

PASSIVE AND CAUSTIVE SENTENCES

PASSIVE SENTENCES

The passive voice is formed by the verb **BE** (in any tense) and the **past participle** of the main verb. Remember that regular past participle are formed by adding –ed to the verb, whereas irregular past participles are those of the 3rd column.

Sujeto + Be + Past Participle + (By-agent)

*The building **was built** in 1997 by Calatrava*

*This film **has been directed** by Tim Burton*

The passive voice is much more common in English than in Spanish, and we frequently translate it as an active form or impersonal form of the verb. We use the passive voice when we want to focus on the action, not the agent, and also when the agent is obvious or unknown. In these cases, it can be omitted.

*The burglar was arrested (**by the police**) as soon as he left the house*

*This car was bought (**by him**) three years ago.*

When we want to change active sentences into passive ones, we follow these steps:

ACTIVE VOICE

Direct object

Active verb

Direct Subject



PASSIVE VOICE

Passive subject

Passive verb

By – agent

Somebody

cleans

this house

everyday

This house

is cleaned

(by somebody)

everyday

EXAMPLES OF VERB CHANGES

| | ACTIVE | PASSIVE |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Present simple | Tom cleans the house everyday | The house is cleaned by Tom everyday |
| Pres continuous | Sarah is writing a letter | A letter is being written by Sarah |
| Past simple | Sam repaired the car | The car was repaired by Sam |
| Past continuous | The man was helping the child | The child was being helped by the man |
| Present perfect | Many tourists have visited the castle | The castle has been visited by many tourists |
| Past perfect | George had brought dinner | Dinner had been brought by George |
| Future will | Carol will finish the project | The project will be finished by Carol |
| Fut. be going to | Sally is going to cook a nice chicken | A nice chicken is going to be cooked by Sally |
| Modals | The police might arrest the murderer | The murderer might be arrested by the police |

Ditransitive verbs

Some verbs can have two objects, such as **ask, give, offer, pay, show, teach, tell**

My mum gave me a book for my birthday

↓ ↓
IO DO

In these cases, it is possible to make two sentences into the passive voice, depending on whether we choose the indirect or the direct object as the Subject for the passive sentence.

I was given a book

A book was given to me

When we use these verbs, it is more frequent to use the indirect object (person) as passive subject.

I was offered the job but I refused

The men will be paid £400 for their work

Have you been shown the new machine?

However, if we use the direct object as subject of the passive voice, we must add **TO** to the indirect object.

*The job was offered **TO** me but I refused*

*£400 will be paid **TO** The men for their work*

*Has the new machine been shown **TO** you?*

Impersonal passive sentences

They frequently go with the verbs **say, think, believe** in the main sentence, while the complete subordinate sentence works as the direct object. In these cases, there are two ways of turning the active sentence into the passive voice.

People say that Javier is a really good actor (active voice)

↓ ↓ ↓
Subject Main verb Subordinate sentence – direct object

The first option implies using **IT** as the subject and making the main verb passive, while the rest of the sentence remains the same.

***It is said** that Javier is a really good actor*

In the second option, we take the subject of the subordinate sentence as subject of the passive sentence, then turn the verb of the main subject into the passive voice and, after that, we add **TO** + base form of the verb of the subordinate clause.

***Javier is said to be** a really good actor*

CAUSATIVE SENTENCES

We use the causative when we refer to an action that is done for us by someone else. It means that we caused the action to happen, but we didn't do it ourselves. This is, we paid, asked or persuaded someone else to do it. It can appear in most verbal tenses. It is formed with the verbs **have / get** and there is no difference between them, although **get** is more informal and, therefore, more used in spoken English.

Subject + have / get + object + past participle

He is having the scene filmed in India

I got my hair cut last week

The structure has a passive sense because the object which appears in the middle receives the action of the verb in past participle, but it is usually translated in the active voice.

You should have your car checked every year

Deberías revisar el coche todos los años

* **Variations**

There are other types of causative sentences formed with **have / let / make** which are followed by a person instead of an object, and a verb in its base form (not past participle)

Subject + have / let / make + person + verb

I had the electrician look at my broken light

John let me drive his new car

The teacher made him apologize for what he said

We can also use **get** in this way but, then, the verb has to be accompanied by **to**. Sometimes, this causative has the feeling that we needed to convince someone to do something, while the other ones are neutral

Subject + get + person + to verb

I got the electrician to look at my broken light

She gets her son to do his homework every afternoon

ADJECTIVES FOLLOWED BY PREPOSITIONS

It is very frequent to find with the verb TO BE adjectives followed by a preposition plus a noun, pronoun or gerund verb. They are adjectives functioning as attributes. Some of them can only be followed by a specific preposition.

The government is responsible for our national parks

We are interested in studying Linguistics

Other adjectives can appear with different prepositions, but the meaning changes depending on the preposition used.

Those lions were tired from their fight

They were tired of calling him

Here you have a list of adjectives commonly used with a preposition:

Angry at: enfadado con

Aware of: consciente de

Bad at: malo en algo

Bad for: malo o perjudicial para

Concerned about: preocupado por

Different to / from: diferente con respecto a

Excited about: entusiasmado por / con

Famous for: famoso / conocido por

Fluent in: fluido en / que tiene fluidez en

Good at: bueno en

Good for: bueno para

Guilty of: culpable de

Hopeful about: esperanzado por / en

Inclined to: dispuesto a

Interested in: interesado en

Involved in: implicado / envuelto en

Keen on: interesado en

Married to: casado con

Nervous about: nervioso por

Optimistic about: optimista con respecto a

Pleased for: contento por

Pleased with: contento / satisfecho por

Proud of: orgulloso de

Reluctant for: reacio a

Responsible for: responsable de

Satisfied with: satisfecho con

Similar to: similar / parecido a

Suitable for: adecuado / apropiado para

Thrilled about/with: emocionado/entusiasmado con

Tired from: cansado por

Tired of: cansado de

Unhappy with: descontento con

Upset about: disgustado / molesto por

Upset with: disgustado / molesto con

Worried about: preocupado por