



42 Reporting with passives

One way to distance yourself from facts is to use the passive voice and reporting verbs. This device is commonly used in newspaper and television journalism.

-  **New language** Passive voice for reporting
- Aa Vocabulary** Reporting language
-  **New skill** Distancing yourself from facts

42.1 KEY LANGUAGE REPORTING WITH PASSIVES

A number of structures and reporting verbs can be used in the passive voice to distance the writer or speaker from the facts.

"IT" + PASSIVE REPORTING VERB

"THAT" CLAUSE

It has been reported that three sailors have disappeared.

SUBJECT +
PASSIVE REPORTING VERB

INFINITIVE CLAUSE

The race is known to be extremely dangerous.

"THERE" +
PASSIVE REPORTING VERB

"TO BE / TO HAVE BEEN"

There are said to be at least 20 boats in the search party.



42.2 MATCH THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SENTENCES TO THE CORRECT ENDINGS

Unfortunately, it was announced

① There are thought to be more than

② Maria Callas is believed by many

③ The escaped criminal is not thought

④ It is hoped

⑤ The damage is expected

to cost more than \$50,000 to repair.

that many new jobs will be created.

6,000 languages in the world.

that 500 employees would lose their jobs.

to be a dangerous threat to society.

to have been the most talented singer ever.



42.3 KEY LANGUAGE MODALS IN THE PASSIVE VOICE

Modals in the present can be made passive by replacing the base form of the main verb with "be" plus the past participle.



You should tell Barbara the exciting news.

[The important thing is that you tell her the news.]

Barbara should be told the exciting news.

[The important thing is that Barbara is told the news, not who tells her.]

Modals in the past tense can be made passive by replacing "have" with "have been."



The managers should have given Daniel more time.

[The main issue is what the managers failed to do.]

Daniel should have been given more time.

[The main issue is what Daniel did not get, not the people responsible.]



42.4 FURTHER EXAMPLES MODALS IN THE PASSIVE VOICE

Modal expressing prohibition.

Phones **must not be used** in school.

Modal expressing desirability
(the right thing to do).

Homeless youngsters **should be housed** here.

Extra tickets **may be sold** on the day.

Modal expressing possibility.

It **must have been mentioned** on the news.

Modal expressing
strong probability.



42.5 CROSS OUT THE INCORRECT WORDS IN EACH SENTENCE

With no exceptions, seat belts must ~~worn~~ / **be worn** at all times in the vehicle.

- 1 I'm so sorry! You should **have been** / **be** introduced to each other earlier this evening.
- 2 Thirty people are expected to **have been** / **be** awarded top prizes at the ceremony later.
- 3 It would help if the school children could **be given** / **give** different instruments to try.
- 4 It's been a strange tournament, and there **have been** / **are** thought to be more surprises to come.





42.6 REWRITE THE SENTENCES USING THE PASSIVE VOICE

TIP

Remember that you can sometimes omit the agent (the person or thing doing the action) if the meaning remains clear.

Industry experts must have written the report.

The report must have been written by industry experts.

- 1 Somebody should have thanked the hosts of the party before we left.

The hosts _____

- 2 The journalist reported that 20 people were injured in the stampede.

It has _____

- 3 Many people think that Pelé was the best soccer player ever.

Pelé is _____



42.7 DESCRIBE THE NEWS OUT LOUD USING PASSIVE REPORTING LANGUAGE



Since the flood, it has been reported
that five restaurants have closed.



2

Many homes are said _____



1

It has been announced that the Cup _____



3

This celebrity couple are reported _____





42.8 FILL IN THE GAPS USING THE CORRECT FORM OF THE VERBS IN THE PANEL

16

THE DAILY HERALD

CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE

The police in Longerton had a suprisingly easy arrest when a robber was foolish enough to incriminate himself.



Bank robber Mark Thomas is spending the night in jail before going to court to be _____ tomorrow.

Last June, Mr. Thomas, dressed in a mask and hat and armed with a knife, demanded \$10,000 from the cashier of a local bank. He was _____ the money, but at this point

Mr. Thomas' planning skills must be _____. Instead of escaping the area, Mr. Thomas took off his hat and mask and walked into the bank next door. He tried to deposit the money and gave the cashiers his full name, address, and bank details. Fortunately, the police had been _____ by the original bank and Mr. Thomas was quickly _____.

He is understood to have been _____ the robbery for many months. He stated that he had been _____ for a vacation, but it was taking too long to raise enough money.

It is _____ that he will be given a lengthy sentence, so he will have to wait even longer for his trip abroad.

question

sentence

~~spend~~

save

call

predict

arrest

plan

give

42 CHECKLIST



Passive voice for reporting ☐

Aa Reporting language ☐



Distancing yourself from facts ☐