

Lecture three

Passive Voice In English Grammar: Form, Use, And Examples

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By Assistant Lecture: Samah Ahmed jameil

Definition

Passive voice Passive voice is a structure where the subject of a sentence receives the action of the verb rather than performs it.

Example:

They were invited to the party.

(The subject "they" receives the action of the passive verb "were invited.")

The Passive Vs. The Active Voice

The main difference between the active and passive voice is that the subject in the active voice performs the action while in the passive voice, it receives the action.

When rewriting active sentences in passive voice, note the following:

- 1-The object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence.
- 2-The form of the verb is the appropriate form of to be (the tense of the active voice main verb) + the past participle.
- 3-The subject of the active sentence becomes the object of the preposition "by" in the passive sentence (or is dropped.)

Here are some examples of active and passive voice:

Active Voice	Passive Voice
William Shakespeare wrote "Hamlet".	"Hamlet was written by William Shakespeare.
Scientists conducted the experiment in a controlled environment.	The experiment was conducted in a controlled environment by scientists.
Someone had stolen the car.	The car had been stolen.
The intern has written the report.	The report has been written by the intern.
The company is hiring a new employee.	A new employee is being hired by the company.

Form Of The Passive Voice

Subject + the appropriate form of *to be* + Past Participle

Passive voice is a structure where the subject receives the action instead of performing it. It is used when we don't know the doer of the action, when we don't want to appear accusative, or when we want to be objective. This structure is often used in scientific texts or news stories.

Example:

Active	Nancy	makes	tea
	subject	verb	object
Passive	Tea	is made	(by Nancy)
	object becoming subject	verb	Subject becoming the object of the preposition "by" (or is dropped)

Use Of The Passive Voice

1-Passive voice is used when the focus is on the action. It is not important or not known, however, who or what is performing the action.

Example: "A letter was written."

The focus, here, is on the fact that a letter was written. We don't know, however, who wrote it.

2- It is also used when we don't know the doer of the action.

Example:

My bike was stolen,

3- Sometimes a statement in passive is more polite (or less accusative) than in active voice, as the following example shows:

Example: A vase was broken.

The focus, here, is on the fact that a vase was broken, but we don't blame anyone. Compare this to: "You broke the vase."

4- It is used when we want to appear more objective:

Example:

The experiment was conducted in a controlled environment.

Examples Of The Passive Voice

Tense		Subject	Verb	Object
Simple Present	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	makes	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	is made	by Nancy.
Present Progressive	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	is making	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	is being made	by Nancy.
Simple Past	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	made	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	was made	by Nancy.
Past Progressive	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	was making	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	was being made	by Nancy.
Present Perfect	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	has made	Tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	has been made	by Nancy.
Past Perfect	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	had made	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	had been made	by Nancy.
Future simple	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	will make	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	will be made	by Nancy.
Future perfect	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	will have made	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	will have been made	by Nancy.
Conditional	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	would make	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	would be made	by Nancy.
Modals	<i>Active:</i>	Nancy	can make	tea.
	<i>Passive:</i>	Tea	can be made	by Nancy.

Passive Voice Sentences With Two Objects:

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

Active/Passive	Subject	Verb	Object 1	Object 2
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Active:	Nancy	offered	a flower	to me.
Passive:	A flower	was offered	to me	by Nancy.
Passive:	I	was offered	a flower	by Nancy.

Impersonal Passive Voice

This type of passive is called impersonal because we use the impersonal form "it is..." This is only possible with verbs of perception (e. g. say, think, know ...)

Note These Examples:

They say that the planet is in danger.

It is said that the planet is in danger.

Examples:

It is said that...

It is thought that...

It is believed that...

It is known that...

It is also common that we start the passive form of these sentences with the subject of the that-clause:

Examples:

They say that the planet is in danger.= The planet is said to be in danger.

They think that women live longer than men. = Women are thought to live longer

Homework :

Transform these following examples in the passive voice into the active voice :

- 1- Peter builds a house.
- 2- Peter built a house.
- 3- Peter has built a house.
- 4- Peter had built a house.
- 5- Peter will build a house.
- 6- Peter is going to build a house in summer.**