

THE PASSIVE

The Passive– Have something done

How the Passive is formed

We form the Passive by using the verb TO BE followed by the past participle.

*The police officer **saw** the robber at the airport.*

*She's **following** him.*

*She'll **catch** him soon.*

*The robber **was seen** at the airport.*

*He's **being followed**.*

*He'll **be caught** soon.*

Active		Passive
<i>to catch</i>	→	<i>to be caught</i>
<i>to have caught</i>	→	<i>to have been caught</i>
<i>catching</i>	→	<i>being caught</i>
<i>having caught</i>	→	<i>having been caught</i>
<i>am / are / is catching</i>	→	<i>am / are / is being caught</i>
<i>catch(es)</i>	→	<i>am / are / is caught</i>
<i>will catch</i>	→	<i>will be caught</i>
<i>am / are / is going to catch</i>	→	<i>am / are / is going to be caught</i>
<i>has / have caught</i>	→	<i>has / have been caught</i>
<i>caught</i>	→	<i>was / were caught</i>
<i>was catching</i>	→	<i>was being caught</i>
<i>had caught</i>	→	<i>had been caught</i>
<i>would catch</i>	→	<i>would be caught</i>
<i>would have caught</i>	→	<i>would have been caught</i>

When the Passive is used

It is used quite often in English, both in speech and writing.

When...

We don't know who or what did something.	<p>"My bike has been stolen"</p> <p>(I don't know who stole it) = Someone has stolen my bike.</p>
The action is more important than who did it.	<p>"Kennedy was shot in 1963"</p> <p>(I know who shot him, but the important fact is that Kennedy was shot).</p>
It is obvious who or what did something.	<p>"The thief's been arrested"</p> <p>(By the police, of course).</p>

- We can add BY + Person / thing to show who does the action if this information is important:
"The thief's been arrested **BY THE POLICE OFFICER**"

If the verb has 2 objects

"A witness gave **the police** **some information**".
"A witness gave **some information** **to the police**".

Either object can be the subject of a passive sentence:



"**The police** were given some information by a witness"



"**Some information** was given to the police by a witness"

To have something done

Structure we use when we ask someone else to do something for us. It is not usually necessary to say who did the action:

The president **had** the car **taken** to the airport (by his driver).
(= The president's driver **took** the car to the airport.)

I **had** my hair **cut**. (= The hairdresser **cut** my hair.)

I'm **having** my kitchen **painted**. (= The decorator **is painting** my kitchen.)

They want **to have** their car **fixed**. (= They want the garage **to fix** their car.)

In informal speech, we sometimes use *get* instead of *have*:

I **got** my hair **cut**. (= I **had** my hair **cut**.)