

## Active and Passive Voice

Voice is a form of a verb that is used to show whether the subject is given more emphasis or the action done by the subject is given more emphasis. The subject of the voice of a sentence is a person, a thing, an action or a place whom the sentence is about.

### Why Should I Care about Voice?

Voices are important topics of General English in Government Exams like banks and Insurance exams and other exams. There are several direct and indirect questions based on Voices. Voices are important for Essay Writing, Report Writing as they give emphasis to topics.

### What is Passive Voice?

When the sentence is in the passive voice, the object of the verb or the action of the subject or recipient of the action is given the main emphasis. It means that the doer of the action is passive and the object of the verb or the action of the subject or recipient of the action is active. Generally, when the sentence is in passive voice it starts with the object, action or receiver.

Examples of Passive Voice:

- A roar was emitted by the lion. (Here the roar of the lion is the main topic of the sentence.)
- The meal was prepared by the cook. (The meal is active while the cook is passive)
- Global Warming is caused by Greenhouse Gases. (Here more emphasis lies on Global Warming)

### Common Rules to Identify the Voice of a Sentence

#### 1. Structure of the Sentence:

When the sentence is in the active voice, the structure of the sentence is

Doer/ Actor/Subject +Verb + Object/ Action/Receiver

**Example:** Ram bought a bike.

- Subject- Ram
- Verb- bought
- Object- a bike

When the sentence is in the passive voice, the structure of the sentence is Object/ Action/Receiver+Verb+Doer/ Actor

**Example:** A bike was bought by Ram

- Doer- Ram
- Verb- bought
- Object- a bike

## **2. We always use past participle verb with a passive voice.**

Past participles verb has endings in -ed. Irregular past participle verb has endings in -en, -t, -d or -n.

**Example:**

- Active Voice: I am doing my work. (Here the sentence is in present continuous tense and the verb is in -ing form)
- Passive Voice: My homework is being done. (Here the sentence is in present continuous tense and the verb is in past participle form)

Also, check out [Reading Comprehension](#).

## **3. We always use a helping verb in a passive sentence.**

**Example:**

- Active Voice: The magician performed a trick. (Here there is only one verb, i.e. main verb- performed)
- Passive Voice: A trick was performed by the magician. (Here there are two verbs, i.e. one main verb- performed and one helping or supporting verb- was)

## **Points to Remember during the Conversion of Voices**

When we convert the Voice the following things should be kept in mind:

- Do not change the meaning of the sentence.
- Do not change the form of the sentence (Imperative/ Interrogative)
- Do not change the tense of the subject.

**Special Case of Passive Voice:**

Sometimes, the most obvious doer of the action is not mentioned in the sentence. In such cases, we have to assume the doer of the action.

### Example:

Passive Voice: A judgment has been passed in court. Here the doer of the action is obvious. It will be the judge or the jury panel. Hence, it is not mentioned. So while converting into active voice the sentence will become.

Active Voice: The judge/ jury passed the judgment in the court.

To get details on [Types, Rules & Cases of Sentence Correction](#), candidates can visit the linked article.

### How to change the Voice from Active to Passive?

- The sentence must have objects (transitive verb). If there is no object then there must be a question word who asks the object.
- Object active sentences became the subject of passive sentences.
- Subject or active sentences into passive sentences that preceded the object word 'by'.

#### Rule 1:

The places of subject and object are interchanged i.e. the object shifts to the place of the subject and the subject shifts to the place of the object in the passive voice.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
S + V + O	O + V + S
<b>Example:</b>	
I write a letter.	A letter is written by me.
"I" is a subject "Write" is a verb "A letter" is an object	

#### Rule 2:

3rd form of the verb (past participle) is always used as the main verb in sentences of passive voice for all tenses. The base form of the verb or present participle.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Sing Is singing Has sung	Sung
<b>Example:</b>	
He sings a song.	A song is sung by him.

“By” is used while making passive voice

Learn all about [Adverbs](#) here.

**Example:**

- The painting was painted by the painter. Auxiliary verbs are used in passive voice according to the tense of a sentence.
- The assigned task has been completed. Auxiliary verbs are used in passive voice according to the tense of a sentence.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
I	Me
We	Us
You	You
He	Him
She	Her
They	Them

**The Form of Active Voice and Passive Voice in Tenses**

Active & Passive voice in Simple Present Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
V1 with 's' or 'es'	Is /am /are + V3
<b>Example:</b>	
Ana does the homework.	The homework is done by Ana.
They sell that house.	That house is sold by them.

For details on the [Cloze Test](#), refer to the linked article.

Active & Passive voice in Present Continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Is /am /are + V4	Is /am /are + being + V3
<b>Example:</b>	

Ana is doing the homework.	The homework is being done by Ana.
They are investigating that house.	That house is being investigated by them.

#### Active & Passive in Present Perfect Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
has /have + V3	has been /have been + V3
<b>Example:</b>	
Ana has completed the homework.	The homework has been completed by Ana.
They have investigated that house.	That house has been investigated by them.

#### Active & Passive voice in Present Perfect Continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
has been/have been + V4	<i>No passive voice</i>

#### Active & Passive voice in Simple Past Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
V2 did + V1	was /were + V3
<b>Example:</b>	
Ana completed the homework.	The homework was completed by Ana.
They investigated that house.	That house was investigated by them.

To get details on [Idioms and Phrases](#), candidates can visit the linked article.

#### Active & Passive voice in past continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
was /were + V4	was /were + being +V3
<b>Example:</b>	
Ana was completing the homework.	The homework was being completed by Ana.
They were investigating that house.	That house was being investigated by them.

#### Active & Passive voice in Past Perfect Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
had + V3	had been +V3

<b>Example:</b>	
Ana had completed the homework.	The homework had been completed by Ana.
They had investigated that house.	That house had been investigated by them.

#### Active & Passive voice in Past Perfect Continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
had been + V3	<i>No passive voice</i>

#### Active & Passive voice in simple future Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
will /shall + V1	will be /shall be +V3

<b>Example:</b>	
Ana will complete the homework.	The homework will be completed by Ana.
They will investigate that house.	That house will be investigated by them.

#### Active & Passive voice in future continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
will be + V4	<i>No passive voice</i>

#### Active & Passive voice in Future Perfect Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
will have + V3	will have been + V3

<b>Example:</b>	
Ana will have completed the homework.	The homework will have been completed by Ana.
They will have investigated that house.	That house will have been investigated by them.

For details on the [Types and Rules of Tenses](#), refer to the linked article.

#### Active & Passive voice in future Perfect continuous Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
will have been + V4	<i>No passive voice</i>

#### Active and Passive voice using Modals

Active Voice	Passive Voice
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S + Modal + V + O	O + Modal + be + V3 + S
S + Modal + not + V + O	O + Modal + not be + V3 + S
Modals are: can /could /shall /should /may /might /will/ would, etc.	
<b>Example:</b>	
She can sell the car every time.	The car can be sold by her every time.
Can she play a violin?	Can a violin be played by her?
You may read this book.	This book may be read by you.
She would teach us today.	We would be taught by her today.
We must help the poor.	The poor must be helped by us.
We ought to respect our elders.	Our elders ought to be respected by us.

### Common Mistakes while Converting the Voice of a Sentence

Never change can into could, shall into should, may into might, as we are making active to passive voice not direct to indirect.

Modal Usage with Present Perfect Tense

Active Voice	Passive Voice
S + Modal + have + V + O	O + Modal + + have been + V3 + S
S + Modal + not have + V + O	O + Modal + not have been + V3 + S
Modals are: should /may /might /ought to	
<b>Example:</b>	
You may have availed the opportunity.	The opportunity may have been availed by you.
He might have eaten the meal.	The meal might have been eaten by him.
He might not have eaten the meal.	The meal might not have been eaten by him.
You should have studied the book.	The book should have been studied by you.
You should not have read the book.	The book should not have been read by you.
You ought to have helped him.	He ought to have been helped by you.

Here's all you need to know about [Gerund, Infinitive and Participle](#)

## Characteristics of Voices of Imperative Sentences

Rule 1:

The object is generally missing in Imperative Sentences. The structure of such sentences in Passive Voice is: Let + object + be/not be + V3

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Do it.	Let it be done.
Call in the doctor.	Let the doctor be called in.

Rule 2:

In sentences that express request, advice, and/or order, such phrases as you are requested to /advised to /ordered to are used. Word kindly /please are dropped.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Kindly lend me some money.	You are requested to lend me some money.

## Passive Voice in Infinitive Verbs

Active Voice	Passive Voice
to + V1	to + be + V3
<b>Example:</b>	
I have to do this work.	This work has to be done.
Women like men to flatter them.	Women like to be flattered by men.
I saw him cross the road.	He was seen to cross the road (by me).
It is time to do this work.	It is time for this work to be done.

## Points to Remember while converting the Voice of a sentence

If an indefinite pronoun(someone /somebody/nobody/anybody) is given in active voice as a subject then in passive voice indefinite pronoun will never be used as an object.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
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Someone has stolen my wallet.	My wallet has been stolen.—CORRECT My wallet has been stolen by somebody.—WRONG
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### Passive Voice with Infinitives

An infinitive follows most verbs normally. However, the infinitive passive voice is used after the modal verb.

#### Example:

1. You have to be tested for Covid-19 to fly internationally.
2. She wants to be titled Miss India.

To get detailed knowledge and examples on [Prefixes and Suffixes](#), candidates can visit the linked article.

### Passive Voice with Gerunds

Prepositions are followed by gerunds. However, normally verbs are followed by a gerund.

#### Example:

1. The students are excited about being taken to the water park for a picnic.
2. The students are excited to be taken to the water park for a picnic.

### Using "to be born"

When "to be born" is used in passive voice, it is generally used in the past tense. However, in some cases, it is used in the present or future tense.

#### Example:

1. The baby was supposed to be born at the early hours on Tuesday.

### Active and Passive voice examples with answers:

**Q.** Change the correct passive form of the sentence.

Take the lessons seriously.

**Ans.** While changing an imperative sentence into passive voice, we need to follow these steps: First of all, we will try to find out the object of the sentence, which is 'lessons' here. If the object is present in the sentence, the syntax for the passive form will be- let + object (in its subjective form)+be+V3 (past participle) + other words.

Hence, we get the passive form i.e.- Syntax- Let + object (in its subjective form)+be+V3 +other words. Sentence-Let + the lessons + be + taken + seriously.

Want to know about [Phrasal Verbs](#)? Learn here

**Q.** Change the correct passive form of the sentence.

They offered me a chair.

**Ans.** The sentence is in an Active voice. It needs to be changed into a Passive voice.

- While converting from Active to Passive voice, the sentence undergoes the following changes:
- Rules of Conversion from Active to Passive Voice:
  1. Identify the subject, the verb, and the object: S+V+O
  2. Change the object into subject
  3. The active verb does not have an object. Therefore, the passive form should begin with you.
  4. Change the verb into the past participle of the verb.
  5. Change the subject into an object
- Following changes will take place:

The object of the active voice A chair becomes the subject of the Passive voice. A helping verb in the past tense is added. The conjunction 'by' is added. 3rd person plural they change to them. Thus, the correct sentence will be: A chair was offered by them to me.

**Q.** Change the correct passive form of the given sentence.

Was she drinking a cocktail?

**Ans.** The sentence is in an Active voice. It needs to be changed into a Passive voice.

- The sentence is an interrogative sentence that starts with a helping Verb. It is asking a question.
- The original sentence in the active voice, the format for this is Helping Verb + Subject + Present continuous Verb + Object.
- This needs to be changed to the passive voice, the format for that will be Helping Verb + Object + being + Past participle of the Verb + by + Subject.
- Eventually, the final sentence will be, Was a cocktail being drunk by her?

**Q.** Change the sentence from Passive to Active.

He was knocked down by a slap.

**Ans.** The sentence is in a Passive voice. It needs to be changed into an Active voice.

- In an active voice, the subject performs the action denoted by the verb.
- On the other hand, a verb is in the passive voice when the subject of the sentence is acted upon by the verb.
- The sentence is in the passive voice, so the sentence has to be changed into an active voice.
- To do that,
  1. The object of the transitive verb (a verb that requires one or more objects) in the Passive voice should become the subject of the verb in the Active voice.
  2. The verb should be changed from the Passive voice to the Active voice without changing its tense.
- So the sentence would be, A slap knocked him down.

For details on the [Synonyms & Antonyms](#), refer to the linked article.

**Q.** Change from Active to Passive voice.

It is time to buy books. It is time \_\_\_\_\_.

**Ans.** The structure of a sentence in active voice is in the form- (subject) + (verb) + (object). This is so because active voice entails that the subject is working upon the object (active action). On the other hand, passive voice entails that the object is being worked upon by the subject (passive action). The passive voice is always constructed with a conjugated form of to be and a past participle form of the verb. And therefore the structure of a sentence in passive voice is- (object) + (a form of *to be* plus the past participle form of a verb) + (preposition) + (subject). Thus the passive voice of the given sentence will be- It is time for (preposition) + the books (object) + to be bought (verb).

Hope this article cleared all your doubts regarding the Voices of English Grammar. Do you want to boost your confidence over a mock test? Then download the [Testbook App](#) now!

### **What is Active Voice?**

When the actor or doer is the subject of the sentence then it is said to be in Active Voice.

### **What is Passive Voice?**

When the action is the subject of the sentence then it is said to be in Passive Voice.

**What is an example of Active and Passive Voice?**

An example of Active Voice is "She ate an apple". An example of Passive Voice is "An apple was eaten by her".

**What is the difference between active and passive voice?.**

The basic difference is that the active voice emphasizes the person or actor whereas the passive voice emphasizes the recipient of the action or the action itself.

**What is the formula for Active Voice and Passive Voice?**

Formula for Active Voice: Doer/ Actor + Verb + Object/ Action/Receiver. Formula for Passive Voice: Object/ Action/Receiver + Verb + Doer/ Actor.