

## W 1 - THE PASSIVE VOICE; CAUSATIVE (Have st done)

- **active voice** – we say what people and things do
- **passive voice** – we say what happens to people and things
- the distinction between the **passive and active voice** applies only to **transitive verbs**, but not all, there are some transitive stative verbs which are not used in the passive (e.g. *fit, have, lack, suit, resemble*) and some prepositional verbs (e.g. Everybody *agreed with* me.)

### Change from active to passive:

- a) the active subject, if retained, becomes the passive agent  
e.g. *The butler* murdered the detective. → The detective was murdered *by the butler*.
  - b) The active object becomes the passive subject.  
e.g. My grandfather built *this house*. → *This house* was built by my grandfather.
  - c) the preposition “by” is inserted before the agent (if mentioned), when we talk about instrument, we use “with” – e.g. He was shot by the policeman with a rifle.
- the agent is an optional element and is commonly omitted
  - the agent can be the person or thing that does the action or that causes what happens  
e.g. I was shocked by his attitude.

### Note:

- get (+ past participle) is frequently used with the passive meaning in informal English, it often has a reflexive meaning - get caught, get dressed, get run over, get killed, get invited, get drowned  
e.g. My watch got broken while I was playing with the children.  
He got caught by the police driving at 120 mph.  
I never get invited to parties.  
!! This form is not used about longer, more deliberate or planned actions!
- as mentioned above, some stative transitive verbs occur only in the active  
e.g. They have a nice house. He lacks confidence.



- **passive structure + the infinitive**

e.g. I was asked to send a stamped addressed envelope.

He is believed to be dangerous. (= It is believed that he is dangerous.)

We were told not to come back.

The company is said to be in trouble. (=It is said that the company is in trouble.)

Mary is said to be some kind of secret agent.

He was seen to come. (!careful – in the active - They saw him come.)

He was made to tell them everything. (!careful – in the active – They made him tell them .....)

He is expected to accept the position. (= It is expected that he will accept..)

- like, enjoy, remember + ing

e.g. Most people don't like being criticized.

- some verbs can be used both transitively and intransitively, e.g. *open* – notice the possible difference between the active and passive sentence:

e.g. The door opened.

The door was opened.

- some active verbs have a passive meaning

e.g. The wine is selling quickly.

The book reads well.

These clothes wash well.

**The causative – Have st done**

- we can't (aren't able to) do something ourselves, so we arrange for somebody else to do it for us

e.g. Carol *had her wedding cake made* by her grandmother.

We need to *have the car repaired* as soon as possible.

I'm going to *have my hair cut* next week.

How often do you *have that coat cleaned*?

I must *have the computer serviced*.

Compare: I must cut my hair. v. I must have my hair cut.

We have to repair the roof. V. We have to have the roof repaired.

- the causative may also mean that something happens to us without wanting or arranging it, usually it is something negative or not nice:

e.g. He *had his purse stolen* while he was going to work by bus.