

## Be careful of Past Participle (Skill 5)

*Previous skill: Be careful with present participle (skill 4)*

**Past Participle** is **verb III** of a verb, such and was)as **studied, taught, cooked** and many others. Past participles can cause confusion in structure questions on the TOEFL test because a past participle can be either **an adjective** or **a part of a verb**.

### 1. As a part of a verb.

Past participle functions as a part of a verb if it is accompanied by have, has, had and to be (am, is, are, were and was). *Example:*

The family has **purchased** a television.

VERB

The poem was **written** by Paul.

VERB

1. In the first sentence the past participle **purchased** is **part of the verb** because it is accompanied by has.
2. In the second sentence the past participle **written** is **part of the verb** because it is accompanied by was.

### 2. As an adjective

Past participle functions as an adjective if it is not accompanied by have, has, had and to be. Example:

The television **purchased** yesterday was expensive.

ADJECTIVE

The poem **written** by Paul appeared in the magazine.

ADJECTIVE

- In the first sentence **purchased** is an **adjective** rather than a verb because it is not accompanied by a form of be or have (and there is a verb, was, later in the sentence).
- In the second sentence **written** is an **adjective** rather than a verb because it is not accompanied by a form of be or have (and there is a verb, appeared, later in the sentence).

The following example shows how a past participle can be confused with the verb in structure questions on the TOEFL test.

*Example:*

The packages..... **mailed** at post office will arrive Monday.

(A) have

(B) were

(C) them

(D) just

- In this example, if you look only at the first few words of the sentence, it appears that packages is the subject and mailed is either a complete verb or a past participle that needs a helping verb. But if you look further in the sentence, you will see that the verb is will arrive. You will then recognize that mailed is a participial adjective and is therefore not part of the verb. Answers (A) and (B) are incorrect because mailed is an adjective and does not need a helping verb such as have or were. Answer (C) is incorrect because there is no need for the object them. **Answer (D) is the best answer** to this question.

The following chart outlines what you should remember about past participles:

### PAST PARTICIPLES

A past participle often ends in -ed, but there are also many irregular past participles. For many verbs, including -ed verbs, the simple past and the past participle are the same and can be easily confused. The -ed form of the verb can be (1) the simple past (2) the past participle of a verb, or (3) an adjective.

1. She **Painted** this picture.

2. She **has painted** this picture.

3. The picture **painted** by Karen is now in a museum.

**EXERCISE 5:** Each of the following sentences contains one or more past participles. Circle the past participles and label them as adjectives or verbs. Then indicate if the sentences are correct (C) or incorrect (I).

1. The money was offered by the client was not accepted. (I)

Analysis:

- **was offered** should be **offered** only and function as as adjective.
- Correct sentence should be *The money offered by the client was not accepted.*

2. The car **listed** in the advertisement had already **stalled**. (C)

Analysis:

- **listed** function as an adjective.
- The Subject is car and verb is had already stalled.

3. The chapters were **taught** by the professor this morning **will be** on next week's exam. (I)

Analysis:

- **were taught** should be **taught** only and functions as an adjective, not part of a verb.
- Correct sentence should be *The chapters taught by professors this morning will be on next week's exam.*

4. The loaves of bread were **baked** in a brick oven at a low temperature for many hours. (C)

Analysis:

- **baked** is part of a verb. **Subject** is **loaves of bread** and **Verb** is **were baked**.

5. The ports were **reached** by the sailors were under the control of a foreign nation. (I)

Analysis:

- **were reached** should be **reached** only and functions as **adjective**.
- Subject is ports and verb is were.
- Correct sentence is *the ports reached by the sailors were under the control of a foreign nation*.

6. Those suspected in the string of robberies were **arrested** by the police.(C)

Analysis:

- **arrested** is **part of a verb**. **Subject** is **robberies** and verb is **were arrested**.

7. The pizza **is served** in this restaurant **is** the tastiest in the county. (I)

Analysis:

- is served should be served only and functions as adjective.
- Subject is pizza and verb is is correct sentence should be The pizza served in this restaurant is the tastiest in the country.

8. The courses **are listed** on the second page of the brochure have several prerequisites. (I)

Analysis:

- **are listed** should be **listed** and functions as adjective, not part of a verb.
- Subject is courses and verb is have.
- Correct answer should be *The course listed on the second page of the brochure have several prerequisites*.

9. All the tenants were **invited** to the Independence Day barbeque at the apartment complex. (C)

Analysis:

- **invited** is part of a verb.
- Subject is tenants and verb is were.

10. Any bills **paid** by the first of the month will be credited to your account by the next day. (C)

Analysis:

- **paid** is adjective.
- Subject is bills and verb is will be.

Source: <http://preparationtoefl.blogspot.com/2011/08/be-careful-of-past-participle-skill-5.html>