

# Passive Causative

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# Grammar Notes

## THE PASSIVE CAUSATIVE

### A. Use

The passive causative is generally used for services such as repairs, beauty treatments, or job duties. This verb form combines causative verbs (which show that someone is causing someone else to do something) and the passive voice (when the focus is on the thing, not the person).

### B. Form

To understand how the passive causative is formed, review the causative and passive patterns below. Then look at the passive causative pattern and example and notice how both causative and passive elements are used.

CAUSATIVE PATTERN	
<b>Pattern</b>	<b>Subject + Have / Let / Make + Object + Base Verb</b> (person)                      (any tense)                      (person)                      (no endings / no tense)
<b>Example</b>	We <b>had</b> them <b>repair</b> our roof.
PASSIVE PATTERN	
<b>Pattern</b>	<b>Subject + Be / Get + Past Participle (+ by someone)</b> (thing)                      (any tense)                      (person, often dropped)
<b>Example</b>	Our roof <b>was repaired</b> (by them).
PASSIVE CAUSATIVE PATTERN	
<b>Pattern</b>	<b>Subject + Have / Get + Object + Past Participle (+ by someone)</b> (person)                      (any tense)                      (thing)                      (person, often dropped)
<b>Example</b>	<p>We<sup>1</sup> <b>had</b><sup>2</sup> our roof<sup>3</sup> <b>repaired</b><sup>4</sup> (by them).<sup>5</sup></p> <p><sup>1</sup> the subject is a person, not a thing, from the <b>causative</b> pattern</p> <p><sup>2</sup> the main verb is <i>have</i> from the <b>causative</b> pattern (or <i>get</i> from the <b>passive</b> pattern)</p> <p><sup>3</sup> the focus of the past participle is on a thing, not a person, from the <b>passive</b> pattern</p> <p><sup>4</sup> the past participle form is from the <b>passive</b> pattern</p> <p><sup>5</sup> the phrase <i>by someone</i> (can be dropped) is from the <b>passive</b> pattern</p>

## Grammar Notes cont.

### C. Examples

- The manager **had** the report **sent out** early this morning.
- The bride **is having** her wedding cake **delivered**.
- I **got** my hair **cut** last weekend.
- My landlord said he **will get** our furnace **fixed** as soon as possible.

### D. Some Notes on "Get"

It's easy to see why *have* is used in the passive causative pattern—it's also a causative verb (along with *let* and *make*). But why and when do we use *get* in this pattern?

#### Note #1

*Get* is the informal passive form of *be*.

- The food was eaten. → The food **got** eaten.
- His car was fixed. → His car **got** fixed.

#### Note #2

*Get* also has a causative meaning (making someone do something). However, it's not a true causative verb, so it is followed by an infinitive.

- My parents **got** me **to clean** my room.
- The teacher **got** the students **to suggest** presentation ideas.

#### Note #3

While *have* and *get* have the same meaning in a passive causative sentence, *get* is not as formal, so it is best to avoid it in formal writing and speaking.

- I **had** my oil **changed** last month.  
*(formal or informal)*
- I **got** my oil **changed** last month.  
*(informal only)*

# Exercise 1

## COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

Complete the sentences using *get* in the appropriate tense along with the object and verb provided.

Ex. She \_\_\_\_\_ *got her hair done* \_\_\_\_\_ for the wedding.  
(her hair, do)

1. Our friends \_\_\_\_\_ tomorrow evening.  
(the dinner party, cater)

2. We \_\_\_\_\_ last month.  
(our gutters, clean)

3. Whenever we have an office party, we \_\_\_\_\_ by volunteers.  
(the mess, clean up)

4. When did you last \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
(your hair, cut)

5. I \_\_\_\_\_ by someone from the IT department tomorrow.  
(my system, reboot)

6. We \_\_\_\_\_ every week.  
(our garbage, pick up)

7. He \_\_\_\_\_ right after he dropped it.  
(his cracked cell phone screen, replace)

8. The HR manager \_\_\_\_\_ by all the new employers now.  
(forms, fill out)

9. I prefer \_\_\_\_\_ by an accountant.  
(my taxes, prepare)

10. She likes \_\_\_\_\_ at that salon on Smith Street.  
(her nails, do)

## Exercise 2

### REWRITE THE SENTENCES

Change the following causative sentences to the passive causative using *have* and *by*.

Ex. They had the store down the street print the brochures.

*They had the brochures printed by the store down the street.*

---

1. The judge will have the jury deliver the verdict.

---

2. My parents are having the landscapers cut down many trees.

---

3. Once a year, I have a vet examine my dog.

---

4. She had someone at the Apple store fix her computer.

---

5. We will have the photographer put all the shots on a disk.

---

6. You had that cleaning service clean your house, didn't you?

---

7. He had his friends move his furniture.

---

8. You said that you had your coworker complete the project.

---

9. I had the dental hygienist clean my teeth.

---

10. They had their lawyer serve papers to the company they're suing.

---

## Exercise 3

### PAIR WORK

Imagine you and your partner are managers in a company. Write five passive causative questions asking if certain things have been done by someone. Then ask your partner the questions and write down his or her answers. Practice with both positive and negative answers.

### A. Questions

Ex. *Did you have this document formatted by your assistant?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Answers

Ex. *She didn't have this document formatted by her assistant. She got it formatted by her intern instead.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



## Exercise 5

### PASSIVE CAUSATIVE VS. CAUSATIVE

This quiz contains a mix of causative and passive causative sentences. Find one error in each sentence below. Rewrite the sentence correctly.

Ex. My doctor had me scheduled a follow-up appointment.

*My doctor had me schedule a follow-up appointment.*

---

1. The charity has the money collect by volunteers.

---

2. I get my hair dyed pink last month.

---

3. They have had their employees worked late many times this year.

---

4. Our teacher is having us writing an essay for homework.

---

5. We had the parcel send by courier last week, so you should have received it by now.

---

6. My neighbors have their groceries delivery once a week.

---

7. I got the hotel staff send up a bathrobe and slippers.

---

8. You should have that rash look at by a doctor.

---

9. After our sink overflowed, we have our drain unclogged.

---

10. Do you need get those documents edited?

---



## Exercise 6

### QUIZ

Circle the correct answer.

- I had my house \_\_\_\_\_ before the party.
  - clean
  - cleaned
  - cleaning
- I got my nails \_\_\_\_\_ before the wedding.
  - were done
  - do
  - done
- The boy's mother had him \_\_\_\_\_ an apology letter to the neighbor whose window he broke.
  - written
  - write
  - to write
- I fell and hurt my ankle. I'm going to the hospital to have it \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - X-rayed
  - X-ray
  - to X-ray
- If your new refrigerator breaks and you still have the warranty, you should \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - get replaced
  - have get it replaced
  - have it replaced
- Last week, Ushi had a toothache, so she \_\_\_\_\_ by a dentist.
  - should have checked it
  - had checked
  - had it checked
- I \_\_\_\_\_ after my purse was stolen.
  - had a new key made
  - got made a new key
  - got the locksmith made a new key
- Our house \_\_\_\_\_ while we were on vacation.
  - had robbed
  - was robbed
  - robbed
- I got my roommates \_\_\_\_\_ down so I could sleep.
  - to turn the TV
  - turn the TV
  - turned the TV
- You look terrific! \_\_\_\_\_
  - Had your hair cut?
  - Do you have your hair cut?
  - Did you get your hair cut?

## Answer Key

### LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students learn how the passive causative is formed and when it is used. They practice both the formal and informal forms of the passive causative through a variety of writing and speaking activities.

**LEVEL:** High Int – Adv

**TIME:** 2 hours

**TAGS:** passive causative, passive, causative, have, get, verbs, tenses, formal, informal, grammar

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### Exercise 1

Answers may vary slightly.

1. are getting / will get / the dinner party catered
2. got our gutters cleaned
3. get the mess cleaned up
4. get your hair cut
5. am getting / will get my system rebooted
6. get our garbage picked up
7. got his cracked cell phone screen replaced
8. is getting the forms filled out
9. to get / getting my taxes prepared
10. to get / getting her nails done

### Exercise 2

1. The judge will have the verdict delivered by the jury.
2. My parents are having many trees cut down by the landscapers.
3. Once a year, I have my dog examined by a vet.
4. She had her computer fixed by someone at the Apple store.
5. We will have all the shots put on a disk by the photographer.
6. You had your house cleaned by that cleaning service, didn't you?
7. He had his furniture moved by his friends.
8. You said that you had the project completed by your coworker.
9. I had my teeth cleaned by the dental hygienist.
10. They had papers served by their lawyer to the company they're suing. / They had papers served to the company they're suing by their lawyer.

### Exercise 3

Answers will vary.

Monitor your students for correct passive causative usage.

### Exercise 4

Answers will vary.

Monitor your students for correct passive causative usage.

*(continued on the next page...)*

# Answer Key cont.

## Exercise 5

Answers may vary.

1. The charity has the money **collected** by volunteers.
2. I **got** my hair dyed pink last month.
3. They have had their employees **work** late many times this year.
4. Our teacher is having us **write** an essay for homework.
5. We had the parcel **sent** by courier last week, so you should have received it by now.
6. My neighbors have their groceries **delivered** once a week.
7. I got the hotel staff **to send up** a bathrobe and slippers.
8. You should have that rash **looked** at by a doctor.
9. After our sink overflowed, we **had** our drain unclogged.
10. Do you need **to get** those documents edited?

## Exercise 6

- |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. b | 3. b | 5. c | 7. a | 9. a  |
| 2. c | 4. a | 6. c | 8. b | 10. c |

### SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Neighbors* and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Neighbours* and *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

If your students can handle it, you may want to point out the causative verb "make" can take a passive form in formal writing/speaking (i.e., when someone was made to do something). This is not the same as the passive causative. The main difference is that the passive focuses on the former object (person), while the passive causative focuses on the former subject and former object (thing). For example:

- Causative:  
The CEO **made** her assistant **type up** the report.
- Passive form of the causative verb "make":  
Her assistant **was made to type up** the report (by the CEO).
- Passive Causative:  
The CEO **had/got** the report **typed up** (by her assistant).