

Active and Passive Voice

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to:—

- ❖ understand the form of voice.
- ❖ change in the structure of the sentence.
- ❖ learn how to change voice from active to passive and passive to active.

QUICK CONCEPT REVIEW

By now all of you know that a verb tells what a noun or pronoun does or what is done to a noun or pronoun. In other words, it tells us what a person or thing does. Voice is that form of verb which says whether the subject does something or something is done to the subject. Voice has two forms:

1. Active voice
2. Passive voice

The form that tells us what the subject does is called the active voice while the form that tells us that something is done to the subject is called the passive voice.

ACTIVE VOICE AND PASSIVE VOICE

In active voice, the subject is active (it acts) and importance is given to the subject. On the other hand, in passive voice, the object (in active voice) is now made the subject (it is acted upon) and is given more importance.

| Active (→) | Passive(↓) |
|------------------------------|--|
| Subject is doing the acting. | Subject is being acted upon, receiving the action. |

Now let us understand it with an example:

Active voice: Atul is writing a letter. Here the subject, Atul, is

acting: "letter" is the object.

But when the same sentence is changed to passive voice, it becomes:

Letter is being written by Atul. Here, "Letter" is the subject. It is being acted upon but is given importance.

Newspaper headlines are usually in passive voice.

Passive voice is used when it is not easy to pinpoint one particular agent as the doer of the action.

- ❖ In active voice, the subject performs the action.
Example: John hit the ball.
- ❖ In passive voice, the action is performed on the subject. The subject receives the action.
Example: The ball was hit over the fence.

RULES TO FOLLOW

When we change active voice into passive voice: the following rules must be kept in mind:

1. Only transitive verbs (verbs with objects) have passive voice.
2. In the passive voice, usually we place the preposition by before the agent.
Example: The cat killed the mouse → The mouse was killed by the cat.
3. In imperative sentences let is used for commands and 'request' is used for request.

Example: Close the door → Let the door be closed.

4. When we change a question into passive, it will remain a question. So the question word should come in the beginning.
Example: Why have you scolded him? → Why has he been scolded by you?
5. To form passive voice, the verb to be is used. Its tense will be the same as the verb in the active voice to which a past participle of the verb in the active voice is added.
Example: Mohan likes tea → Tea is liked by Mohan

Active voice

You must not leave the door open.



Passive voice

The door must not be left open.