

## UNIT 9

### THE PASSIVE (to be + past participle)

#### Form

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

Active	Passive
He <b>washes</b> the car.	The car <b>is washed</b> .
He <b>washed</b> the car.	The car <b>was washed</b> .
He <b>has washed</b> the car.	The car <b>has been washed</b> .
He <b>will wash</b> the car.	The car <b>will be washed</b> .

#### Use

- We use the passive when we want to show that the action of the verb is more important than the person who carries out the action.

*The bank robber **was caught** yesterday. (The action is more important than the person who caught the bank robber.)*

### CHANGING FROM ACTIVE INTO PASSIVE

active	subject	verb	object
	Kim	baked	a cake.
passive	subject	verb	agent
	A cake	was baked	by Kim.

- The object of the active sentence becomes the subject in the passive sentence.
- The active verb changes into a passive form.
- The subject of the active sentence becomes the agent.

Study the following table:

	active	passive
present simple	She <b>cleans</b> the house.	The house <b>is cleaned</b> .
past simple	She <b>cleaned</b> the house.	The house <b>was cleaned</b> .
present perfect simple	She <b>has cleaned</b> the house.	The house <b>has been cleaned</b> .
future simple	She <b>will clean</b> the house.	The house <b>will be cleaned</b> .
modal	She <b>must</b> clean the house.	The house <b>must be cleaned</b> .

- We form questions by putting the verb **to be** before the subject.  
***Was** the car made in Japan?*
- The **agent** (the person who carries out the action) is introduced with **by** and is mentioned only when the identity of the agent **is important** or **needs to be stated**.  
*The telephone **was invented by Alexander Graham Bell**. (The identity of the agent is important.)*
- The agent is not mentioned when:
  - it is unknown.  
*Don's van was damaged in the car park. (We don't know who damaged Don's van.)*
  - it is unimportant.  
*Spaghetti is eaten in Italy. (The agent is unimportant.)*
  - it is obvious from the context.  
*The mail has been delivered. (It is obvious who did it — the postman.)*