

## Episode 088 – Grammar

### The passive voice in the present tense to describe a condition

The passive voice is a verb form that is used to describe actions or states of being. It changes the perspective of an action or event. While an active sentence emphasizes the subject carrying out an action, a passive construction places emphasis on the action carried out. The subject of a passive sentence is usually the person or thing to which the process is done or happens.

In contrast to the passive voice to describe an action, which you learned about previously, passive constructions that describe a condition place more emphasis on the result of an action. So this type of formulation describes the state of being of the person(s) or thing(s) after the action has taken place.

Example:

*Die Gläser sind gespült.*

(= In this sentence, the condition of the glasses is important. They are clean. It's not important how they got that way.)

### How to form it

To form the passive voice to describe a state of being, German uses the helping verb "sein" and a past participle. The helping verb is conjugated in the present tense. The past participle remains unchanged. In a declarative sentence, the helping verb is in the second position and the past participle goes to the end of the sentence.

Examples:

*Die Gläser **sind** fertig **gespült**.*

*Der Boden **ist** auch **gewischt**.*

*Wieso **ist** die Bar nicht **aufgeräumt**?*

# Harry – gefangen in der Zeit

Begleitmaterialien

To form a passive sentence, the object of the action moves to the beginning of the sentence or follows the finite verb.

Active:

*Jakob spült die Gläser.*

*Wieso spülst du die Gläser nicht?*

Passive voice to describe an action:

*Die Gläser werden gespült.*

*Wieso werden die Gläser nicht gespült?*

Passive voice to describe a condition:

*Die Gläser **sind** gespült.*

*Wieso **sind** die Gläser nicht gespült?*

Usually there is no indication of the person carrying out the action in passive sentences that describe a condition.

## Present perfect or passive?

The passive voice to describe a condition has the same form as the present perfect tense when formed with the helping verb "sein".

conjugated helping verb + past participle

Present perfect with the helping verb "sein":

*Harry **ist** in die Disko **gegangen**.*

Passive voice in the present tense to describe a condition:

*Die Disko **ist** **aufgeräumt**.*

Here's how to tell the difference:

The present perfect conveys an action that happened in the past.

The passive voice to describe a condition expresses the result of an action.

The passive voice can be turned into an active sentence. To do that, you simply add information about who carried out the action:

*Jakob hat die Disko aufgeräumt.*