



Passive Voice Basics: Past Simple Passive

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

1. The Eiffel Tower ____ in 1889.
a) was built
b) built
c) were built
d) is built
2. These photos ____ during our holiday in Spain.
a) took
b) was taken
c) were taken
d) are taken
3. The window ____ by a football yesterday.
a) broke
b) is broken
c) were broken
d) was broken
4. All the cookies ____ before I got home.
a) are eaten
b) was eaten
c) ate
d) were eaten
5. The letter ____ last Monday.
a) was sent
b) is sent
c) sent
d) were sent
6. The children ____ not ____ to the party.
a) were ... invited
b) did ... invite
c) was ... invited
d) were ... inviting
7. America ____ by Christopher Columbus in 1492.
a) discovered
b) were discovered
c) was discovered
d) is discovered
8. ____ the homework ____ on time?
a) Were ... submitted
b) Did ... submit
c) Was ... submitted
d) Was ... submitting
9. The two men ____ by the police last night.
a) were arrested
b) was arrested
c) are arrested
d) arrested
10. The film ____ in New Zealand in 2003.
a) made
b) were made
c) was made
d) is made
11. Several trees ____ during the storm.
a) were damaged
b) was damaged
c) damaged
d) are damaged

12. ___ the car ___ before you bought it?
a) Did ... check
b) Was ... checked
c) Were ... checked
d) Was ... checking
13. The match ___ because of the rain.
a) cancelled
b) was cancelled
c) were cancelled
d) is cancelled
14. These paintings ___ over 200 years ago.
a) painted
b) were painted
c) was painted
d) are painted
15. The money ___ not ___ in the drawer.
a) did ... find
b) were ... found
c) was ... found
d) was ... finding
16. The school ___ in 1965.
a) founded
b) was founded
c) were founded
d) is founded
17. ___ all the guests ___ to the wedding?
a) Did ... invite
b) Was ... invited
c) Were ... invited
d) Were ... inviting
18. My bag ___ from the car while I was shopping.
a) stole
b) was stolen
c) were stolen
d) is stolen
19. The roads ___ not ___ properly last winter.
a) did ... repair
b) was ... repaired
c) were ... repaired
d) were ... repairing
20. The telephone ___ by Alexander Graham Bell.
a) invented
b) was invented
c) were invented
d) is invented



Answers

1. a) was built
2. c) were taken
3. d) was broken
4. d) were eaten
5. a) was sent
6. a) were ... invited
7. c) was discovered
8. c) Was ... submitted
9. a) were arrested
10. c) was made
11. a) were damaged
12. b) Was ... checked
13. b) was cancelled
14. b) were painted
15. c) was ... found
16. b) was founded
17. c) Were ... invited
18. b) was stolen
19. c) were ... repaired
20. b) was invented



Explanations

1. “was built” (a)

Use 'was + past participle' for singular subjects in the past. 'The Eiffel Tower' is singular, so we use 'was built'.

2. “were taken” (c)

'These photos' is plural, so we use 'were + past participle'. Take-took-taken is an irregular verb.

3. “was broken” (d)

'The window' is singular. Use 'was broken' for past passive. Break-broke-broken is irregular.

4. “were eaten” (d)

'All the cookies' is plural. Use 'were eaten'. Eat-ate-eaten is an irregular verb.

5. “was sent” (a)

'The letter' is singular + past time ('last Monday'). Use 'was sent'. Send-sent-sent.

6. “were ... invited” (a)

'The children' is plural. Negative past passive: 'were not invited'. Someone didn't invite them.

7. “was discovered” (c)

'America' is singular. Use 'was discovered' for a historical fact in the past passive.

8. “Was ... submitted” (c)

Past passive question with singular 'homework': 'Was + subject + past participle?'

9. “were arrested” (a)

'The two men' is plural + past time ('last night'). Use 'were arrested'.

10. “was made” (c)

'The film' is singular + past time ('in 2003'). Use 'was made' to describe where and when the film was produced.

11. “were damaged” (a)

'Several trees' is plural. Use 'were damaged'. The storm caused the damage to the trees.

12. “Was ... checked” (b)

Past passive question: 'Was + subject + past participle?' 'The car' is singular, so use 'Was ... checked?'

13. “was cancelled” (b)

'The match' is singular. Use 'was cancelled'. The rain caused the cancellation.

14. “were painted” (b)

'These paintings' is plural + past time ('200 years ago'). Use 'were painted'.

15. “was ... found” (c)

'The money' is singular/uncountable. Negative past passive: 'was not found'.

16. “was founded” (b)

'The school' is singular + past time. Use 'was founded' to describe when it was established.

17. “Were ... invited” (c)

'All the guests' is plural. Past passive question: 'Were + subject + past participle?'

18. “was stolen” (b)

'My bag' is singular. Use 'was stolen'. Steal-stole-stolen is irregular. The bag received the action.

19. “were ... repaired” (c)

'The roads' is plural. Negative past passive: 'were not repaired'.

20. “was invented” (b)

'The telephone' is singular. Use 'was invented' to describe a historical invention. The agent is mentioned with 'by'.