

The Passive Voice

Business English

WHAT IS THE PASSIVE VOICE?

The passive voice is a way of forming sentences so that **the focus is on the person or thing receiving the action.**

Examples:

ACTIVE: Someone stole my car last week.

PASSIVE: My car was stolen last week.

A: They are building a new office.

P: A new office is being built.

WHEN TO USE THE PASSIVE VOICE?

When the subject is not important → The streets are swept every day.

When we don't know the subject → My car has been stolen.

When the focus is on the action → A new office house is being built.

When we want to make a polite statement → A mistake was made.

HOW TO MAKE A SENTENCE IN THE PASSIVE VOICE?

Put the OBJECT of the sentence at the beginning + form of TO BE + V3
(O + 'TO BE' + V3)

Example:

The project is finished on time.

PRESENT SIMPLE TENSE

- To express habits or general truth
- To express a repeated action
- Used with verbs of senses (see, smell, hear, think, like, hate)
- Future events that will happen according to some timetables, schedules

AFFIRMATIVE (+): S + V (3RD person V-s, V-es) example: I like chocolate.

NEGATIVE (-): S + don't/doesn't + V example: I don't like chocolate.

INTERROGATIVE (?): Do/Does + S + V example: Do you like chocolate?

Adverbs of time:

Usually, always, sometimes, never, on Mondays, every week/month, etc.

PRESENT SIMPLE TENSE (PASSIVE)

Affirmative:

O + AM/IS/ARE + V3 → The documents are printed.

Negative:

O + AM/IS/ARE NOT + V3 → The documents are not printed.

Interrogative:

AM/IS/ARE + O + V3...? → Are the documents printed?

PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE

- Actions that are happening NOW
- Actions that are happening ABOUT NOW (but not necessarily at the moment of speaking)
- Future actions in the near future (a personal plan)

(+): S + am/is/are + V + ing ex.: I am writing an essay.

(-): S + am/is/are NOT + V + ing ex.: I am not writing an essay.

(?): Am/Is/Are + S + V-ing ex.: Are you writing an essay?

Adverbs of time:

Today, now, right now, at the moment, this weekend, tonight, currently, these days

PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE (PASSIVE)

Affirmative:

O + AM/IS/ARE + BEING + V3. → The products are being sent.

Negative:

O + AM/IS/ARE NOT BEING + V3 → The products aren't being sent.

Interrogative:

AM/IS/ARE + O + BEING + V3...? → Are the products being sent?

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

- For experience when we don't know when the action took place in the past, it is not important when we did it. Rather it is important that we either have done it or not in our lives
- For past action (recent past, not long ago) that has a result in the present (example: Jimmy has gone to New York. → He isn't here now.)
- An action which started in the past and continuous up to now. (example: I haven't seen Joe since Friday. → Friday was the last time when I saw him)

(+): S + HAVE/HAS + V3 (or –ed)

(-): S + HAVEN'T/HASN'T + V3 (or –ed)

(?): HAVE/HAS + S + V3...? (or –ed)

Adverbs of time: Until now, since, never, ever, already, yet, for three hours/weeks, so far, recently

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE (PASSIVE)

Affirmative:

O + HAVE/HAS BEEN + V3 → The letter has been sent.

Negative:

O + HAVE/HAS NOT BEEN + V3 → The letter hasn't been sent.

Interrogative:

HAVE/HAS + O + BEEN + V3...? → Has the letter been sent?

PAST SIMPLE TENSE

- For activities completed in the past and have no connection with present
- When we know exactly when the action in the past happened

(+): S + V2 (or –ed) example: I studied French at the university.

(-): S + didn't + V (base form) ex.: I didn't study French at the university.

(?): Did + S + V (base form) ex.: Did you study French at the university?

Adverbs of time:

Last year/week/month, ten days ago, yesterday, the day before yesterday, in 1998

PAST SIMPLE TENSE (PASSIVE)

AFFIRMATIVE:

O + WAS/WERE + V3 → The mistakes were corrected.

NEGATIVE:

O + WASN'T/WEREN'T + V3 → The mistakes weren't corrected.

INTERROGATIVE:

WAS/WERE + O + V3...? → Were the mistakes corrected?

PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE

- When the action happened in the past for a longer period of time ex.: He was reading all night long.
- When two actions happen at the same time in the past (parallel actions) ex.: While I was watching TV, she was talking to Steve.
- When a short action ends a longer action ex.: I was reading my emails when the phone rang.

(+): S + was/were + V +ing

(-): S + wasn't/weren't + V + ing

(?): Was/Were + S + V +ing...?

Adverbs of time:

all night long, all day yesterday, all last week, while, when

PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE (PASSIVE)

AFFIRMATIVE:

O + WAS/WERE + BEING + V3 → The products were being sent.

NEGATIVE:

O + WASN'T/WEREN'T + BEING + V3 → The products weren't being sent.

INTERROGATIVE:

WAS/WERE + O + BEING + V3...? → Were the products being sent?

PAST PERFECT TENSE

- When a past action finished before another past action began.
- Example: He had lost his watch before he arrived home. (First he lost his watch, then he arrived home at a later point of the time)

(+): S + had + V3 (or –ed) ex. He had forgotten to turn off the radio.

(-): S + hadn't + V3 (or –ed) ex.: He hadn't forgotten to turn off the radio.

(?): Had + S + V3 (or –ed) ex.: Had he forgotten to turn off the radio?

Adverbs of time:

before, after, as soon as

PAST PERFECT TENSE (PASSIVE)

AFFIRMATIVE:

O + HAD + BEEN + V3 → The letters had been sent.

NEGATIVE:

O + HADN'T + BEEN + V3 → The letters hadn't been sent.

INTERROGATIVE:

HAD + O + BEEN + V3...? → Had the letters been sent?

FUTURE SIMPLE (WILL)

- Definite future → He will be 25 next week.
- Predictions (opinion about the future) → I think / I believe he will like this CD.
- Distant future → People will use electric cars in 40 years.
- For promises/requests/refusals/offers → I will help you with those heavy bags.
- Deciding at the moment of speaking to do something → Boss: I need someone to meet our guest at the airport. Assistant: Okay, I will go.

(+): S + will + V (base form)

(-): S + won't + V

(?): Will + S + V

Adverbs of time: Tomorrow, tonight, next week/month, soon, in the future

AFFIRMATIVE:

O + WILL + BE + V3 → The letters will be sent.

NEGATIVE:

O + WON'T + BE + V3 → The letters won't be sent.

INTERROGATIVE:

WILL + O + BE + V3...? → Will the letters be sent?

'GOING TO' FUTURE

- Prediction based on present situation. → Look at the clouds! It is going to rain!
- Near future → Next week we are going to travel on holiday to Greece.
- Talking about something that is already decided. → Marianne: There is no milk left in the fridge! Sam: I know, I'm going to buy some milk in the shop!

(+): S + am/is/are + GOING TO + V

(-): S + am/is/are + not + GOING TO + V

(?): Am/Is/Are + S + GOING TO + V...?

Adverbs of time: tomorrow, this afternoon, soon, tonight, next week

AFFIRMATIVE:


O + AM/IS/ARE + GOING TO + BE + V3 → The laptop is going to be used.

NEGATIVE:

O + AM/IS/ARE NOT + GOING TO + BE + V3 → The laptop is not going to be used.

INTERROGATIVE:

AM/IS/ARE + O + GOING TO + BE + V3...? → Is the laptop going to be used?

A solid blue circle is centered on a dark, textured background. Inside the circle, the text "THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION AND GOOD LUCK!" is written in white, uppercase, sans-serif font, arranged in five lines.

THANK YOU
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LUCK!