

9A The passive

We form the passive using a form of *be* + past participle.

Active	09.03 Passive
They make a lot of movies in Hollywood.	A lot of movies are made in Hollywood.
The scriptwriters are writing a new script this week.	A new script is being written this week.
The real estate agent has sold the house for \$1 million.	The house has been sold for \$1 million.
There was an accident while they were building the bridge.	There was an accident while the bridge was being built .
A movie studio will make a movie from the book.	A movie will be made from the book.
Somebody stole our car during the night.	Our car was stolen during the night.
An expert should do the work.	The work should be done by an expert.

We use passive verb forms:

- when the main thing we are talking about is the object of the verb
A movie **will be made** from the book.
The work **should be done** by an expert. (We are talking about the work, not the expert.)

- when the agent (the doer) isn't important
The house **has been sold** for \$1 million. (We're not interested in the real estate agent.)
- when the agent (the doer) is very obvious
A new script **is being written** this week. (by scriptwriters)
- when we don't know who did something / what caused something.
Our car **was stolen** during the night.

Negatives and questions are made in the same way as other uses of *be*:

Movies **aren't** made here.

Is a movie **being** made here?

We use *by* to introduce the person or thing that did the action (the agent):

This frame was drawn **by** one of the animators.

We usually use *with* to introduce a tool, instrument, or technique that was used by the agent:

The pirate's beard was controlled **with** a wire.



Tip

We can say something was made by hand or by machine:

This sweater was made **by hand** in Scotland.



a Complete the passive sentences. Don't include any agents that are in parentheses.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Ryan Coogler directed <i>Black Panther</i> . | <i>Black Panther</i> _____ was directed by Ryan Coogler. |
| 2 (People) still make these shoes by hand. | These shoes _____ are still made by hand. |
| 3 (They) will build a new bridge next year. | A new _____ |
| 4 My grandfather gave me this watch. | I _____ |
| 5 (We)'ve told everybody to be here on time. | Everybody _____ |
| 6 (People) will laugh at you if you wear that hat. | You _____ |
| 7 A computer program creates the special effects. | The special effects _____ |
| 8 My parents are looking after our dog this week. | Our dog _____ |
| 9 (They) offered me \$1,000 for my painting. | I _____ |
| 10 (Somebody) was repairing my car at the time. | My car _____ |

b Rewrite the sentences as either Yes/No questions (?) or negatives (-).

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 We were picked up at the airport. | (-) _____ We weren't picked up at the airport. |
| 2 The painting's already been sold. | (?) _____ Has the painting already been sold? |
| 3 The work will be finished by Saturday. | (-) _____ |
| 4 The movie's being made in Brazil. | (?) _____ |
| 5 Tomatoes are grown in Spain. | (?) _____ |
| 6 The car was being driven too fast. | (-) _____ |
| 7 The costumes were made by hand. | (?) _____ |
| 8 The sculpture has been taken to the museum. | (-) _____ |