

# The Passive Voice - Present & Past simple

We use the passive voice when the subject of the sentence is the receiver of the action.

| EXAMPLES                                                                                                                                                                                                            | EXPLANATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Popcorn <b>is sold</b> in movie theaters.<br>Old movies <b>were fi lmed</b> in black and white.<br>Many movies <b>have been made</b> in Hollywood.                                                                  | Passive verb = a form of <i>be</i> + past participle                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p><b>subject    verb    object</b></p> <p><b>Active:</b> The children <b>saw</b> the movie.</p> <p><b>subject    verb    by agent</b></p> <p><b>Passive:</b> The movie <b>was seen</b> <i>by</i> the children.</p> | <p>Compare active and passive. The object of the active sentence (<i>movie</i>) is the subject of the passive sentence.</p> <p>If the agent of the action (the person who performs the action) is mentioned, it follows <i>by</i>.</p> |

## The Oscars

Read the following magazine article. Pay special attention to verbs in the passive voice.



The Academy Awards are given out every year to recognize outstanding work of movie actors, directors, and others who are part of the movie-making industry.

These awards, called Oscars, are presented in a formal ceremony in Hollywood. Several people are nominated in specific categories, such as Best Movie, Best Actor, Best Music, and Best Costumes. One nominee is chosen to receive an award in each category. When the awards ceremony started in 1929, 15 awards were presented and the ceremony was attended by only 250 people. Tickets were sold \$10, and anyone who could afford a ticket could attend. Today about two dozen Oscars are presented. Tickets are no longer sold to the general public; invitations are sent only to people involved in making the movies and to their guests. Today the awards are presented in the 3400-seat Kodak Theatre in Hollywood. Until 1941, the winners' names were already known before the ceremony and published in newspapers the night before the ceremony. Now the winners' names are placed in sealed envelopes and the envelopes are not opened until the night of the ceremony. Since 1953, Oscar night has been televised and broadcast all over the world. This show is seen by hundreds of millions of people. Viewers watch as their favorite movie stars arrive looking beautiful and hopeful.

Did You  
Know?

Walt Disney has won the most Oscars ever: 26.

# The Passive Voice—Practice

- Compare active voice and passive voice in the Present and Past simple

## Tense

Simple  
Present

## Active

A **committee** chooses the winner.

## Passive = Be + Past Participle

The winner **is chosen** by a committee

Simple  
Past

They **announce** the winners' names

The winners' **name are announced**

## EXERCISE 1

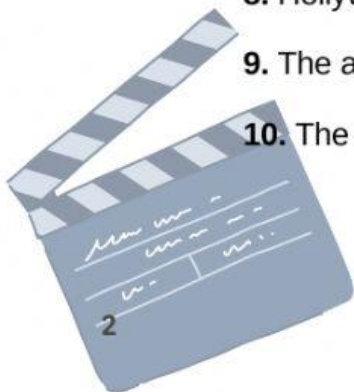
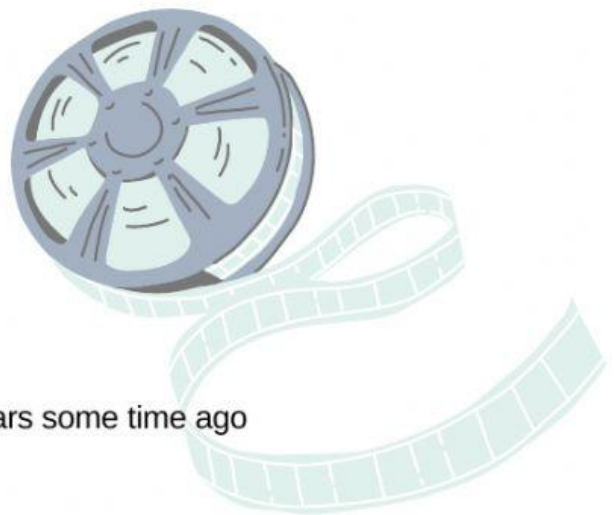
Read the following sentences. Decide if the underlined verb is active (A) or passive (P).

### EXAMPLES

The actress received an Oscar. **A**

The actress was given an Oscar. **P**

1. The actress wore a beautiful gown.
2. Halle Berry presented an Oscar.
3. Martin Scorsese was nominated to the Oscars some time ago
4. Many books were made into films.
5. Movies were filmed in black and white until the beginnings of last century.
6. Many actors live in California.
7. Many movies are made in studios in Hollywood.
8. Hollywood was built at the beginning of the twentieth century.
9. The actress thanked all the audience who helped her win.
10. The actress was driven to the ceremony in a white limousine.



## EXERCISE 2

Fill in the blanks with the passive voice of the verb in parentheses. Use the tense or modal given.

### EXAMPLE

(simple present: give)

The best actor is given an Oscar.

1. (present simple : see)

The awards ceremony \_\_\_\_\_ by millions of people.

2. (past simple: choose)

Which actor \_\_\_\_\_ last year?

3. (simple past: make)

Star Wars \_\_\_\_\_ in 1977.

4. (simple past: give)

In 1929, only one award \_\_\_\_\_ to a woman.

5. (simple past: add)

When \_\_\_\_\_ sound to movies?

6. (simple present: often / make)

Movies \_\_\_\_\_ in Hollywood.

## EXERCISE 3

Fill in the blanks with the active or passive voice of the verb in parentheses ( ). Use the tense indicated.

### EXAMPLES

I **saw** an old movie on TV last night.

(past: see)

1. The movie **was filmed** in black and white.

(past: film)

2. Many movies in Hollywood.

(present: make)

3. The actress Jenna Ortega beautiful dresses.

(present: design)

4. The actress a dress that by Ralph Lauren.

(past simple: wear) (past: design)

5. Who the music for the movie?

(past: compose)

## EXERCISE 4

Change the following sentences to passive voice in two ways. Omit the agent.

### EXAMPLE

They gave the actress an award.

The actress was given an award.

1. The presenter handed the actress an Oscar.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Someone served the guests dinner.

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The scriptwrite wrote the script

\_\_\_\_\_

4. The crew prepared the props on the stage

\_\_\_\_\_