

63 Events in the past

English uses the past simple passive to talk about events in the past when it is the effect of an action that is important, rather than the cause of the action.

- >New language Past simple passive
- Vocabulary Environmental disasters
- New skill Talking about important events

63.1 KEY LANGUAGE THE PAST SIMPLE PASSIVE

You can use the past simple passive to emphasize the importance of actions and events in the past and to draw attention to the things or people that were affected by the events.

PAST SIMPLE PASSIVE

The buildings **were destroyed in a fire.**

Use the passive to emphasize the effect rather than the cause.



63.2 FURTHER EXAMPLES THE PAST SIMPLE PASSIVE



The trees **were cut down** last year.



The railway line **was damaged** during the storm.



Two people **were injured** in the accident.



63.3 HOW TO FORM THE PAST SIMPLE PASSIVE

SUBJECT

"WAS / WERE"

PAST PARTICIPLE

REST OF SENTENCE

The buildings

were

destroyed

in a fire.

The thing that receives the action.

Use "was" for singular subjects, or "were" for plural subjects.

The main verb is expressed as a past participle.



63.4 FILL IN THE GAPS BY PUTTING THE VERBS IN THE PAST SIMPLE PASSIVE



Many trees were burned (**burn**) in a forest fire last night.

- 1 Several buildings were destroyed (**destroy**) after a powerful earthquake.
- 2 The factory was demolished (**demolish**) because it was unsafe.
- 3 Many homes were flooded (**flood**) after the river burst its banks.
- 4 The explorer was rescued (**rescue**) after she got lost in the mountains.
- 5 The beaches were covered (**cover**) in oil this morning.
- 6 My train was delayed (**delay**) because a tree fell onto the line.



63.5 SAY THE SENTENCES OUT LOUD, CHANGING THEM FROM THE PAST SIMPLE ACTIVE TO THE PAST SIMPLE PASSIVE

Someone burned down the building.

The building was burned down.



3 Something polluted the lake.

The lake was polluted.



1 Something destroyed the factory.

The factory was destroyed.



4 Someone hurt the animals.

The animals were hurt.



2 Someone spilled the oil into the ocean.

The oil was spilled into the ocean.



5 Something damaged many people's homes.

Many people's homes were damaged.



63.6 VOCABULARY DISASTERS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



oil spill



deforestation



air pollution



global warming



smog



flood



shipwreck



overpopulation



63.7 READ THE ARTICLE AND WRITE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS AS FULL SENTENCES

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DAILY NEWS

CHEMICAL SPILL TURNS LAKE RED

Following an explosion at Bander Chemical Factory last night, toxic chemicals were released into the air. Lake Bander, which provides water for the factory, was turned red by the chemicals, which were carried into the lake by last night's rain.

Thousands of fish were killed, local farmers' crops were destroyed, and this morning the entire Bander area was declared a disaster area. The CEO of Bander Chemicals apologized for the leak and said the company was

doing everything possible to clean the lake and surrounding countryside. Local farmer John Hawkins said, "My business was ruined last night. I just hope Bander Chemicals will help us now."



What happened to the chemicals last night?

The chemicals were released into the air.

1 What happened to Lake Bander?

2 How did the chemicals get into the lake?

3 What happened to thousands of fish?

4 What happened to local farmers' crops?

5 What happened to the Bander area?

6 What happened to John Hawkins' business?



63.8 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS



A news reporter interviews Rosie, an eyewitness, and José, a vet, about an oil spill.

The birds were covered in oil.

True False Not given

1 Rosie thought there had been an oil spill.

True False Not given

2 The emergency services were not called.

True False Not given

3 The birds were cleaned on the beach.

True False Not given

4 Many of the birds were killed.

True False Not given

5 The oil spill happened after a shipwreck.

True False Not given

6 The ship ran into some rocks.

True False Not given

7 The public were not allowed on the beach.

True False Not given

63 ✓ CHECKLIST

Past simple passive

Environmental disasters

Talking about important events



REVIEW THE ENGLISH YOU HAVE LEARNED IN UNITS 59–63

NEW LANGUAGE	SAMPLE SENTENCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNIT
PAST CONTINUOUS	I was having lunch with a friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	59.1
COLLOCATIONS WITH "TAKE"	It takes time to build a good team.	<input type="checkbox"/>	59.8
COLLOCATIONS WITH "MAKE"	It's tempting to rush things if you want to make progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	59.8
COLLOCATIONS WITH "HAVE"	It's worth having a discussion with your neighbors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	59.8
PAST CONTINUOUS FOR SCENE-SETTING	The sun was shining and the birds were singing .	<input type="checkbox"/>	61.1
PAST CONTINUOUS AND PAST SIMPLE	I was taking a photo when a monkey grabbed my camera.	<input type="checkbox"/>	62.1
PAST SIMPLE PASSIVE	The buildings were destroyed in a fire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	63.1