

# Module 3 – Passive and Impersonal Structures

Title: "Let the Action Speak – Mastering the Passive"

Hi again, and welcome to a new lesson!

## [Section 1 –Passive Construction]

Let's see examples in different tenses:

Tense	Active	Passive
Present Simple	People make coffee	Coffee <b>is made</b>
Past Simple	They built the house	The house <b>was built</b>
Present Perfect	She has written the report	The report <b>has been written</b>
Future (will)	They will finish the work	The work <b>will be finished</b>
Modal	We must do it	It <b>must be done</b>

⚠ Note: Only **transitive verbs** (verbs that take a direct object) can be used in the passive.

Example: ☒ Transitive verb: Active: Someone broke the window. → Passive: The window was broken. ☐ Intransitive verb: Active: She sleeps peacefully. → **X** There is no passive form because “sleep” has no object.

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### [Extra Examples – Passive with Different Subjects]

Sometimes the subject of the active sentence becomes unnecessary or unknown in the passive version:

Active: The chef cooked the meal.

Passive: The meal was cooked. (We don't need to say "by the chef" unless it's important.)

Passive structures are useful when we don't want to assign blame or responsibility:

Active: Someone made a mistake.

Passive: A mistake was made.

→ This is more diplomatic — common in business or official communication.

## [Section 2 – Modals in Passive]

### Impersonal Structures

Impersonal passive structures help present facts without personal bias.

Let's look at more verbs commonly used in impersonal structures:

- It is **known** that...
- It is **suggested** that...
- It is **understood** that...
- It is **expected** that...

Examples:

- It is understood that climate change will affect future generations.
- It is suggested that people reduce their meat consumption.

These are especially useful when referring to studies, opinions, or general beliefs.

Alternative structure:

- Climate change is understood to affect future generations.
- People are suggested to reduce their meat consumption. (✗ unnatural — "It is suggested that..." is better.)

So: **not all verbs work equally well** in both impersonal forms. Some (like *suggest*) are best used in the "It is said that..." structure.

## Passive in Instructions and Rules

Passive voice is common in formal instructions or official documents because it sounds more neutral and impersonal.

Examples:

- Candidates **are required** to submit their applications by Monday.
- The form **must be completed** in black ink.
- Phones **should be switched off** during the exam.

In these examples, the passive removes the subject ("You") and creates a more professional tone.

Compare:

- You must switch off your phone. (Direct)
- Phones must be switched off. (Neutral, formal)

## [Mini-section – Practice Phrase]

Should you include the agent (the “doer” of the action)?

Sometimes yes, especially if it adds important information:

- The novel was written **by George Orwell**.
- The bridge was designed **by an award-winning architect**.

But often the agent is left out:

- The documents were delivered this morning. (We don't care who delivered them)
- A new system has been introduced. (Focus on the system, not the people)

🔗 Use “by + agent” only when it's relevant or informative.

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## [Recap & Outro]

Let's recap:

Use the passive to focus on actions or results

Structure: be + past participle, with tense changes

Use modals in passive: must be done, should have been finished

Use impersonal passive for formal, indirect reporting:

→ It is believed that... / He is said to...

Thanks for watching! In the next lesson, we'll tackle conditional sentences and how to express real and unreal situations in English.

See you next time!

Now that you've seen how flexible and useful the passive can be — especially in formal, academic, or professional contexts — you'll notice it everywhere: in news articles, reports, instructions, and scientific texts.

### Reading - Lesson 3: A University Research Project

Let's move on to our reading segment, where you'll see how real researchers communicate their findings using the passive and impersonal structures we've covered.

(Filled with passive voice and impersonal structures typical of academic language)

### Modulo 3: Passive and Impersonal Structures

This story takes place in an academic research environment where Dr. Martinez and her team are presenting groundbreaking research on renewable energy technology. The narrative centers on a significant scientific achievement: the development of revolutionary solar panels that could transform the energy industry. The story illustrates how passive voice and impersonal structures are commonly employed in academic and scientific contexts. Through interactions with journalists, team members, and colleagues, we observe how scientific information is conveyed to various audiences in formal, objective language. The story covers the entire research process, from initial experiments and data collection to publication and future commercial applications.

It also explores the collaborative nature of scientific research, funding challenges, and the impact of academic work on society. The university setting provides an authentic context for understanding how passive voice creates objectivity and professionalism in formal communication. At the same time, impersonal structures help present information in a neutral and authoritative manner, which is essential in academic and scientific writing.

#### "The University Research Project"

Dr. Martinez enters the laboratory, where her research team is preparing for an important presentation. The results of their groundbreaking study on renewable energy **have been published** in the most prestigious scientific journal, and the academic community is buzzing with excitement.

"The experiments **were conducted** over a period of eighteen months," Dr. Martinez explains to the visiting journalists. "All data **was collected** using the most advanced equipment available, and the results **have been verified** by independent laboratories in three different countries."

The lead researcher, James, joins the conversation. "Our solar panel prototypes **are being tested** in various weather conditions right now. The efficiency improvements **were achieved** through a completely new approach to photovoltaic cell design."

One journalist asks about the funding. "**It is widely known** that research projects like this require substantial investment. How **was the project financed?**"

"The funding **was provided** by both government grants and private investors," Dr. Martinez responds. "Additional resources **were donated** by several technology companies who believe in the potential of our research."

**It is believed** that this technology has the potential to revolutionize the renewable energy sector. **It is estimated** that the new solar panels **will be manufactured** commercially within the next five years. **It is reported** that major energy companies **are already being contacted** by investors interested in the technology.

The team's work **has been recognized** internationally. Dr. Martinez **is regarded as one of the leading experts in her field**, and her research **is considered** groundbreaking. **It is expected** that she **will be offered** prestigious positions at universities around the world.

"The most challenging part **was overcoming** the technical limitations of traditional solar cells," James explains. "New materials **had to be developed**, and countless prototypes **were tested** before we achieved the desired results."

The manufacturing process **will be optimized** further before commercial production begins. Environmental impact studies **are being conducted** to ensure the technology is genuinely sustainable. **It is anticipated** that the first commercial installations **will be completed** by the end of next year.

"Safety protocols **must be followed** strictly during production," Dr. Martinez emphasizes. "Workers **will be trained** extensively, and all equipment **will be inspected** regularly to prevent accidents."

The presentation **was attended** by representatives from major universities, government agencies, and private companies. Questions **were asked** about scalability, cost-effectiveness, and environmental impact.

All concerns **were addressed** thoroughly by the research team.

**This technology is likely to make a significant contribution** to reducing global carbon emissions. **It is predicted** that within a decade, these solar panels **could be found** on buildings and in solar farms worldwide, helping to create a more sustainable future for everyone.