suffer*** an overdose.

**Note:** With these structures the agent of the action is NEVER mentioned (who believes/ who reports/ who knows/ ...)

**It + passive verb + that –clause**

**Subject + passive verb + to-infinitive**

People **rumour** that Angelina Jolie has anorexia

**It is rumoured** that Angelina Jolie has anorexia.

Angelina Jolie **is rumoured** to have anorexia

The tense of the passive verb is determined by the active sentence:

rumour = present simple → is rumoured

### Passive Gerund = being + past participle

I don't appreciate people lying to me.

I don't appreciate being lied to.

### Passive Infinitive = to + be + past part

Someone saw him leave the building

He was seen to leave the building.

#### Change to impersonal passive

1. They say the PM is dying.

It \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_

2. They expect the concert will finish at about 11pm.

It \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_

3. People said she had been driving drunk.

It \_\_\_\_\_

She \_\_\_\_\_

4. They thought she lied to the police

It \_\_\_\_\_

She \_\_\_\_\_

5. People know he committed the murder.

It \_\_\_\_\_

He \_\_\_\_\_

6. They think rebels have kidnapped him.

It \_\_\_\_\_

He \_\_\_\_\_

7. People claim she is a secret agent.

It \_\_\_\_\_

She \_\_\_\_\_

#### Change to Gerund or Infinitive Passive

1. Someone heard her singing.

She \_\_\_\_\_

2. Daniela hates people telling her what to do.

She \_\_\_\_\_

3. Marge loves people to give her compliments.

She \_\_\_\_\_

4. Roger can't stand people pushing him in queues.

He \_\_\_\_\_

5. The boss wants us to inform him about all the latest developments.

He \_\_\_\_\_

6. James isn't keen on anyone taking his things without asking.

He \_\_\_\_\_

7. I resent everyone blaming me for the accident.

I \_\_\_\_\_

8. Cynthia loves people to give her flowers.

Cynthia \_\_\_\_\_

9. Someone saw him run away.

He \_\_\_\_\_