

Section – V

Active and Passive Voice

Voice

- Voice is the form of the verb which indicates whether a person or a **thing does something or something has been done to a person or a thing.**
- **Kinds of voice:** There are two kinds of voice, namely:
 1. Active Voice
 2. Passive Voice
- In grammar, **voice** is a feature of a **verb**. It tells whether the **subject of a verb** acts or is acted upon. English has two voice: **active** and **passive**.
- A verb is in the **active voice** when its **subject is the doer**, of the action. For example, the verb is in active voice in the sentence. ***Hari reads a book*** because the subject; ***Hari*** performs the action; ***'reads'***.
- A verb is in **passive** voice when its subject receives the action. For example, in the sentence ***The book was read by Hari***. The subject, ***book***, receives the action, ***'was read'***.



The book was read

Hari read the book.



- **We can begin a sentence either with the subject or object.** This fact decides whether a sentence is **active** or **passive**.
- If a sentence has one of the **helping verbs** such as **am, is, are, was, were, been, being, be** and **past participles of the verb** like **eaten, broken, spent, learnt, incented, discovered**, it is in the **passive voice**.

Active and Passive Voice



The cat drank the milk.



The milk was drunk by the cat.



subject

verb

ACTIVE VOICE	PASSIVE VOICE
	
Wild penguins acted my sister.	subject action My sister was attacked by wild penguins.

Active voice

- A verb is in the Active Voice when its form shows that the person or thing denoted by the subject does something; or in other words, is the doer of the action.
- The Active Voice is so called because the person denoted by the subject acts (is active)

E.g.- Rama **helps**Hari.

In this sentence, the form of the verb shows that the person denoted i.e. 'Rama' does something.

The verb '**helps**' is said to be in the **Active Voice**.

Active Form

- In this case the **thing doing action is the subject of the sentence and the thing receiving the action is the object** & so most sentences are active. (Thing doing action) + (verb) + (thing receiving action).

E.g. Teacher teaches the students. i.e. Teacher (**subject doing action**) + teaches (**verb**) + the students (**object receiving the action**).

- **Construction of the Active Voice**

The normal pattern is of a sentence in active voice is:

(S+V) or (S+V+O)

where **S** = Subject, **V** = Verb and **O** = Object

Let us study this pattern in the following examples:

○ **Examples**

1. The dog bit the boy
Subject Verb Object

2. Pooja will present the research
at the conference
Subject Verb Object

3. Scientists have conducted experiments to
test the
hypothesis.
Subject Verb Object

Passive voice

- A verb is said to be in the Passive Voice when its form shows that something is done to the person or thing denoted by the subject.
- The Passive Voice is so called because the person or thing denoted by the subject is not active but is passive, that is, suffers or receives some action.

E.g.-Hari is **helped** by Ram.

In this sentence the form of the verb shows that something is done to the person denoted by the subject, that is, something is done to Hari.

The verb '**helped**' is said to be in the Passive Voice.

In this case, thing **that receives action is subject of the sentence** and the thing that does the action is **optionally included near the end of the sentence**.

1. Passive form is used if the thing receiving the action, is more important or should be emphasized.
2. It can also be used if who is doing the action is not known or does want to be mentioned. **(Thing that receive action) + (be) + (past participle of verb) + (by) + (thing that does action).**

E.g., The students are taught by the teacher. In this case, the students (**subjects receiving action**) + are taught (**passive verb**) + by the teacher (**doing action**).

- The passive is generally found in more **formal kinds of texts, such as reports, forms, evaluations, etc.**

E.g. A small amount of water was added to the beaker, while the mixture was heated using a Bunsen-burner.

- Only transitive verbs or verbs **that take a direct object** can be changed into passive voice.
- When the **result or the recipient in a sentence is the focus of the sentence, passive voice should be used.**

E.g.

- The **boy** was bitten by the dog.
- Research** will be presented by Pooja at the conference.
- Experiments** have been conducted to test the hypothesis.

Note: agent performing action has been omitted.

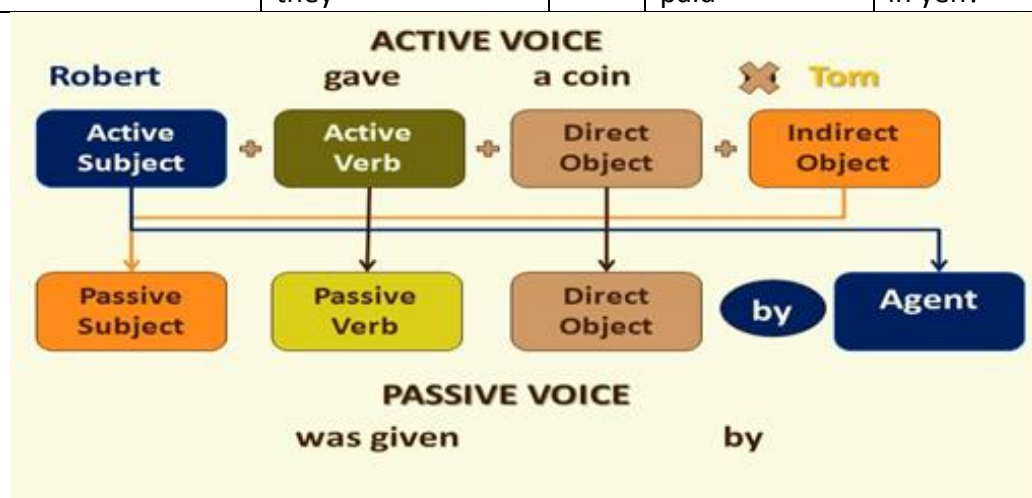
Active voice: Subject + Active verb + object

Passive voice: Subject + Passive Verb + 'by' + agent

Construction of the Passive Voice

The structure of the Passive Voice is as follows:

Subject	Auxiliary Verb (to be)		Main Verb (past participle)	Agent
Water	is		drunk	by everyone.
Hundred people	are		employed	by this company.
I	am		paid	in euros
We	are	not	paid	in dollars
Are	they		paid	in yen?



Tense with Active and passive voice

	Simple	Continuous	Perfect	Perfect
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					Continuous
Present	Active	I Love	I am Loving	I have Loved	I have been loving
	Passive	I am Loved	I am being loved	I have loved	
Past	Active	I loved	I was loving	I had loved	I had been loving
	Passive	I was loved	I was being loved	I had been loved	
Future	Active	I shall love	I shall be loving	I shall have loved	I shall have been loving
	Passive	I shall be loved		I shall have been loved	

Comparison of Active and Passive Voices

1. Passive sentence with one object.

Tense	Voice	Subject	Verb	Object
Simple Present	Active	Sita	writes	a letter
	Passive	A letter	is written	by Sita
Simple Past	Active	Sita	wrote	a letter
	Passive	A letter	was written	by Sita
Present Perfect	Active	Sita	has written	a letter
	Passive	A letter	has been written	by Sita
Future I	Active	Sita	will write	a letter
	Passive	A letter	will be written	by Sita
Present Progressive	Active	Sita	is writing	a letter
	Passive	A letter	is being written	by Sita
Past Progressive	Active	Sita	was writing	a letter
	Passive	A letter	was being written	by Sita
Past Perfect	Active	Sita	had written	a letter
	Passive	A letter	had been written	by Sita
Future II	Active	Sita	will have written	a letter
	Passive	A letter	will have been written	by Sita
Conditional I	Active	Sita	would written	a letter
	Passive	A letter	would be written	by Sita
Conditional II	Active	Sita	would have written	a letter
	Passive	A letter	would have been written	by Sita

Passive Sentences with Two objects

Rewriting an active sentence with two objects in passive voice means that one of the two objects becomes the subjects, the other one remains an object. Which object to transform into a subject depends on what you want to focus upon in the sentence.

Voice	Subject	Verb	Object 1	Object 2
Active	Rita	wrote	a letter	to me
Passive	A letter	was written	to me	by Rita
Passive	I	was written	a letter	by Rita

PASSIVE VOICE: IMPERATIVE SENTENCES

- Various ideas like **commands/orders/requests** may be expressed in Passive Voice.
- **Formula:**

You are **asked/requested/begged/implored/ordered/commanded/ told/ advised + to + verb**

- The Passive structure is rarely used in spoken English to express command/requests and orders. But **the passive structure may be used in making indirect orders/requests and advice.**
- ‘You are requested to appear for an interview on Sunday at 8 o’ clock.’ **These types of instructions are often found in the interview call letters**

Syntactical changes in the active-passive conversion process:

○ Present Indefinite Tense

Active Voice

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Object</i>
I	love	my children
Subject	Verb	Object

Passive Voice

Subject + helping verb (is/am/are) + past participle + by + object
 My children are loved by me
 Subject Helping Verb + Past Participle by + Object

○ Present Continuous Tense

Active Voice

Subject + helping verb (is/am/are) + verb + ing + object
 Children are helping the poor
 Subject Helping Verb + Verb + ing Object

Passive Voice

Subject + helping verb (is/am/are) + being + third form of verb + by + object
 The poor are being helped by children

Subject Helping Verb + Past Participle by + Object

E.g.

Active Voice

They are not holding a meeting
Subject Verb Present Object
Progressive

Passive Voice

A meeting is not being held by them
Subject Helping Verb + Present by + Object
Progressive

Active Voice

Chikky is writing a letter
Subject Helping Verb + Verb + ing Object

Passive Voice

A letter is being written by Chikky.
Subject Helping Verb Present Progressive

○ Present Perfect Tense

Active Voice or Progressive Tense

Subject + helping verb (has/have) + Past Participle + object

Monu has invited all his friends
Subject Present Perfect Object

Passive Voice

Subject + helping verb (has/have + been) + Past Participle + by + object

All his friends have been invited by Monu
Subject Present Perfect Progressive by + Object

E.g.

Active Voice

You have borrowed my book.

Passive Voice

My book has been borrowed by you

Active Voice

I have lost my watch

Passive Voice

My watch has been lost by me.

○ Past Indefinite Tense

Active Voice

Subject + Past tense + object

E.g.

They elected him president

Subject Past tense Object

Passive Voice

Subject + helping verb (was/were) + Past Participle + by + object

He was elected president by them.

Subject Helping Verb Past Participle by + Object

E.g.

Active Voice

They kept us waiting.

Subject Simple Past Object

Passive Voice

we were kept waiting by them.

Subject Helping Verb Past Progressive by + Object

Active Voice

He bought a watch yesterday.

Subject Simple Past Object

Passive Voice

A watch was bought by him yesterday.

Subject Helping Verb Past Participle by + Object

○ Past Continuous Tense

Active Voice

Subject + helping verb (was/were)+ verb + ing + object

E.g.

The horses were drawing a cart.
Subject Helping Verb + Verb + ing Object

Passive Voice

Subject + helping verb (was/were + being) + Past Participle + by + object

A cart was being drawn by the horses.
Subject Helping Verb + Past Progressive by + Object

E.g.

Active Voice

The players were making a noise.

Passive Voice

A noise was being made by the player.

○ Past Perfect Tense

Active Voice

Subject + helping verb (had) + Past Perfect

Rani had never seen it before.
Subject Helping Verb + Past Participle Object

Passive Voice

Subject + helping verb (had been) + Past Perfect

E.g.

It had never been seen by Rani before.
Subject Helping Verb Past Perfect Object

E.g.

Active Voice

By eighteen years of age, Dilip had taken the degree.

Passive Voice

By eighteen years of age, the degree had been taken by Dilip.

○ Future Indefinite Tense

Active Voice

Subject + helping verb (shall/will) + verb + object

E.g.

- i. He will write a letter
Subject Helping Verb Verb Object
- ii. We shall teach him
Subject Helping Verb Verb Object

Passive Voice

Subject + helping verb (shall/will + be) + by + object

- i. A letter will be written by him
Subject Helping Verb Past Participle by Object
- ii. He will be taught by us
Subject Helping Verb Past Participle by Object

○ Future Perfect Tense

E.g.

Active Voice

Subject + helping verb (will have/shall have) + Past Participle + object

- i. They will have planted trees.
Subject Helping Verb Past Participle Object
- ii. The teacher will have called the roll.
Subject Helping Verb Past Participle Object

• Used to

Active Voice

- i. ABC used to pay the taxes.

Passive Voice

- i. The taxes used to be paid by ABC.

• Would Always

Active Voice

- i. My mother would always make the cookies.

Passive Voice

- i. The cookies would always be made by my mother.

- **Future in the Past-‘Would’**

Active Voice

- i. I knew ABC would finish the work by 7 PM.

Passive Voice

- i. I knew the work would be finished by 7 PM.

Future in the Past- ‘Was Going to’

Active Voice

- i. I thought ABC was going to make a beautiful dinner tonight.

Passive Voice

- i. I thought a beautiful dinner was going to be made by ABC tonight.