

Active Voice vs. Passive Voice



PASSIVE

ACTIVE

VOICE

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Active Voice

- Is the **normal** voice.
- This is the voice that we use **most of the time**.
- The active voice is **shorter** and more direct:

Active: The waiter dropped the tray of food.

Passive: The tray of food was dropped by the waiter.

Active Voice

The active voice is **less awkward** and clearly states relationship between subject and action:

Passive: Your request for funding has been denied by the review committee.

Active: The review committee denied your request for funding.



Passive Voice

- The passive voice is **less usual**.
- Passive voice is the voice used when the subject is **the recipient** of the action.
- Passive voice is usually **wordier**.



Passive Voice

- The **agent** (doer) of the action is **unimportant**:

The pyramids were built thousands of years ago.

- The **agent** is **unknown**:

Several robberies were committed during the night.

Active Voice vs. Passive Voice

- In active voice, the subject does the acting:

The committee made the decision.

- In passive voice, the subject is acted upon:

The decision was made (by the committee).

Active Voice

In the active voice, the object receives **the action of the verb**:

active	subject	verb	object
	<i>Cats</i>	<i>eat</i>	<i>fish.</i>

Passive Voice

In the passive voice,
the subject receives
the action of the verb:

subject	verb	object
Fish	are eaten	by cats.



Changing from active into passive

- The **object** of the **active** sentence becomes the **subject** of the **passive** sentence.
- The **active verb** remains in the same tense but changes into a passive form.
- The **subject** of the **active** sentence becomes the **agent**.

Changing from active into passive

Active	Subject <i>Helen</i>	Verb <i>did</i>	Object <i>the task.</i>
Passive	<i>The task</i> Subject	<i>was made</i> Verb	<i>by Helen.</i> Agent

Thanks for your attention 😊

