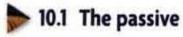
Passive Voice

We form the passive with the verb to be and the past participle of the main verb.

	Active Voice	Passive Voice
Present Simple	They serve dinner at 6:00.	Dinner is served at 6:00.
Present Continuous	They are serving dinner now.	Dinner is being served now.
Past Simple	They served dinner.	Dinner was served.
Past Continuous	They were serving dinner.	Dinner was being served.
Future Simple	They will serve dinner.	Dinner will be served.
Present Perfect	They have served dinner.	Dinner has been served.
Past Perfect	They had served dinner.	Dinner had been served.
Future Perfect	They will have served dinner.	Dinner will have been served.
Present infinitive	They should serve dinner.	Dinner should be served.
Perfect infinitive	They should have served dinner.	Dinner should have been served.
-ing form	He likes people serving his dinner.	He likes his dinner being served.
Perfect -ing form	Having served dinner,	Dinner having been served,
Modals + be + p.p.	You must serve dinner.	Dinner must be served.



Form

am/is/are
was/were
has/have been
will
+ -ed (past participle)

The past participle of regular verbs ends in -ed. There are many common **irregular past participles**. See the list on p158.

Present

English is spoken all over the world. 100 million mobile phones are thrown away every year. Fiat cars aren't made in France. Where is coffee grown?

Past

The first text message was sent in 1989. They weren't injured in the accident. When was television invented?

We use the Passive:

- when the agent (the person who does the action) is unknown, unimportant or obvious from the context. The door had been locked. (we don't know who locked it – unknown agent) Repairs are being made to the car. (by the mechanic – obvious agent)
- when we are interested more in the action than the person who carries it out, such as in news reports, formal notices, instructions, processes, headlines, advertisements, etc. The whole area was evacuated. (news report) Breakfast is served from 6.00 to 10.30. (formal notice)
- to make statements more formal or polite. "My new dress has been ruined". (more polite than saying "You ruined my dress").
- to put emphasis on the agent. The Pyramids were built by the ancient Egyptians.
- We use by + agent to say who or what carries out the action. We use with + instrument / material / ingredient to say what the agent used to carry out the action. The cake was made by Ann. It was made with eggs, flour and butter.
- Only transitive verbs (verbs followed by an object) can be changed into the passive:

active: Mary feeds the dogs. (transitive verb)

passive: The dogs are fed by Mary.

but: They **sleep** early every night. (The verb sleep in this sentence is intransitive; not followed by an object. The sentence cannot be changed into the passive.)

Some transitive verbs, such as have, fit, suit, resemble, etc. cannot be changed into the passive. She resembles her father in many ways.

Changing from Active into Passive

To change a sentence from active into the passive:

- a) the object of the active sentence becomes the subject in the passive sentence,
- b) the active verb remains in the same tense, but changes into a passive form,
- the subject of the active sentence becomes the agent, and is either introduced with the preposition by or omitted.

	subject	verb	object
active	The mayor	opened	the new school
	subject	verb	agent

Active to passive

- 4 Read the text again. How are these verbs expressed in the passive?
 - 1 Martin Cooper made the first mobile phone call in 1973.
 - 2 Almost six billion people worldwide own mobile phones.
 - 3 Shops in the UK sell 30 million phones every year.
 - 4 They have sold camera phones since 2002.
 - 5 Engineers have added a lot of amazing features.
 - 6 They decorate the Goldstriker phone with over 550 diamonds.
 - 7 We throw away 100 million mobile phones every year.
 - 8 Some people believe that mobile phones will eventually replace all landline phones.

Answers and tapescript

- 1 The first mobile phone call was made in 1973 by Martin Cooper.
- 2 Mobile phones are owned by almost six billion people worldwide.
- 3 30 million phones are sold in the UK every year.
- 4 Camera phones have been sold since 2002.
- 5 A lot of amazing features have been added.
- 6 The Goldstriker phone is decorated with over 550 diamonds.
- 7 100 million mobile phones are thrown away every year.
- 8 Some people believe that eventually all landline telephones will be replaced by mobile phones.