

9A The passive

We form the passive using a form of *be* + past participle.

Active	09.03 Passive
<i>They make a lot of movies in Hollywood.</i>	<i>A lot of movies are made in Hollywood.</i>
<i>The scriptwriters are writing a new script this week.</i>	<i>A new script is being written this week.</i>
<i>The real estate agent has sold the house for \$1 million.</i>	<i>The house has been sold for \$1 million.</i>
<i>There was an accident while they were building the bridge.</i>	<i>There was an accident while the bridge was being built.</i>
<i>A movie studio will make a movie from the book.</i>	<i>A movie will be made from the book.</i>
<i>Somebody stole our car during the night.</i>	<i>Our car was stolen during the night.</i>
<i>An expert should do the work.</i>	<i>The work should be done by an expert.</i>

We use passive verb forms:

- when the main thing we are talking about is the object of the verb
A movie will be made from the book.
- The work should be done by an expert.* (We are talking about the work, not the expert.)

- when the agent (the doer) isn't important
The house has been sold for \$1 million. (We're not interested in the real estate agent.)
- when the agent (the doer) is very obvious
A new script is being written this week. (by scriptwriters)
- when we don't know who did something / what caused something.
Our car was stolen during the night.

Negatives and questions are made in the same way as other uses of *be*:

Movies aren't made here.

Is a movie being made here?

We use *by* to introduce the person or thing that did the action (the agent):

This frame was drawn by one of the animators.

We usually use *with* to introduce a tool, instrument, or technique that was used by the agent:

The pirate's beard was controlled with a wire.



We can say something was made by hand or by machine:

This sweater was made by hand in Scotland.



a Complete the passive sentences. Don't include any agents that are in parentheses.

- 1 Ryan Coogler directed *Black Panther*.
- 2 (People) still make these shoes by hand.
- 3 (They) will build a new bridge next year.
- 4 My grandfather gave me this watch.
- 5 (We)'ve told everybody to be here on time.
- 6 (People) will laugh at you if you wear that hat.
- 7 A computer program creates the special effects.
- 8 My parents are looking after our dog this week.
- 9 (They) offered me \$1,000 for my painting.
- 10 (Somebody) was repairing my car at the time.

Black Panther _____ was directed by Ryan Coogler.
These shoes _____ are still made by hand.
A new _____
I _____
Everybody _____
You _____
The special effects _____
Our dog _____
I _____
My car _____

b Rewrite the sentences as either Yes/No questions (?) or negatives (-).

- 1 We were picked up at the airport.
- 2 The painting's already been sold.
- 3 The work will be finished by Saturday.
- 4 The movie's being made in Brazil.
- 5 Tomatoes are grown in Spain.
- 6 The car was being driven too fast.
- 7 The costumes were made by hand.
- 8 The sculpture has been taken to the museum.

(-) _____ We weren't picked up at the airport.
(?) _____ Has the painting already been sold?
(-) _____
(?) _____
(-) _____
(?) _____
(-) _____