

## 9A The passive

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

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

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.



**Tip**

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

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 We were picked up at the airport.           | (-) _____ We weren't picked up at the airport. |
| 2 The painting's already been sold.           | (?) _____ Has the painting 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. | (-) _____                                      |