

# It is said that ... He is said to ... He is supposed to ...

A Study this example situation:



Henry 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

Compare the two structures:

- Cathy works very hard.   
 It is said that she works 16 hours a day. or She is said to work 16 hours a day.
- The police are looking for a missing boy.   
 It is believed that the boy is wearing a white pullover and blue jeans. or The boy is believed to be wearing a white pullover and blue jeans.
- The strike started three weeks ago.   
 It is expected that it will end soon. or The strike is expected to end soon.
- A friend of mine has been arrested.   
 It is alleged that he hit a policeman. or He is alleged to have hit a policeman.
- 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:

- It is reported that two people were injured in the explosion. or Two people are reported to have been injured in the explosion.

## B (Be) supposed to

Sometimes (it is) supposed to ... = (it is) said to ... :  
 I want to see that film. It's supposed to be good. (= it is said to be good)

- Mark is supposed to have hit a policeman, but I don't believe it.

But 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 advisable:

- You're not supposed to park your car here. It's private parking only.
- Jeff is much better after his illness, but he's still not supposed to do any heavy work.

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 expected that the weather will be good tomorrow.  
The weather is .....
- 3 It is believed that the thieves got in through a window in the roof.  
The thieves .....
- 4 It is reported that many people are homeless after the floods.  
Many people .....
- 5 It is thought that the prisoner escaped by climbing over a wall.  
The prisoner .....
- 6 It is alleged that the man was driving at 110 miles an hour.  
The man .....
- 7 It is reported that the building has been badly damaged by the fire.  
The building .....
- 8 a It is said that the company is losing a lot of money.  
The company .....
- b It is believed that the company lost a lot of money last year.  
The company .....
- c It is expected that the company will make a loss this year.  
The company .....

45.2 There are a lot of rumours about Alan. Here are some of the things people say about him:

- 1 Alan speaks ten languages.
- 2 He knows a lot of famous people.
- 3 He is very rich.
- 4 He has twelve children.
- 5 He was an actor when he was younger.



Nobody is sure whether these things are true. Write sentences about Alan using supposed to.

- 1 Alan is supposed to speak ten languages.
- 2 He .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....
- 5 .....

45.3 Complete the sentences using supposed to be + the following:

on a diet a flower my friend a joke ~~a secret~~ working

- 1 Everybody seems to know about the plan, but it is 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 reading the paper now. You .....

45.4 Write sentences with supposed to + the following verbs:

arrive block ~~park~~ phone start

Use the negative (not supposed to) where necessary.

- 1 You 're not supposed to park here. It's private parking only.
- 2 We ..... work at 8.15, but we rarely do anything before 8.30.
- 3 Oh, I ..... Helen, but I completely forgot.
- 4 This door is a fire exit. You ..... it.
- 5 My train ..... at 11.30, but it was an hour late.