

Before you start

1 Review these intermediate grammar points and check you know them.

Passive forms of tenses

- 1 These are more common in writing than in spoken English.
- 2 We make the passive form of verbs in all tenses by using *be* in the appropriate tense plus the past participle of the main verb:
A password is used to access the site. (The customer **uses** a password to access the site.)
My bag was stolen. (A thief **stole** my bag.)
The murder is being investigated. (The police **are investigating** the murder.)
The show has been cancelled. (The organisers **have cancelled** the show.)
Drinks will be served in the interval. (The waiters **will serve** drinks.)
- 3 It is possible to make passive forms of the perfect continuous tenses, but we prefer to use an active form and an impersonal subject, e.g. *they/one*:
 [By next month the murder **will have been being investigated** for over a year.]
 ✓ By next month they **will have been investigating** the murder for over a year.

Passive modals

FORM	ACTIVE	PASSIVE
modal verbs: verb + <i>be</i> + past participle	<i>Candidates must answer all the questions.</i> <i>They have to take a test.</i>	<i>All the questions must be answered.</i> <i>A test has to be taken.</i>
modal perfects: verb + <i>have been</i> + past participle	<i>Someone might have stolen it.</i> <i>The jury ought to have convicted him.</i>	<i>It might have been stolen.</i> <i>He ought to have been convicted.</i>

Subjects and agents

- 1 In this active sentence *the judge* is the subject of the active verb and *the names of the winners* is the object:

subject active verb object
The judge will read out the names of the winners in alphabetical order.

In the passive equivalent *the names of the winners* becomes the subject of the passive verb and *the judge* becomes the agent (the person or thing that causes the action of the passive verb):

subject passive verb agent
The names of the winners will be read out in alphabetical order (by the judge).

- 2 We often don't mention the agent in the passive, but if we do it is introduced with *by*.