

6th - Active & Passive Voice



Read these sentences.

- He **Painted** a picture.
- A picture was **Painted** by him.

Both the sentences have the same meaning but have been constructed differently. In the first sentence, the highlighted verb indicates that the subject (**he**) did the action. In the second sentence, the function of the verb is to show that the subject (a **picture**) was acted on.

The verb that expresses that the action is carried out by the subject is said to be in the active voice. The active voice is used when the agent or the doer is to be made prominent.

The verb that expresses what is done to the subject is said to be in the passive voice.

Let us revise the rules of conversion from active to passive voice.

1. The positions of the subject and the object of the active verb are interchanged. The subject of the verb in the active voice is made the object of the verb in the passive voice.
2. In the passive voice, the preposition by is added before the object.
3. The number of the verb is changed according to the number and person of the subject.

- He loves me.

I am loved by him.

Active verbs followed by a preposition retain the preposition. For example

1. The students laughed at the clown
2. The clown was laughed at by the students.

Not all tenses take the passive form. Study the table to understand how the verb is changed into the passive voice form in different tenses.

Tense	Active voice	Passive voice
Simple present	He reads a book	A book is read by him
Present Continuous	He is reading a book	A book is being read by him
Present Perfect	He has read a book	He has been read by him
Present Perfect continuous	He has been reading a book	-
Simple Past	He read a book	A book was read by him
Past continuous	He was reading a book	A book was being read by him
Past Perfect	He had read a book	A book had been read by him
Past Perfect continuous	He had been reading a book	-----
Simple future	He will read a book	A book will be read by him
Future continuous	He will be reading a book	-----
Future Perfect	He will have read a book	A book will have been read by him
Future perfect continuous	He will have been reading a book	-----

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Study this table to understand how imperative sentences are changed into ad by him, the passive voice.

Active voice

- Take it away.
- Do it tomorrow.
- Open the window.
- Do not leave the food uncovered

Passive voice

- Let it be taken away.
- Let it be done tomorrow.
- Let the window be opened.
- Let not the food be kept uncovered.

- The imperative sentence in the passive voice takes the form—

Let + object + be + past participle

- If the sentence is in the negative, the form is—

Let not + object + be + past participle

A. Put the verb in the brackets in a suitable passive form.

1. The car (park) in the drive.
2. The illegal immigrants (take) to the police station.
3. We (teach) ballet by Mr Harry.

Underline the verbs in these sentences and state whether they are in the active or the passive voice

1. I shall write a note.
2. It was known to them.
3. Do not heat the food.
4. Do the work right now.
5. The jar contains milk.

Study this table to understand how interrogative sentences are changed into the passive voice.

Active voice	Passive voice
Did Ravi invite you?	Were you invited by Ravi?
Do the children like sweets?	Are sweets liked by the children?
Have you finished the project?	Has the project been finished by you?
Who did this?	By whom was this done?

The passive voice is used when the person or thing acted is to be made prominent. The passive voice is thus preferred when the active form would involve the use of a vague pronoun or noun (somebody, they, people, anybody) as subject. For example,

My purse has been stolen. (Someone has stolen my, purse)

I was asked my name. (They asked me my name)

I have been invited to the party. (Someone has invited me to the party)

Change the' sentences from the active to the passive voice

1. Help the poor
2. Why did he call you?
3. I have selected a coat.
4. I expect you to help her.

