

PASSIVE AND CAUSATIVE 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

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 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?

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

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

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

She gets her son to do his homework every afternoon