GRAMMARTOP
ENGLISH GRAMMAR IN PLAIN ENGLISH

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Past Simple Passive is normally used to talk about some completed actions in the past. In the passive voice, emphasis is put on the **effect of an action** rather than on the doer.

Compare the sentences with active and passive voice:

via http://englishgu.ru/past-simple/
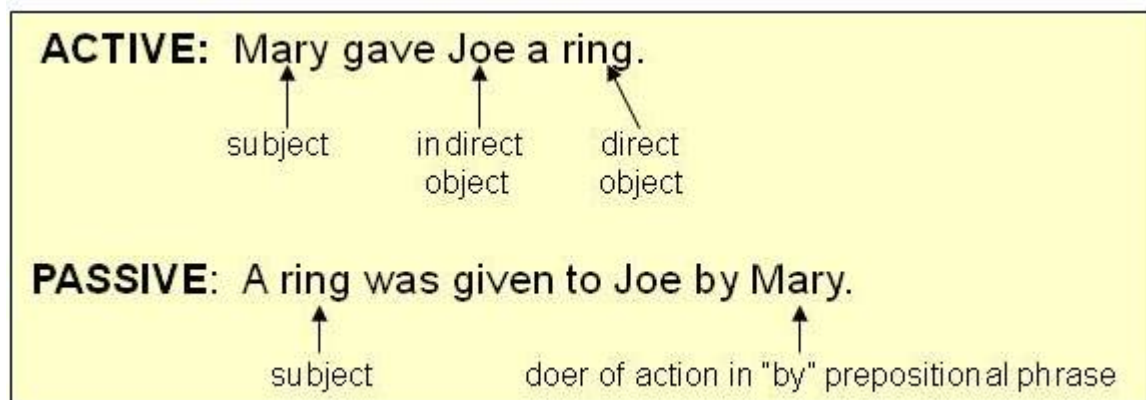
- *This fortress **was built** 120 year ago.*
- *Two people **were taken** to hospital after the accident.*
- *The railroad **was damaged** by the storm.*

Past Simple Passive structure

Let's compare active and passive structures in Past Simple. The Past Simple Active is formed like this:

[subject] + verb with -ed ending (or the Past Simple form for [irregular verbs](#))

To make statements with the Past Simple Passive, use:

was/were + the **[Past Participle](#)** form of the verb

Note: We use '*was*' for singular nouns and pronouns (I, he, she, it) and '*were*' for plural nouns and pronouns (you, we, they).

Singular	Plural
I **was heard**	*We* **were heard**
You **were heard**	*You* **were heard**
He/she/it **was heard**	*They* **were heard**

- *I **was bitten** by a dog a few days ago.*
- *The mistakes **were corrected** by the teacher.*
- *No apples **were eaten** by Lauran.*

When to use Past Simple Passive

We use Past Simple Passive for actions or events that happened in the past (yesterday, last week (month, year), in 2010). Unlike the Past Perfect Passive, there's no specific point in the past. In such statements we focus attention on the person or thing affected by the action, when the subject is unknown, unclear or irrelevant.

Compare:

- *Tom repaired the car. – The car **was repaired** by Tom.*
- *Thomas Edison invented the light bulb. – The light bulb **was invented** by Thomas Edison.*

In these examples, the focus is on the effect of the past action, it's not important who performed the action.

We use Past Simple Passive with the same meaning as Past Simple in the active voice except for the fact that Past Simple Passive makes focus on the effect (or the object) rather than the doer (the subject) of an action. Read more about the uses of Past Simple [here](#).

Negative forms of Past Simple Passive

Making a negative Past Simple Passive form is easy. Just insert '**not**' between 'was' or 'were' and Past Participle (the contracted forms are 'wasn't' and 'weren't').

- *Mary **wasn't invited** to the party.*
- *The match **wasn't won** by our team.*

- *You **weren't invited** to the party.*

Questions in Past Simple Passive

To make a question in Past Simple Passive, swap the subject and 'was' or 'were'. The structure for asking questions in Past Simple Passive is:

was/were + [subject] + Past Participle

- ***Were** the students **taught** at home?*
- ***Was** the article **written** by Nick?*

To make a wh-question, insert a [question word](#) before 'was' or 'were':

- *When **was** the test **passed**?*
- *Where **were** grapes **grown**?*

In this video, you'll learn how to use Past Simple Passive:

Read more about:

[Present Simple Passive](#)

[Future Simple Passive](#)