

The mothers of invention

Grammar – Passive

10A passive: be + past participle

Present: *am / is / are + past participle*

(4, 38))

- Kevlar **is used** to make bullet-proof vests.
- Tippex **isn't used** very much today.
- Are** disposable nappies **used** all over the world?

Past: *was / were + past participle*

- The dishwasher **was invented** by Josephine Cochrane.
- Windscreen wipers **weren't invented** until 1903.
- When **was** the washing machine **invented**?

- You can often say things in two ways, in the active or in the passive.
*Josephine Cochrane **invented** the dishwasher. (active)*
*The dishwasher **was invented** by Josephine Cochrane. (passive)*
- In the **active** sentence, the focus is more on **Josephine Cochrane**.
- In the **passive** sentence the focus is more on **the dishwasher**.
- You can also use the passive when it isn't known or isn't important who does or did the action.
*My car **was stolen** last week.*
*Volvo cars **are made** in Sweden.*
- Use *by* to say who did the action.
*The Lord of the Rings **was written by** Tolkien.*

10A

a Complete with present or past passive.

- The Eiffel Tower *was completed* in 1889. (complete)
- 1 Many of the things we use every day _____ by women. (invent)
 - 2 In the UK most children _____ in state schools. (educate)
 - 3 Australia _____ by Captain Cook in 1770. (discover)
 - 4 This morning I _____ up by the neighbour's dog. (wake)
 - 5 Cricket _____ in the summer in the UK. (play)
 - 6 The songs on this album _____ last year. (record)
 - 7 Nowadays a lot of toys _____ in China. (make)
 - 8 Carols are songs which _____ at Christmas. (sing)
 - 9 These birds _____ in northern Europe. (not usually see)
 - 10 'Rome _____ in a day.' (not build)

b Rewrite the sentences in the passive, beginning with the **highlighted** words.

- Shakespeare wrote **Hamlet** in 1603.
Hamlet was written by Shakespeare in 1603.
- 1 Jonathan Ive designed **the iPod and the iPhone**.
 - 2 Most Mediterranean countries produce **olive oil**.
 - 3 Herschel discovered **Uranus** in 1781.
 - 4 Barry Sonnenfeld directed **the Men in Black films**.
 - 5 David Hockney painted **Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy** in 1970–1971.
 - 6 Elvis Presley didn't write **Blue Suede Shoes**.
 - 7 JK Rowling wrote **the Harry Potter books**.
 - 8 They make **Daihatsu cars** in Japan.

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Answer Key

- a
- 1 were invented
 - 2 are educated
 - 3 was discovered
 - 4 was woken
 - 5 is played
 - 6 were recorded
 - 7 are made
 - 8 are sung
 - 9 aren't usually seen
 - 10 wasn't built
- b
- 1 The iPod and the iPhone were designed by Jonathan Ive.
 - 2 Olive oil is produced by most Mediterranean countries.
 - 3 Uranus was discovered by Herschel in 1781.
 - 4 The *Men in Black* films were directed by Barry Sonnenfeld.
 - 5 *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy* was painted by David Hockney in 1970–1971.
 - 6 *Blue Suede Shoes* wasn't written by Elvis Presley.
 - 7 The Harry Potter books were written by JK Rowling.
 - 8 Daihatsu cars are made in Japan.