2.4 The passive: present and past

**Remember**

Ein **Aktivsatz** drückt aus, was das Subjekt tut.
Ein **Passivsatz** drückt nur aus, dass etwas geschieht, ohne zu erwähnen, wer oder was hier handelt.

So wird das Passiv gebildet:

- passive simple present: am/is/are + past participle
- passive simple past: was/were + past participle

**Beispiele:**

- English is **spoken** all over the world.
- Passports are **checked** at the customs.
- Coffee is **not grown** in Germany.
- The telephone was **invented** in the USA.
- The United States was **founded** in 1776.
- **Were** you **told** to go home?

Ist es einem wichtig auszudrücken, wer etwas in einem Passivsatz tut, dann hängt man dieses Objekt mit der Präposition by an.

**Beispiele:**

- English is spoken **by a lot of people**.
- The telephone was invented **by Graham Bell**.

**Answer the questions and use the passive voice.**

Mr Benson called the police because someone had got into his house and stolen some money.

1. Policeman: Did the thieves break a window?
   Mr Benson: Yes, a window.

2. Policeman: How much money did the thieves take?
   Mr Benson: About $1,000.

3. Policeman: Did they find anything else?
   Mr Benson: No, nothing else.

4. Did they do any other damage?
   Mr Benson: No. No other damage.

5. Did they pull out the drawers (Schubladen)?
   Mr Benson: Yes, the drawers.
2. Put the verbs in brackets into the passive voice in the present tense.

Rules at our school!

- The pupils **(tell)** to be quiet during class.
- Homework **(do)** at school every afternoon.
- Tests **(write)** at the end of each month.
- The caretaker (= Hausmeister) **(ask)** to repair broken things.
- Everybody **(speak to)** in a friendly way.
- The parents **(invite)** to the school party at the end of term.
- The board **(clean)** at the end of each lesson.
- The books **(keep)** on the bookshelf.
- English **(teach)** in each class.
- Every morning a song **(sing)** by all the pupils.

3. Put the sentences into the passive voice in the past tense. Only use the by-agent when the subject is underlined.

The world of work

1. The technicians **repaired** the old machines.
2. The company **sold** the electronic equipment all over the world.
3. Mr Johnson **controlled** the work processes.
4. The assistant **installed** a new computer.
5. Our company **opened** two new branches last year.
6. All computer operators **read** the latest computer magazine.
7. The bookshop next door **sold** some books about computers.
8. The firm **sent** the new parts late.
Choose the right form of the passive voice.

Traffic and accidents
1. In America more than three million people
   ■ was injured
   ■ are injured
   ■ is injured every year.

2. Drivers
   ■ are warned
   ■ is warned
   ■ were warn to drive carefully.

3. A lot of lives have been saved since seat belts
   ■ are introduced
   ■ were introduced
   ■ was introduced many years ago.

4. There are still a lot of accidents, although a lot of money
   ■ was spent
   ■ is spent
   ■ are spent each year on new highways.

5. Last year even more highways
   ■ are built
   ■ was built
   ■ were built than the year before.

Say it in English.

Sage auf Englisch, dass …
1. dein Fahrrad gestern gestohlen wurde.
2. die Hausaufgaben (singular noun!) jeden Tag kontrolliert werden.
3. Spanisch an deiner Schule nicht unterrichtet wird.

Frage, ob …
5. in Südafrika Englisch gesprochen wird.
6. diese Uhr in Deutschland hergestellt wurde.
6 Fill in the gaps with the verbs given below.

Remember to write was/were first.

1. A bomb … in a flat in London last night.
2. 400 children … home from school yesterday because of the hot weather.
3. Thousands of houses … in a hurricane in Texas last month.
4. A man … last month for stealing a valuable painting from the British Museum.
5. Three valuable paintings … from the British Museum last week.
6. 2000 workers … new jobs last month.
7. Higher milk prices … by farmers last week.
8. More British and American soldiers … to Iraq last month.
9. More than 60 people … by the police after heavy rain fell in the south of England last month.
10. Pupils … that the exam results would be published the following day.

7 Change these sentences into headlines by using the passive.

1. A car knocked down a boy yesterday.
2. They will make shoes in the old car factory.
3. People must not ride bicycles on the pavement.
4. They built the first skyscraper in 1934.
5. They are repairing London Road and Exeter Road this month.
6. You can expect traffic jams.
7. They have designed an economical car engine.
8. They have found an unknown painting by Picasso in an old building.
9. They will play Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony next weekend.