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the passive (all forms); *it is said that...*, *he is thought to...*, etc.

the passive (all forms)

present simple	Murderers are usually sentenced to life imprisonment.	(4 36)))
present continuous	The trial is being held at the moment.	
present perfect	My car has been stolen .	
past simple	Jim was arrested last month.	
past continuous	The cinema was being rebuilt when it was set on fire.	
past perfect	We saw that one of the windows had been broken .	
future	The prisoner will be released next month. The verdict is going to be given tomorrow.	
infinitive with <i>to</i>	People used to be imprisoned for stealing bread.	
infinitive without <i>to</i>	You can be fined for parking on a yellow line.	
gerund	He paid a fine to avoid being sent to jail.	

- Use the passive when you want to talk about an action, but you are not so interested in saying who or what does / did the action.
- If you also want to mention the person or thing that did the action (the agent), use *by*. However, in the majority of passive sentences the agent is not mentioned.

it is said that..., *he is thought to...*, etc.

<p>active</p> <p>1 They say that the fire was started deliberately. People think that the mayor will resign.</p> <p>2 People say the man is in his 40s. The police believe he has left the country.</p>	<p>passive</p> <p>It is said that the fire was started deliberately. It is thought that the mayor will resign. The man is said to be in his 40s. He is believed to have left the country.</p>	(4 37)))
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- This formal structure is used especially in news reports and on TV with the verbs *know*, *tell*, *understand*, *report*, *expect*, *say*, and *think*. It makes the information sound more impersonal.
- You can use *It is said, believed, etc. + that + clause*.
- You can use *He, The man, etc. (i.e. the subject of the clause) + is said, believed, etc. + to + infinitive (e.g. to be) or perfect infinitive (e.g. to have been)*.

a Rewrite the sentences in the passive, without the agent.

- The police caught the burglar immediately.
The burglar was caught immediately.
- Police closed the road after the accident.
The road...
 - Somebody has stolen my handbag.
My handbag...
 - They are painting my house.
My house...
 - They'll hold a meeting tomorrow to discuss the problem.
A meeting...
 - If they hadn't found the bomb in time, it would have exploded.
If the bomb...
 - The police can arrest you for driving without a licence.
You...
 - Miranda thinks someone was following her last night.
Miranda thinks she...
 - I hate somebody waking me up when I'm fast asleep.
I hate...
 - They're going to close the local police station.
The local police station...

b Rephrase the sentences in two ways to make them more formal.

- People think the murderer is a woman.
It is thought that the murderer is a woman.
The murderer is thought to be a woman.
- Police believe the burglar is a local man.
It...
The burglar...
 - People say the muggers are very dangerous.
It...
The muggers...
 - Police think the robber entered through an open window.
It...
The robber...
 - Police say the murderer has disappeared.
It...
The murderer...
 - Lawyers expect that the trial will last three weeks.
It...
The trial...

◀ p.76