**Active and Passive Voice Rules for English Grammar**

**Active & Passive Voice**

Let us first understand the meaning of voice, and what is active voice and passive voice.

**What is Voice of a verb?**

The voice of a verb expresses whether the subject in the sentence has performed or received the action.

**Example:**

* The watchman opens the door.
* The door is opened by the watchman.

**Types of Voices of Verb**

Verbs have two voices (i) Active Voice (ii) Passive Voice

**Active Voice** – When an action performed by the subject is expressed by the verb, it is an active voice. Active voice is used when more straightforward relation and clarity is required between the subject and the verb.

**Active Voice example:**

* Hens lay eggs.
* Birds build nests.

**Passive Voice** – When the action expressed by the verb is received by the subject, it is passive voice. Passive voice is used when the doer of the action is not known and the focus of the sentence is on the action and not the subject.

**Passive Voice Examples:**

* Eggs are laid by hens.
* Nests are built by birds.

**Active and Passive Voice Rules for Conversion of Sentence:**

**Rules for Active – Passive Voice Conversions**

**Rule1.** Identify the (S+V+O) Subject, Verb and object in the active sentence to convert to passive voice

**Example:**

He drives car. (Subject – He, verb – Drives, object – Car)

**Rule2.** Interchange the object and subject with each other, i.e. object of the active sentence become the subject of the passive sentence.

**Example:**

Active voice: She knits sweater. (Subject – She, Verb – Knits, Object – Sweater)

Passive Voice: The sweater is knitted by her. (Object sweater is interchanged with the subject She).

**Rule3.** In passive voice sometimes the subject is not used, i.e. the subject in passive voice can be omitted if the sentence without it gives enough meaning.

**Example:**

Milk is sold in liters

**Rule4.** Change the base verb in the active sentence into the past participle ie. third form verb in a passive sentence i.e. preceded by (By, With, to, etc). Base verbs are never used in passive voice sentences.

**Example:**

* Active voice: She prepares dinner.
* Passive voice: The dinner is prepared **by** her.
* Active voice: She knows him.
* Passive voice: He is known **to** her.
* Active voice: Juice fills the jar.
* Passive voice: The jar is filled **with** juice.

**Rule5.** While conversion of Active voice sentence to Passive voice sentence, the pronoun used in the sentence also changes in the following manner.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Voice Pronoun** | **Passive Voice Pronoun** |
| I | Me |
| We | Us |
| He | Him |
| She | Her |
| They | Them |
| You | You |
| It | It |

**Rule6.** Use the suitable helping or auxiliary verb (is/am/are/was, etc.). The rules for using auxiliary verbs in passive voice sentences are different for each tense.

**Example:**

* The letter **is** written by her
* A book **was** not bought by her
* Chocolates**are being** eaten by them.

**Forms of Active and Passive Voice For All Tenses**

* **Simple Present Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Sentences** | **Passive Sentences** |
| He writes an essay | An essay is written by him |
| Sheena does the housework | The housework is done by Sheena |
| She cares for the rabbit | The rabbit is being cared for by her |
| Jacob always plays the guitar | The guitar is always played by Jacob |

* **Present Continuous Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Sentences** | **Passive Sentences** |
| They are eating bananas | The bananas are being eaten by them |
| Bob is drawing a diagram | A diagram is being drawn by Bob |
| Ram is playing the piano | A piano is being played by Ram |
| She is waiting for Reema | Reema is being waited for by her |

* **Present Perfect Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Sentences** | **Passive Sentences** |
| Has he done the work? | Has the work been done by him? |
| Have they left the apartment? | Has the apartment been left by them? |
| He created this masterpiece | This masterpiece is created by him |
| He read the newspaper | The newspaper is being read by him |

**Note-** [except certain exemptions, no passive Voice formation for the following tenses can be formed, Present Perfect Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Continuous Tense, Future Perfect Continuous Tense and Future Continuous Tense]

* **Simple Past Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Voice** | **Passive Voice** |
| Ria paid the bills | The bills were paid by Ria |
| The teacher called the student | The student was called by the teacher |
| She did not buy the fruits | The fruits were not bought by her |

* **Past Progressive/Continuous Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Voice** | **Passive Voice** |
| They were waiting for him | He was being waited for by them |
| Astha was learning French | French was being learnt by Astha |
| She was playing kabaddi | Kabaddi was being played by her |

* **Past Perfect Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Voice** | **Passive Voice** |
| She won the match | The match had been won by her |
| I had finished her work | Her work had been finished by me |
| He had missed the last metro | The last metro had been missed by him |

* **Simple Future Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Voice** | **Passive Voice** |
| He will write a letter | A letter will be written by him |
| He will repair her cycle | Her cycle will be repaired by him |
| He shall start the meeting | The meeting will be started by him |

* **Future Perfect Tense**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Active Voice** | **Passive Voice** |
| Meena will not have changed the bedsheet | The bed sheet will not have been changed by Meena |
| They will have won the match | The match will have been won by them |
| Reena will have washed the skirt | The skirt will have been washed by Reena |