

Passive with ser

Spanish · British English › Spanish

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The Passive Voice: Ser + Past Participle

Hello! Today we're diving into the passive voice in Spanish. It's super useful when you want to focus on the **action** itself or the **object** that receives the action, rather than who performed it. Think of it like saying "The house was built" instead of "The workers built the house."

Subject + **SER** (conjugated) + **PAST PARTICIPLE** (agreed in gender and number)

The key to forming the passive voice is the verb **ser**, which needs to be conjugated in the correct tense and mood, and the **past participle** of the main verb. Remember, the **past participle always agrees in gender and number with the subject!**

Tense	Ser (Examples)
Present	es / son
Preterite	fue / fueron
Simple Future	será / serán

How do we form the **past participle**? It's quite straightforward! For verbs ending in **-ar**, we add **-ado**. For verbs ending in **-er** or **-ir**, we add **-ido**. Don't forget to make it agree with the subject!

Infinitive	Participle	Agreement Forms
hablar	hablado	hablada, hablados, habladas
comer	comido	comida, comidos, comidas
vivir	vivido	vivida, vividos, vividas

La carta fue escrita por mi amigo.

The letter was written by my friend.

Remember: SER + Past Participle = "it was done" (an action, a process). Think of **SER** as the verb that describes an **action**!

Watch out! Don't confuse the passive voice with constructions using **estar + participio**. The passive voice with **ser** describes an **ACTION** that was performed on the subject. **Estar + participio** describes a **STATE** which is the **RESULT** of an action. For example: *La puerta fue abierta* (The door was opened – an action) vs. *La puerta está abierta* (The door is open – a state).

- We often use the passive voice when we don't know who performed the action, or when the doer is obvious and unimportant.
- The agent (the person or thing performing the action) is introduced using the preposition **por**, e.g., *por el arquitecto* (by the architect).
- The passive voice is frequently found in news reports, formal texts, and historical descriptions.

Los libros son leídos por muchos estudiantes.

The books are read by many students.

El libro fue escrito.

~~El libro está escrito.~~

The first sentence (fue escrito) is the passive voice, describing an action (someone wrote the book). The second (está escrito) describes a state (the book is written, meaning it has content).

Practise regularly, and the passive voice will become second nature to you! Best of luck!

Part 1 – Choose the correct word

Circle the option that correctly fills each gap.

1. El partido _____ por millones de personas.

The match was watched by millions of people.

A) será visto B) es visto C) fue visto D) fue vista

2. La revista _____ cada mes.

The magazine is printed every month.

A) será impresa B) es impresa C) fue impresa D) es impreso

3. La solución _____ pronto.

The solution will be found soon.

A) es encontrada B) será encontrada C) fue encontrada D) será encontrado

4. Las entradas _____ rápidamente.

The tickets were sold quickly.

A) serán vendidas B) fueron vendidas C) son vendidas D) fueron vendidos

5. Las llaves _____ al dueño.

The keys were returned to the owner.

A) son devueltas B) fueron devueltos C) serán devueltas D) fueron devueltas

6. Las puertas _____ por el portero a las nueve.

The doors were opened by the doorman at nine.

A) fueron abiertos B) serán abiertas C) fueron abiertas D) son abiertas

7. El artículo _____ mañana.

The article will be published tomorrow.

A) era publicado B) será publicada C) es publicado D) será publicado

8. El museo _____ por el rey en 1990.

The museum was opened by the king in 1990.

A) fue abierta B) es abierto C) fue abierto D) será abierto

Part 2 – Fill in the gap

Write the missing word or phrase on the line.

1. El informe _____ por el equipo.

The report is made by the team.

2. Esto _____ ayer por el presidente.

This was said by the president yesterday.

3. El correo _____ cada mañana.
The post is delivered every morning.
4. La pared _____ de azul.
The wall was painted blue.
5. La mesa _____ en el centro.
The table was put in the centre.
6. Los goles _____ por millones de personas.
The goals will be seen by millions of people.

Part 3 – Translate

Write each word in Spanish on the line.

1. to be broken (m.) › _____
2. to be said (pl.) › _____
3. to be read (pl.) › _____
4. to be written (pl.) › _____
5. to be read (sg.) › _____
6. to be made (pl.) › _____

Part 4 – Match the pairs

Write the letter of the matching translation next to each term.

Term	Translation
1. ser descubiertos	A to be visited (f. pl.)
2. ser cubiertos	B to be put
3. ser frito	C to be discovered (pl.)
4. ser visitadas	D to be visited (m.)
5. ser construida	E to be built
6. ser vendido	F to be fried (m.)
7. ser puesta	G to be covered (pl.)
8. ser visitado	H to be sold (m.)

Answer Key

Part 1 — Choose the correct word

1. C) fue visto
2. B) es impresa
3. B) será encontrada
4. B) fueron vendidas
5. D) fueron devueltas
6. C) fueron abiertas
7. D) será publicado
8. C) fue abierto

Part 2 — Fill in the gap

1. es hecho
2. fue dicho
3. es entregado
4. fue pintada
5. fue puesta
6. serán vistos

Part 3 — Translate

1. ser roto
2. ser dichas
3. ser leídos
4. ser escritas
5. ser leída
6. ser hechos

Part 4 — Match the pairs

1. C (to be discovered (pl.))
2. G (to be covered (pl.))
3. F (to be fried (m.))
4. A (to be visited (f. pl.))
5. E (to be built)
6. H (to be sold (m.))
7. B (to be put)
8. D (to be visited (m.))