

# it is said that ... he is said to ... he is supposed to ...

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**

<input type="checkbox"/> Cathy loves running. <b>It is said that</b> she runs 10 miles a day.	or	<b>She is said to</b> run 10 miles a day.
<input type="checkbox"/> The police are looking for a missing boy. <b>It is believed that</b> the boy is wearing a white sweater and blue jeans.	or	<b>The boy is believed to</b> be wearing a white sweater and blue jeans.
<input type="checkbox"/> The strike started three weeks ago. <b>It is expected that</b> it will end soon.	or	<b>The strike is expected to</b> end soon.
<input type="checkbox"/> A friend of mine has been arrested. <b>It is alleged that</b> he stole a car.	or	<b>He is alleged to</b> have stolen a car.
<input type="checkbox"/> The two houses belong to the same family. <b>It is said that</b> there is a secret tunnel between them.	or	<b>There is said to</b> 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"/> <b>It is reported that</b> two people were injured in the explosion.	or	<b>Two people are reported to</b> have been injured in the explosion.
---	----	---

B **supposed to ...**

You can use **supposed to ...** in the same way as **said to ...**:

- I want to see that film. **It's supposed to be** good. (= people say it's good)
- There are many stories about Joe. **He's supposed to have robbed** a bank many years ago.
- Fireworks **are supposed to have been invented** in China. Is it true?

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:

- The plan **is supposed to be** a secret, but everybody seems to know about it.  
(= the plan is intended to be a secret)
- What are you doing at work? **You're supposed to be** on holiday.  
(= you arranged to be on holiday)
- Our guests **were supposed to come** at 7.30, but they were late.
- Jane **was supposed to phone** me last night, but she didn't.
- 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 advised:

- You're not supposed to park** your car here. It's private parking only.
- Joe is much better after his illness, but **he's not supposed to exercise** too hard.

## 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 reported that many people are homeless after the floods.  
Many people .....
- 3 It is thought that the thieves got in through a window in the roof.  
The thieves .....
- 4 It is alleged that the driver of the car was driving at 110 miles an hour.  
The driver .....
- 5 It is reported that the building has been badly damaged by the fire.  
The building .....
- 6 It is said that the company is losing a lot of money.  
The company .....
- 7 It is believed that the company lost a lot of money last year.  
The company .....
- 8 It is expected that the company will make a loss this year.  
The company .....

**45.2** Complete the sentences. Use the words in brackets and any other necessary words.

- 1 A: What's the City Hotel like? Can you recommend it?  
B: I've never stayed there, but ..... it's supposed to be ..... (it / supposed) very good.
- 2 A: How much are these paintings worth?  
B: I'm not sure, but ..... (they / supposed) very valuable.
- 3 A: This looks an interesting building.  
B: Yes, ..... (it / supposed) a prison a long time ago.
- 4 A: Is it true that your neighbours were lucky in the lottery?  
B: Yes, ..... (they / supposed / win) a lot of money.
- 5 A: Is it possible to climb to the top of the tower?  
B: Yes, ..... (the view / supposed) very nice.
- 6 A: I heard that Laura has gone away.  
B: Yes, ..... (she / supposed / living) in London now.

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

on a diet      a flower      my friend      a joke      open every day      a secret      working

- 1 How is it that everybody knows about the plan? ..... It's 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 playing a game now. ....
- 7 That's strange. The museum seems to be closed. ....

**45.4** Write sentences with supposed to ... or not supposed to .... Choose from the following verbs:

depart      lift      park      phone      put      start

- 1 You ..... 're not supposed to park ..... your car here. It's private parking only.
- 2 We ..... work at 8.15, but we rarely do anything before 8.30.
- 3 I ..... Helen last night, but I completely forgot.
- 4 This door is a fire exit. We ..... anything in front of it.
- 5 My flight ..... at 10.15, but it didn't leave until 11.30.
- 6 Jonathan has a problem with his back. He ..... anything heavy.