

Simple past passive

1 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in parentheses.

- 1 Liquid Paper® was (invent) by Bessie Nesmith in 1951.
- 2 Penicillin was (discover) by Alexander Fleming.
- 3 The first telegraph system was (build) by Samuel Morse in 1835.
- 4 The first radio transmission across the Atlantic was (make) on December 12, 1901.
- 5 The World Wide Web was (launch) in 1990 after Tim Berners-Lee created the first browser.
- 6 The first commercial cell phones were (sell) by NTT in Japan in 1979.

Remember

- The simple past passive is formed with the past tense of the verb *be* (i.e. *was* and *were*) + past participle:
The first real aeroplane was built in 1903.
- We use *by* + noun when we want to say who does the action:
The first real aeroplane was flown by Orville and Wilbur Wright.

2 Choose the correct word. Be careful! Not all the sentences are passive.

Most people think the electric light bulb (1) *invented* / *was invented* by Thomas Edison. In fact, it was Humphry Davy who (2) *invented* / *was invented* it in 1800.

In 1655, Huygens (3) *discovered* / *was discovered* Titan, the largest moon of Saturn.

The first microwave ovens (4) *produced* / *were produced* by The Raytheon Corporation in 1954.

In 1928, the color TV (5) *developed* / *was developed* by John Logie Baird. Two years later, he (6) *made* / *was made* the first public TV broadcast.

The first book in English (7) *printed* / *was printed* in about 1474 by William Caxton.

The first designs of a submarine (8) *made* / *were made* by Leonardo da Vinci.

3 Rewrite the sentences using the passive.

Orville and Wilbur Wright flew the first aeroplane.

The first aeroplane *was flown by Orville and Wilbur Wright.*

- 1 Marie Curie discovered radium in 1898.
Radium
.....
- 2 The Ancient Egyptians built the pyramids.
The pyramids
.....
- 3 Marconi made the radio popular.
The radio
.....

- 4 Erno Rubik invented his The Rubik's® Cube in 1977.
The Rubik's® Cube
..... by Erno Rubik.
- 5 Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*.
Romeo and Juliet and *Hamlet*
.....
- 6 Leonardo da Vinci painted the *Mona Lisa*.
The *Mona Lisa*
.....