

PASSIVE VOICE 3

A

Study this example situation:



George is very old. Nobody knows exactly how old he is, but:

It is said that **he** is 108 years old.

or **He is said to be** 108 years old.

Both these sentences mean: 'People say that he is 108 years old.'

You can use these structures with a number of other verbs, especially:

alleged believed considered expected known reported thought understood

Compare the two structures:

<input type="checkbox"/> Cathy loves running.	It is said that she runs ten miles a day.	or She is said to run ten miles a day.
<input type="checkbox"/> The police are looking for a missing boy.	It is believed that the boy is wearing a white sweater and blue jeans.	or The boy is believed to be wearing a white sweater and blue jeans.
<input type="checkbox"/> The strike started three weeks ago.	It is expected that the strike will end soon.	or The strike is expected to end soon.
<input type="checkbox"/> A friend of mine has been arrested.	It is alleged that he hit a policeman.	or He is alleged to have hit a policeman.
<input type="checkbox"/> The two houses belong to the same family.	It is said that there is a secret tunnel between them.	or There is said to be a secret tunnel between them.

These structures are often used in news reports. For example, in a report about an accident:

<input type="checkbox"/> It is reported that two people were injured in the explosion.	or Two people are reported to have been injured in the explosion.
--	---

B

(Be) supposed to

Sometimes (it is) **supposed to** ... = (it is) said to ...:

<input type="checkbox"/> I want to see that film. It's supposed to be good. (= it is said to be good)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fireworks are supposed to have been invented in China. Is it true?	

But sometimes **supposed to** has a different meaning. We use **supposed to** to say what is intended, arranged or expected. Often this is different from the real situation:

<input type="checkbox"/> The plan is supposed to be a secret, but everybody seems to know about it.	(= the plan is intended to be a secret)
<input type="checkbox"/> What are you doing at work? You're supposed to be on holiday.	(= you arranged to be on holiday)
<input type="checkbox"/> Our guests were supposed to come at 7.30, but they were late.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Jane was supposed to phone me last night, but she didn't.	
<input type="checkbox"/> I'd better hurry. I'm supposed to be meeting Chris in ten minutes.	

You're **not supposed to** do something = it is not allowed or advisable:

<input type="checkbox"/> You're not supposed to park your car here. It's private parking only.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Jeff is much better after his illness, but he's still not supposed to do any heavy work.	

Exercises

45.1 Write these sentences in another way, beginning as shown. Use the underlined word each time.

- 1 It is expected that the strike will end soon. The strike ... is expected to end soon.
- 2 It is expected that the weather will be good tomorrow.
The weather is ...
- 3 It is believed that the thieves got in through a window in the roof.
The thieves ...
- 4 It is reported that many people are homeless after the floods.
Many people ...
- 5 It is thought that the prisoner escaped by climbing over a wall.
The prisoner ...
- 6 It is alleged that the man was driving at 110 miles an hour.
The man ...
- 7 It is reported that the building has been badly damaged by the fire.
The building ...
- 8 a. It is said that the company is losing a lot of money.
The company ...
b. It is believed that the company lost a lot of money last year.
The company ...
c. It is expected that the company will make a loss this year.
The company ...

45.2 There are a lot of rumours about Alan. Here are some of the things people say about him:

- 1 Alan speaks ten languages.
- 2 He knows a lot of famous people.
- 3 He is very rich.
- 4 He has twelve children.
- 5 He was an actor when he was younger.



Nobody is sure whether these things are true. Write sentences about Alan using **supposed to**.

- 1 Alan is supposed to speak ten languages.
- 2 He ...
- 3 ...
- 4 ...
- 5 ...

45.3 Complete the sentences using **supposed to be** + the following:

on a diet a flower my friend a joke a secret working

- 1 How is it that everybody seems to know about the plan? It ... is supposed to be a secret.
- 2 You shouldn't criticise me all the time. You ...
- 3 I shouldn't be eating this cake really. I ...
- 4 I'm sorry for what I said. I was trying to be funny. It ...
- 5 What's this drawing? Is it a tree? Or maybe it ...
- 6 You shouldn't be reading the paper now. You ...

45.4 Write sentences with **supposed to** + the following verbs:

block depart park phone start

Use the negative (**not supposed to**) where necessary.

- 1 You ... 're not supposed to park here. It's private parking only.
- 2 We ... work at 8.15, but we rarely do anything before 8.30.
- 3 Oh, I ... Helen last night, but I completely forgot.
- 4 This door is a fire exit. You ... it.
- 5 My flight ... at 11.30, but it was an hour late.