

Active and Passive Voice Rules

In English, the verb form which indicates whether the subject (person or object) of a sentence do something or something has been done on the subject called the voice. A sentence that begin with the subject or the object to determine whether the sentence was categorized as active or passive voice sentences.

For example, when a sentence has one auxiliary verb, such as am, are, is, been, being, be, and past participle of verbs like written, driven, drawn, known, learnt, broken, discovered; the sentence is a passive voice.

Uses of Passive Voice

1. “By” is used in the passive voice when the actor needs to know the job.

Example: “Love addicted” was sung by Vamps.

2. Passive voice is used if it doesn't need to know the perpetrator work.

Example: the streets are cleaned everyday

3. Passive voice is used if we don't know or forget who the perpetrator work.

Example: The police was murdered.

4. Passive voice is used if we are more interested in the job than the actors who work.

Example: A new departmental store is being built.

5. Passive voice is used to avoid an awkward sentence or inappropriate with grammar.

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Example: When she arrived home a police arrested her — it's better: when she arrived home she was arrested (by a police).

The Rules to Change the Sentences from Active to Passive Form

1. The sentence must have objects (transitive verb). If there is no object then there must be question word who asks the object.
2. Object active sentence became the subject of passive sentences.
3. Subject or active sentences into passive sentences that preceded the object word "by".
4. The verb used is verb III (past participle) which preceded by to be.
5. The adjusted sentence structure by tenses.

Fundamental Rules

1. The places of subject and object are interchanged i.e. the object shifts to the place of subject and subject shifts to the place of object in passive voice.

Example:

- **Active voice:** I write a letter.
- **Passive voice:** I letter is written by me.

Subject (I) of sentence shifted to the place of object (letter) and object (letter) shifted to the place of subject (I) in passive voice.

2. Sometimes subject of sentence is not used in passive voice. Subject of sentence can be omitted in passive voice, if without subject it can give enough meaning in passive voice.

Example:

- **Passive voice:** cloth is sold in yards

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3. 3rd form of verb (past participle) is always used as main verb in sentences of passive voice for all tenses. Base form of verb or present participle will be never used in passive voice.

The word “by” is used before subject in sentences in passive voice.

Example:

- **Active voice:** He sings a song.
- **Passive voice:** A song is sung by him.

4. The word “by” is not always used before subject in passive voice. Sometimes words “with, to, etc” may also be used before subject in passive voice.

Examples:

- **Active voice:** The water fills the tub.
- **Passive voice:** The tub is filled with water.
- **Active voice:** He knows me.
- **Passive voice:** I am known to him.

5. Auxiliary verbs are used passive voice according to the tense of sentence.

Changes of Pronouns

Active Voice	Passive Voice
I	me
We	us
You	you

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He	him
She	her
It	it
They	them

The Form of Active Voice and Passive Voice in Tenses

Passive voice in Simple Present Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: Subject + infinitive + object	Formula: S + to be + past participle + by object

Examples:

Simson cares the lion	The lion is cared by Simson
Ana does the homework	The homework is done by Ana
They sell that house	That house is sell by them
Jessica always plays the piano	The piano is always played by Jessica
She buys a book	A book is bought by her

Passive voice in Present Continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: Subject + to be (is, am, are) + present participle + object	Formula: S + to be (is, am, are) + being + past participle + by object

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Examples:

She is doing her homework	The homework is being done by her
He is waiting for Dewi	Dewi is being waited by him
They are giving the present	The present is being given by them
Bobby is drawing a nice scenery	A nice scenery is being drawn by Bobby
Ratna is writing the letter	The letter is being written by Ratna

Passive voice in Simple Past Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: Subject + past participle + object	Formula: S + was/were + past participle + by object

Examples:

She cleaned the house	The house was cleaned by her
Jeffri bought a new car	A new car was bought by Jeffri
The teacher called the students	The students were called by the teacher
She saved her money	Her money was saved by her
Rina paid all her purchase	Her purchase were paid by Rina

Passive voice in Past Continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: S + was/were + being + past participle + by object	Formula: S + was/were + being + past participle + by object

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Examples:

I was waiting for Dina	Dina was being waited by me
She was reading a novel	A novel was being read by her
Andi was learning an English	An English was being learnt by Andi
They are building the house	The house being built by them
He was playing a kite	A kite was being played by him

Passive voice in Past Perfect Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: Subject + had + past participle + object	Formula: S + had been + past participle + by object

Examples:

He had left that place	That place had been left by him
I had finished my work	My work had been finished by me
She had missed the last bus	The last bus had been missed by her
He had posted the letter	The letter had been posted by him
Rudi had completed his speech	His speech had been completed by Rudi

Passive voice in Simple Future Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: Subject + will + infinitive + object	Formula: S + will + be + past participle + by object

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Examples:

I shall read a newspaper	A newspaper will be read by me
She will sing a beautiful song	A beautiful song will be sung by her
Budi will repair his bicycle	His bicycle will be repaired by Budi
They will pay the tax	The tax will be paid by them
We shall start this meeting	This meeting will be started by us

Passive voice in Future Continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: Subject + will be + present participle + object	Formula: S + will + be + ing + past participle + by object

Examples:

He will be doing a test tomorrow	A test will be being done by him tomorrow
They will be watching movie on next Saturday	The movie will be being watched by them on next Saturday
Mita will be increasing her value next time	Her value will be being increased by Mita next time
She will be applying a job tomorrow	A job will be being applied by her tomorrow
Sinta will be learning her lesson next week	Her lesson will be being learnt by Sinta

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Passive voice in Past Future Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Formula: Subject + would + infinitive + object	Formula: S + would + be +past pasrticiple + by object

Examples:

I would buy a book tomorrow	A book would be bought by me
They would play football next time	Football would be played by them next time
Mita would wash her shoes tomorrow	Her shoes would be washed by Nita tomorrow
My father would use Blackberry tomorrow	Blackberry would be used by my father tomorrow
I would sell my laptop next week	My laptop would be sold next week

The following tenses cannot be changed into passive voice.

1. Present perfect continuous tense
2. Past perfect continuous tense
3. Future perfect continuous tense

Active and Passive voice using Modals

Active and Passive voice using *Can*

This modal applies to all subjects. The sentence patterns are:

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Active Voice	Passive Voice
S + can + infinitive + object	S + can be + past participle + by object

Examples:

She can sell the car every time.	The car can be sold by her every time.
Can she play a violin?	Can a violin be played by her?

To change the above sentence into a **negative sentence**, then place the word not after *can*. The sentence patterns are:

S + can not + infinitive + object	S + can not be + past participle + object
Risky can not buy this car every time.	This car can not be bought by Risky every time.

Active and Passive voice using *May*

This modal applies to all subjects. The sentence patterns are:

Active Voice	Passive Voice
S + may + infinitive + object	S + may be + past participle + by object

Examples:

He may sell the house.	The house may be sold by him.
May I buy the computer?	May the computer be bought by me?

To change the above sentence into a **negative sentence**, then place the word not after *may*.

I may not buy the computer.	The computer may not be bought by me.
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Active and Passive voice using *Must*

This modal applies to all subjects. The sentence patterns are:

Active Voice	Passive Voice
S + must + infinitive + object	S + must be + past participle + by object

Examples:

He must finish his duty in a week.	His duty must be finished by him in a week.
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To change the above sentence into a **negative sentence**, then place the word not after *must*.

Dewi must not open the gate every morning.	The gate must not be opened by Dewi every morning.
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Active and Passive voice using *Might*

This modal applies to all subjects. The sentence patterns are:

Active Voice	Passive Voice
S + might + infinitive + object	S + might be + past participle + by object

Examples:

He might meet Dewi.	Dewi might be met by him.
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To change the above sentence into a **negative sentence**, then place the word not after *might*.

Guests might not play chess.	Chess might not be played guests.
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Passive voice for “May Have, Might Have, Should Have, Must Have, Ought To Have”

Active voice: MAY HAVE	Active voice: MAY HAVE BEEN
You may have availed the opportunity.	The opportunity may have been availed by you.
You may not have availed the opportunity.	The opportunity may not have been availed by you.
Active voice: MIGHT HAVE	Active voice: MIGHT HAVE BEEN
He might have eaten meal.	Meal might have been eaten by him.
He might not have eaten meal.	Meal might not have been eaten by him.
Active voice: SHOULD HAVE	Active voice: SHOULD HAVE BEEN
You should have studied the book.	The book should have been studied by you.
You should not have studied the book.	The book should have not been studied by you.
Active voice: MUST HAVE	Active voice: MUST HAVE BEEN
He must have started job.	Job must have been started by you.
He must not have started job.	Job must not have been started by you.
Active voice: OUGHT TO HAVE	Active voice: OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN

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You ought to have helped him.

He ought to have been helped by you

Verbs Followed by Modals (Can, could, may, might, would, should, ought)

The form of the verb is the same as that of a verb in the Simple Future Tense, i.e., modal auxiliary + be + III form.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
You <i>can do</i> this work.	This work <i>can be done</i> by you.
Police <i>could not catch</i> the thief.	The thief <i>could not be caught</i> by police.
You <i>may read</i> this book.	This book <i>may be read</i> by you.
He <i>might suffer</i> a great loss.	A great loss <i>might be suffered</i> by him.
You <i>should respect</i> your parents.	Your parents <i>should be respected</i> by you.
She <i>would teach</i> us today.	We <i>would be taught</i> by her today.
We <i>must help</i> the poor.	The poor <i>must be helped</i> by us.
We <i>ought to respect</i> our elders.	Our elders <i>ought to be respected</i> by us.
Passive Voice	Active Voice
A scholarship <i>may be won</i> by her.	She <i>may win</i> a scholarship.
<i>Could</i> this sum be <i>solved</i> by you?	<i>Could</i> you <i>solve</i> this sum?
<i>Should</i> cards be <i>played at</i> by us?	<i>Should</i> we <i>play at</i> cards.
By <i>whom</i> could he be helped?	<i>Who</i> could help him?

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Imperative Sentences

A sentence that expresses a command, or a request or an advice, or an entreaty is called an Imperative Sentence or Desire.

Characteristics of Imperative Sentences

1. The object you is generally missing in Imperative Sentences. The structure of such sentences in Passive Voice is: Let + object + be/not be + V3
2. In sentences which express request, advice and order, such phrases as, You are requested to/advised to /ordered to are used.
3. Word kindly/please are dropped.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Do it.	<i>Let it be done.</i>
Call in the doctor.	<i>Let the doctor be called in.</i>
Never <i>tell</i> a lie.	<i>Let a lie be never told</i>
Shut the door.	<i>Let the door be shut.</i>
Do not starve the cow.	<i>Let the cow not be starved</i>
Stand up.	<i>You are ordered to stand up.</i>
<i>Kindly</i> lend me some money.	<i>You are requested to lend me some money.</i>
Work hard.	<i>You are advised to work hard</i>
Don not do it.	<i>You are forbidden to do it. or Let it be not done</i>

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Passive Voice	Active Voice
<i>You are ordered to open the door.</i>	Open the door.
<i>You are requested to come here.</i>	Come here please.
<i>Let the light be witched on.</i>	Switch on the light.
<i>Let your parents be obeyed.</i>	Obey your parents.

Change of Voice in the Infinitive Verbs

Active Voice	Passive Voice
to + V¹	to + be + V³
I have to do this work.	This work has to be done.
I want to buy this book.	I want this book to be bought.
Women like men to flatter them.	Women like to be flattered by men.
There is no shop to let.	There is no shop to be let. infinitive 'to'

Verbs/phrases

I made him stand up.	He was made to stand up by me.
I saw him cross the road.	He was seen to cross the road (by me).

It is time to

It is time to do this work.	It is time for this work to be done.
It is time to call the roll.	It is time for the roll to be called.

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Passive Voice	Active Voice
I expect her to be brought round.	I expect to bring her round.
A pen is to be written with.	A pen is to write with.
It is time for the race to be run.	It is time to run the race.
They should be invited by us.	We should invite them.

Sentences which cannot be changed into passive voice

Transitive and intransitive verb

A verb can be either transitive or intransitive. A transitive verb needs an object (in sentence) to give complete meaning while intransitive verb does not need an object (in sentence) to give complete meaning.

For example:

Transitive verb: He sent a letter. (Send is a transitive verb and it needs an object i.e. letter to express full meaning.)

Intransitive Verb: He laughs. (Laugh is an intransitive verb and it does not need object for expressing full meaning.)

e.g. Sleep, go, reach, sit, die, are examples of intransitive verbs.

Intransitive verb cannot be changed into passive voice

The sentences having intransitive verbs (belonging to any tense) cannot be changed into passive voice. The reason is that there is not any object in such sentences and without object of sentence passive voice is not possible.

A sentence can be changed into passive voice if it has subject and object. Sometimes subject may not be written in passive voice but it does not mean that it has no subject. Such sentences have subject but the

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subject is so common or familiar or known that if even it is not written in passive voice, it gives full meaning.

For example: Cloth is sold in yards.

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