

it is said that ... he is said to ... he is supposed to ...

A Study this example situation:



George is very old. Nobody knows exactly how old he is, but:

It is said that he is 108 years old.

or **He is said to be** 108 years old.

Both these sentences mean: 'People say that he is 108 years old.'

You can use these structures with a number of other verbs, especially:

alleged believed considered expected known reported thought understood

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Cathy loves running.
It is said that she runs 10 miles a day. | or | She is said to run 10 miles a day. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The police are looking for a missing boy.
It is believed that the boy is wearing a white sweater and blue jeans. | or | The boy is believed to be wearing a white sweater and blue jeans. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The strike started three weeks ago.
It is expected that it will end soon. | or | The strike is expected to end soon. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A friend of mine has been arrested.
It is alleged that he stole a car. | or | He is alleged to have stolen a car. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The two houses belong to the same family.
It is said that there is a secret tunnel between them. | or | There is said to be a secret tunnel between them. |

These structures are often used in news reports. For example, in a report about an accident:

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|---|----|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> It is reported that two people were injured in the explosion. | or | Two people are reported to have been injured in the explosion. |
|---|----|---|

B **supposed to ...**

You can use **supposed to ...** in the same way as **said to ...**:

- ☐ I want to see that film. **It's supposed to be** good. (= people say it's good)
- ☐ There are many stories about Joe. **He's supposed to have robbed** a bank many years ago.
- ☐ Fireworks **are supposed to have been invented** in China. Is it true?

Sometimes **supposed to ...** has a different meaning. We use **supposed to** to say what is intended, arranged or expected. Often this is different from the real situation:

- ☐ The plan **is supposed to be** a secret, but everybody seems to know about it.
(= the plan is intended to be a secret)
- ☐ What are you doing at work? You **'re supposed to be** on holiday.
(= you arranged to be on holiday)
- ☐ Our guests **were supposed to come** at 7.30, but they were late.
- ☐ Jane **was supposed to phone** me last night, but she didn't.
- ☐ I'd better hurry. I **'m supposed to be meeting** Chris in ten minutes.

You're not supposed to do something = it is not allowed or advised:

- ☐ **You're not supposed to park** your car here. It's private parking only.
- ☐ Joe is much better after his illness, but **he's not supposed to exercise** too hard.

Exercises

45.1 Write these sentences in another way, beginning as shown. Use the underlined word each time.

- 1 It is expected that the strike will end soon.
The strike is expected to end soon.
- 2 It is reported that many people are homeless after the floods.
Many people
- 3 It is thought that the thieves got in through a window in the roof.
The thieves
- 4 It is alleged that the driver of the car was driving at 110 miles an hour.
The driver
- 5 It is reported that the building has been badly damaged by the fire.
The building
- 6 It is said that the company is losing a lot of money.
The company
- 7 It is believed that the company lost a lot of money last year.
The company
- 8 It is expected that the company will make a loss this year.
The company

45.2 Complete the sentences. Use the words in brackets and any other necessary words.

- 1 A: What's the City Hotel like? Can you recommend it?
B: I've never stayed there, but it's supposed to be (it / supposed) very good.
- 2 A: How much are these paintings worth?
B: I'm not sure, but (they / supposed) very valuable.
- 3 A: This looks an interesting building.
B: Yes, (it / supposed) a prison a long time ago.
- 4 A: Is it true that your neighbours were lucky in the lottery?
B: Yes, (they / supposed / win) a lot of money.
- 5 A: Is it possible to climb to the top of the tower?
B: Yes, (the view / supposed) very nice.
- 6 A: I heard that Laura has gone away.
B: Yes, (she / supposed / living) in London now.

45.3 Write sentences using **supposed to be** + the following:

on a diet a flower my friend a joke open every day a secret working

- 1 How is it that everybody knows about the plan? It's supposed to be a secret.
- 2 You shouldn't criticise me all the time. You
- 3 I shouldn't be eating this cake really. I
- 4 I'm sorry for what I said. I was trying to be funny. It
- 5 What's this drawing? Is it a tree? Or maybe it
- 6 You shouldn't be playing a game now.
- 7 That's strange. The museum seems to be closed.

45.4 Write sentences with **supposed to ...** or **not supposed to ...**. Choose from the following verbs:

depart lift ~~park~~ phone put start

- 1 You 're not supposed to park your car here. It's private parking only.
- 2 We work at 8.15, but we rarely do anything before 8.30.
- 3 I Helen last night, but I completely forgot.
- 4 This door is a fire exit. We anything in front of it.
- 5 My flight at 10.15, but it didn't leave until 11.30.
- 6 Jonathan has a problem with his back. He anything heavy.