

PASSIVE WITH NO DOER - THE PASSIVE WITH "SE"

If the agent (doer) is not mentioned or implied and the subject is a thing, the reflexive construction is preferred in Spanish. In such constructions, the subject usually follows the verb:

Aquí **se habla** español.
Aquí **se hablan** español y francés.
¿A qué hora **se cierran** las tiendas?
Se publicó el libro.
Se perdieron los documentos.
Desde aquí **se pueden ver** los monumentos.

Spanish is spoken here.
Spanish and French are spoken here.
At what time are the stores closed?
The book was published.
The documents were lost.
From here the monuments can be seen.

- When the agent of the action is unknown or unimportant to the message, the idea should be expressed by using a passive **se** construction. In a passive **se** sentence, the speaker simply wants to communicate that an action is or was being done to someone or something. This construction is used regularly in both written and spoken Spanish.

ENGLISH PASSIVE

Money was sent to the exiles.
(Who sent the money is not known or is unimportant.)
Many machines were bought.
(Who bought them is not known or is unimportant.)

SPANISH ALTERNATIVE

passive **se**
Se mandó dinero a los exiliados.
passive **se**
Se compraron muchas máquinas.

Se necesitan personas bilingües.
Bilingual people are needed.
Se busca una profesora de matemáticas.
A math teacher is sought.

Se venden coches de segunda mano.
Secondhand cars are sold.

"SE" AS AN INDEFINITE SUBJECT

In addition to being the reflexive pronoun for the third person singular and plural, *se* has other important uses:

1. It is used with the third person singular of the verb in order to express an indefinite subject (*one, people, we, they, you, etc.*).

Se come bien en este restaurante.

One eats (You eat) well in this restaurant.

The third person plural of the verb may also be used, as in English, to make this kind of impersonal statement.

Dicen que la Universidad de Valencia es una de las mejores universidades.

or

Se dice que la Universidad de Valencia es una de las mejores universidades.

They say that the University of Valencia is one of the best universities.

The pronoun **se** may also be used as an indefinite subject. In such constructions, **se** is not reflexive and is used only with the third person singular of the verb:

se dice:	it is said, one says, people say, they say, you say
se cree:	it is believed, one believes, people believe, they believe, you believe
se sabe:	it is known, one knows, people know, they know, you know

The forms **dicen** (they say), **creen** (they believe), and **saben** (they know) are used without **se**:

Se dice }	que es muy rico.	It is said }	that he is very rich.
Dicen }		They say }	