



Passive Voice

Grammar > Intermediate 6



Exercise 1 – Learning

Passive Voice Forming

A sentence in the **active voice** focuses on the **subject**:

Subject + Verb + Object

- The bear ate a fish.
- John broke our TV.

A sentence in the **passive voice** focuses on the **action**:

Subject + Helping Verb be + Past Participle (+ 'by' Agent of Action)

- The fish was eaten (by the bear).
- Our TV was broken by John.

In the sentences above, **the agents** (in brackets) can be omitted.



Passive Voice Usage

We use the passive voice when **the subject is not important** or when **we do not know the subject**.

For example, scientists often use the passive voice to talk about their experiments, since the results of an experiment are more important than the people who carried it out.

- *Active voice:* We carried out this experiment to test a new cancer treatment.
- *Passive voice:* This experiment was carried out to test a new cancer treatment.

The passive voice is also used **to avoid revealing the subject**.

For example, if you notice your roommate often leaves the bathroom lights on, you can say:

- *Active:* I noticed that you often **leave** the bathroom lights **on**.
- *Passive:* I noticed that the bathroom lights ***are*** often **left on**.

By using the passive voice, you avoid directly blaming your roommate.



To negate a sentence in passive voice, put '**not**' after the helping verb:

Subject + Helping Verb be + 'not' + Verb (past participle)

- The fish **was not** eaten.
- The TV **was not** broken.

To form the passive voice in future tense, use the future tense of the helping verb '**be**'.

- The fish **will** be eaten.
- The TV **will not / won't** be broken.



Exercise 2 – Rephrasing

Rephrase the following sentences in the passive voice.

Example: My secretary prints the documents. → The documents are printed by my secretary.

Content:

1. My secretary doesn't print the documents.
2. My secretary didn't print the documents.
3. My secretary won't print the documents.
4. Our manager fired four employees.
5. Their boss won't sign the contract tomorrow.
6. They will not show the new film.
7. Her husband robbed the bank.
8. I noticed your red dress.



Exercise 3 – Sentence Construction

Use what you learned in class to create active and passive sentences with your tutor.

Example: leave the lights on. → You leave the lights on./ The lights are left on.

Content:

1. eat my food.
2. leave the TV on.
3. not wash the dishes.
4. leave the tap on.
5. not sell my car.
6. leave socks on the floor.