

Passive (2) (be/been/being done)

Study the following *active* and *passive* forms:

A

After *will / can / must / going to / want to*, etc.

active: do/clean/see, etc.

Somebody will clean the room later.

passive: be done/cleaned/seen, etc.

The room will be cleaned later.

- The situation is serious. Something must be done before it's too late.
- A mystery is something that can't be explained.
- The music was very loud and could be heard from a long way away.
- A new supermarket is going to be built next year.
- Please go away. I want to be left alone.

B

After *should have / might have / would have / seem to have*, etc.

active: done/cleaned/seen, etc.

Somebody should have cleaned the room.

passive: been done/cleaned/seen, etc.

The room should have been cleaned.

- I haven't received the letter yet. It might have been sent to the wrong address.
- If you hadn't left the car unlocked, it wouldn't have been stolen.
- There were some problems at first, but they seem to have been solved.

C

Present perfect

active: has/have done

The room looks nice. Somebody has cleaned it.

passive: has/have been done

The room looks nice. It has been cleaned.

- Have you ever been bitten by a dog?
- "Are you going to the party?" "No, I haven't been invited."

Past perfect

active: had done

The room looked nice. Somebody had cleaned it.

passive: had been done

The room looked nice. It had been cleaned.

- The vegetables didn't taste very good. They had been cooked too long.
- The car was three years old but hadn't been used very much.

D

Present continuous

active: am/is/are doing

Somebody is cleaning the room right now.

passive: am/is/are being done

The room is being cleaned right now.

- There's somebody walking behind us. I think we are being followed.
- (in a store) "Can I help you, ma'am?" "No, thank you. I'm being helped."

Past continuous

active: was/were doing

Somebody was cleaning the room when I arrived.

passive: was/were being done

The room was being cleaned when I arrived.

- There was somebody walking behind us. We were being followed.

Exercises

40.1 What do these words mean? Use *it can* or *it can't*. Use a dictionary if necessary.

If something is:

1. washable, *it can be washed* .
2. unbreakable, it _____ .
3. edible, it _____ .
4. unusable, _____ .
5. invisible, _____ .
6. portable, _____ .

40.2 Complete these sentences with one of the following verbs (in the correct form):

carry cause ~~do~~ make repair send spend wake up

Sometimes you need *have* (*might have, could have, etc.*).

1. The situation is serious. Something must *be done* before it's too late.
2. I haven't received the letter. It might *have been sent* to the wrong address.
3. A decision will not _____ until the next meeting.
4. I told the hotel desk clerk that I wanted to _____ at 6:30 the next morning.
5. Do you think that less money should _____ on the military?
6. This road is in very bad condition. It should _____ a long time ago.
7. The injured man couldn't walk and had to _____ .
8. It's not certain how the fire started, but it might _____ by an electrical short circuit.

40.3 Rewrite these sentences. Instead of using *somebody* or *they*, write a passive sentence.

1. Somebody has cleaned the room. *The room has been cleaned.*
2. Somebody is using the computer at the moment.
The computer _____ .
3. I didn't realize that somebody was recording our conversation.
I didn't realize that _____ .
4. When we got to the stadium, we found that they had canceled the game.
When we got to the stadium, we found that _____ .
5. They are building a new highway around the city.
_____ .
6. They have built a new hospital near the airport.
_____ .

40.4 Make sentences from the words in parentheses. Sometimes the verb is active, sometimes passive. (This exercise also includes the simple past – see Unit 39C.)

1. There's somebody behind us. (I think / we / follow) *I think we're being followed.*
2. This room looks different. (you / paint?) *Have you painted it?*
3. Tom gets a higher salary now. (he / promote) _____
4. My umbrella has disappeared. (somebody / take) _____
5. Ann can't use her office right now. (it / redecorate) _____
6. Our car wasn't where we had left it. (it / steal) _____
7. The photocopier broke down yesterday, but now it's OK. (it / work / again; it / repair) _____
8. The police have found the people they were looking for. (two people / arrest / last night) _____
9. The man next door disappeared six months ago. (nobody / see / since then) _____
10. I was mugged on my way home a few nights ago. (you / ever / mug?) _____