

THE PASSIVE VOICE

1 USE

We often use **the passive** when we want to **talk about an action** rather than the person or thing that does the action. In other words, the **action is more important than who carries it out**.

2 FORM

We use a form of **be** + **past participle** of the verb. The object of the **active** becomes the subject of the **passive** verb:

active verb + object

They **buy** their clothes in the sales.

subject + passive verb

Their clothes **are bought** in the sales.



Passive voice produces a sentence in which **the subject receives an action**.

In contrast, **active voice** produces a sentence in which **the subject performs an action**.

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3 REASONS FOR USING THE PASSIVE

We use the passive when...

- **it doesn't matter who does the action**
*The votes **will be counted** at the end of the meeting.*
- **we know or can guess who does the action**
*John **is being operated** on. (obviously by a surgeon.)*
- **we don't know (or don't want to say) who does the action**
*My bicycle **has been stolen**. (I don't know who stole it.)*
- **we want to talk about general feelings, beliefs or rules**
*Smoking **is not allowed** in this room. (It's a rule.)*
*Swimming **is said** to be the best form of exercise. (Many people say this.)*

Remember: If we want to say who or what does the action when using a passive verb, we use **by + person/thing**. We usually put this at the end of the clause or sentence:

Example: *This dress was designed **by Giorgio Armani**.*



ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1

Study how to make the passive for the tenses below. Then, transform the sentences from the active into the passive.

Passive voice – all tenses		
Verb tense	Active voice	Passive voice
Present simple	They take the photos in Africa	The photos are taken in Africa
Present continuous	They are taking the photos in Africa	The photos are being taken in Africa
Present perfect	They have taken the photos in Africa	The photos have been taken in Africa
Past simple	They took the photos in Africa	The photos were taken in Africa
Past continuous	They were taking the photos in Africa	The photos were being taken in Africa
Past perfect	They had taken the photos in Africa	The photos had been taken in Africa
Future simple	They will take the photos in Africa	The photos will be taken in Africa
Be going to	They are going to take the photos in Africa	The photos are going to be taken in Africa
Future perfect	They will will have taken the photos in Africa	The photos will have been taken in Africa

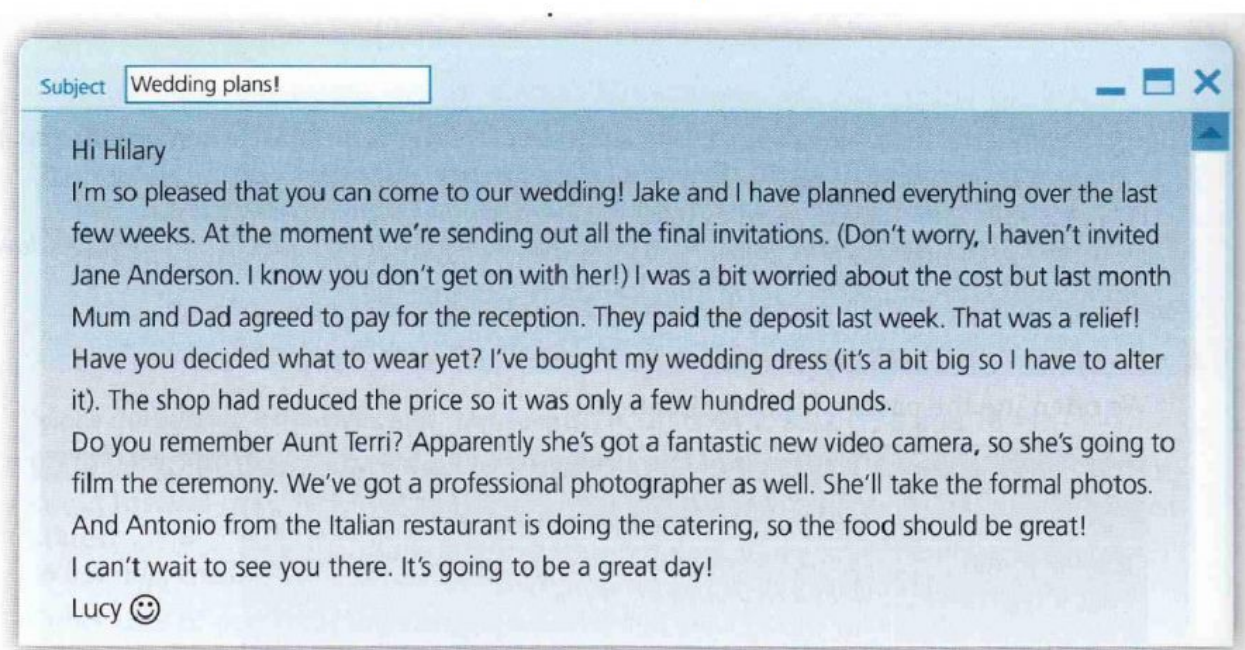
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- They were painting that wall yesterday.
That wall _____
- We've turned off the lights.
The lights _____
- We will send you an email tomorrow.
You _____
- Do I have to fill in this form?
Does this form _____?

5. They haven't repaired your computer yet.
Your computer _____
6. They're going to close the road for 24 hours.
The road _____
7. They aren't making that model any more.
That model _____

ACTIVITY 2

Use the information in the email to complete the sentences below.



- 0 Everything has been planned by Jake and Lucy.
- 1 The final invitations _____ at the moment.
- 2 Jane Anderson _____ to the wedding.
- 3 The deposit for the reception _____ last week.
- 4 Lucy has bought her wedding dress but it has _____
- 5 The price of the dress _____ by the shop.
- 6 The ceremony _____ by Lucy's aunt.
- 7 The formal photos _____ by a professional photographer.
- 8 The catering _____ by Antonio.