

When to Use the Passive

Use the passive when **the thing or the result matters more than who did it**: when the doer is unknown, obvious or unimportant. *My car was stolen. The results will be published on Monday.* It's common in formal, scientific and news writing, and for describing processes. In everyday conversation, the active usually sounds more natural.

The results **will be published** on Monday.



1. Choose the right answer Circle a or b.

- Our flight _____ because of the storm.
a) was cancelled b) cancelled
- Next, the bottles _____ with water.
a) fill b) are filled
- Look! Somebody _____ my car!
a) has damaged b) has been damaged
- Breakfast _____ from 7 to 10.
a) serves b) is served
- The Eiffel Tower _____ in 1889.
a) was completed b) completed

2. Correct the mistake

Each sentence has one mistake. Write the correct sentence.

1. My car was stolen by someone.

2. The beans roast at 200°C.

3. The window was broken by me.

3. Your turn

Write three sentences of your own that use this rule. You can use these phrases.

it is believed

is not permitted

has been reported

are required to

is located

was founded in

See the rule move

The full lesson, with more pictures, examples and a quiz that checks your answers, is free at clarigram.app/passive-voice/when-to-use

When to Use the Passive

1. Choose the right answer

1. **a) was cancelled** The flight didn't cancel anything: passive.
2. **b) are filled** A step in a process: passive.
3. **a) has damaged** Somebody is the doer and the subject: active.
4. **b) is served** Breakfast doesn't serve anything: passive.
5. **a) was completed** The tower didn't complete anything: passive.

2. Correct the mistake

1. **My car was stolen.** If the doer is unknown, leave out by someone.
2. **The beans are roasted at 200°C.** In a process, the beans don't do it themselves: passive.
3. **I broke the window.** When the doer is you and it matters, use the active.

3. Your turn

Answers will vary. Check that each sentence follows the rule on page 1, or paste them into Clarigram to have them checked.