

In the first example, the passive is formed incorrectly because the past participle *painted* should be used rather than the present participle *painting*. In the second example, the verb *be* has not been included, and some form of *be* is necessary for a passive verb. The verb in the second sentence should be *will be finished*.

The following chart outlines the way to form the passive correctly:

THE FORM OF THE PASSIVE		
BE	+	past participle (BY + object)

**EXERCISE 37:** Each of the following sentences has a passive meaning. Underline twice the verbs that should be passive. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- I 1. The boy had never be stung by a bee.
- C 2. The suits were hung in the closet when they were returned from the cleaners.
- \_\_\_ 3. Money is lending by the credit union to those who want to buy homes.
- \_\_\_ 4. The record had been chose by dancers near the jukebox.
- \_\_\_ 5. The topic for your research paper should have been approved by your advisor.
- \_\_\_ 6. That song has been playing over and over again by Steve.
- \_\_\_ 7. Their utility bills have been increased again and again.
- \_\_\_ 8. The patients who are too sick to sit up are being assisted by the orderlies.
- \_\_\_ 9. The offices were thoroughly clean last evening by the night crew.
- \_\_\_ 10. The car that was struck in the intersection yesterday is being repaired today.

### SKILL 38: RECOGNIZE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE MEANINGS

When there is no object (with or without *by*) after a verb, you must look at the meaning of the sentence to determine if the verb should be active or passive. Sentences with an incorrect passive verb and no *by + object* to tell you that the verb should be passive are the most difficult passive errors to recognize on the TOEFL test. Study the examples:

- We mailed *the package* at the post office.  
 The letter was mailed *by us* today before noon.  
 The letter was mailed today before noon.  
 The letter mailed\* today before noon.

The first three examples above are correct. The first example has the active verb *mailed* used with the object *package*; the second example has the passive verb *was mailed* used with *by us*; the third sentence has the passive verb *was mailed* used without an object.

The fourth example is the type of passive error that appears most often on the TOEFL test. This type of sentence has the following characteristics: (1) an incorrect passive verb that looks like a correct active verb, and (2) no *by + object* to tell you that a passive is needed. To correct the fourth example, the active verb needs to be changed to the passive *was mailed*.

To determine that such a sentence is incorrect, you must study the meaning of the subject and the verb. You must ask yourself if the subject *does* the action of the verb (so an active verb is needed) or if the subject *receives* the action of the verb (so a passive verb is needed). In the incorrect example, you should study the meaning of the subject and verb, *the letter mailed*. You should ask yourself if *a letter mails itself* (the letter *does* the action) or if someone *mails a letter* (the letter *receives* the action of being mailed). Since a letter does not mail itself, the passive is required in this sentence.

The following chart outlines the difference in meaning between active and passive verbs:

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE MEANINGS	
ACTIVE	The subject <i>does</i> the action of the verb.
PASSIVE	The subject <i>receives</i> the action of the verb.

**EXERCISE 38:** Each of the following sentences contains at least one active verb; however, some of the verbs should be passive. Underline the verbs twice. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- I 1. The car parked in a no-parking zone.
- C 2. The physics exam began just a few minutes ago.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Everything to organize the picnic has already done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The police investigated him because of his unusual actions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The package containing the necessary samples has just sent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The vacation to Europe will plan carefully before the scheduled departure date.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The coffee turned bitter when it left on the stove for so long.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The soccer game won in the closing minutes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The clothes made to rival the latest fashions of the season.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. When the roads are icy, the buses do not drive.

**EXERCISE (Skills 37–38):** Underline the verbs twice in the following sentences. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. After the old radiator had be replaced, the travelers continued their cross-country trip.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. During the lightning storm, he struck in the head by a falling tree.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. While I am on vacation, the pets should be feeds every morning and evening.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A book being written now by a team of writers will be published in the fall.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I found out that the real estate agent had already been leased the condominium.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The house that Mrs. Martin has always wanted to buy has just placed on the market.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The foundation should have been finishing by the construction workers before they left the construction site.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. We must leave that money in the checking account because the bills pay on the first of the month.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The horses can't be taken out now because they have been rode for the past few hours.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. It is being announced by a presidential aide that a lawyer from Virginia has been named attorney general.

**TOEFL EXERCISE (Skills 37–38):** Choose the letter of the word or group of words that best completes the sentence.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. _____ discussed by the board of directors when it was proposed again by the supervisors.</p> <p>(A) The problem had already<br/>(B) The problem is already<br/>(C) The problem had already been<br/>(D) The problem has already</p> | <p>3. The x-ray treatments _____ up to the time that he was dismissed from the hospital.</p> <p>(A) gave daily<br/>(B) were given daily<br/>(C) basically have given<br/>(D) daily had been given</p> |
| <p>2. Much of the carnage of elephants, giraffes, and big cats _____ uncaring hunters.</p> <p>(A) must commit by<br/>(B) must be committed<br/>(C) must have committed<br/>(D) must have been committed by</p>                            |   |



Choose the letter of the underlined word or group of words that is not correct.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The first fish have appeared on the earth approximately 500 million years ago.  
 A B C D
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Only rarely sound waves are of a single frequency encountered in practice.  
 A B C D
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Cameos can be carved not only from onyx and sardonyx or from agate.  
 A B C D
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Although most of the wild horses on the western range have already been rounded up, the most remote the area, the greater the possibility that wild horses can still be found.  
 A B C D
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. During this period, \$206 was spend annually on food by families in the lower third income bracket.  
 A B C D
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The dangers of noise are, unfortunately, not as clear-cut than are those from most other health hazards.  
 A B C D
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. In a recent survey of Americans, more than 75 percent expressed the view that the government it should take a more active role in health care.  
 A B C D

## PROBLEMS WITH NOUNS

The same types of problems with nouns appear often in written expression questions on the TOEFL test. You should be familiar with these problems so that you will recognize them easily. You should be able to do the following: (1) use the correct singular or plural noun, (2) distinguish countable and uncountable nouns, (3) recognize irregular singular and plural nouns, and (4) distinguish the person from the thing.

### SKILL 39: USE THE CORRECT SINGULAR OR PLURAL NOUN

A problem that is common in written expression questions on the TOEFL test is a singular noun used where a plural noun is needed, or a plural noun used where a singular noun is needed.

On the table there were many *dish*\*.

The lab assistant finished every *tests*\*.

In the first example, *many* indicates that the plural *dishes* is needed. In the second example, *every* indicates that the singular *test* is needed.