

**Grammar Reference**

**Active and passive**

**Meaning and use**

In English, we can express sentences in two different ways: **active voice** and **passive voice**.

The**active voice** is used when the focus is on the **subject** (or agent) of the main verb. This is the person or thing doing the verb.

* ***Millions of people****use the internet every day.*
* ***A strong storm****destroyed many houses in the village.*
* ***Only six students****passed the test.*

The**passive voice**is used when the **person or the thing affected** by the main verb becomes the focus.

* ***The internet****is used by millions of people every day.*
* ***Many houses in the village****were destroyed by a strong storm.*
* ***The test****was passed by only six students.*

The **passive**is often used when the person or thing doing the verb is **not important**, **unknown**, or **obvious**. In this case, we may **leave them out**completely.

* *The solution was heated to 100 degrees.*(agent is unimportant)
* *My bike was stolen last Thursday.*(identity of agent is unknown)
* *The president was voted into office.*(agent is obvious)

**Form**

**The active voice** is made with **subject + main verb + object**.

* *Bees make honey.*
* *James Cameron directed Titanic.*
* *Alex is repairing Bill's bicycle.*

**The passive voice** is made with **subject + to be + past participle + by + object**.

Note that the active voice object becomes the passive voice subject. In the **passive**, the main verb is always the **past participle**.

**Positive**

* *Honey is made by bees.*
* *Titanic was directed by James Cameron.*
* *Bill's bicycle is being repaired by Alex.*

**Negative**

We make the negative passive with **subject + negative of to be + past participle + by + object.**

* *Honey is not made by wasps.*
* *Titanic wasn’t directed by George Lucas.*
* *Bill's bicycle is not being repaired by Alex.*

**Question**

* *Is honey made by bees?*
* *Was Titanic directed by James Cameron?*
* *Is Bill's bicycle being repaired by Alex?*

**Take note: describing a process**

We can use the **passive voice** to describe processes in which the **action**is more important than the person performing it.

* *The metal sheeting was****heated****and****bent into shape****before being****cooled****,****polished****, and finally****painted****.*

**Spoken English**

When using the passive voice, **get** is sometimes used in place of the verb **to be**. This is especially common in informal, spoken English.

* *I****got****fired for being late!*
* *These letters****get****delivered first.*
* *Your bike****will get****stolen if you don’t lock it up.*
* [**Practise Grammar**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/course/intermediate/unit-12)

**Taken from:**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/course/intermediate/unit-12/tab/grammar>

**Passive 5 (mixed tenses)**

**Change these active sentences to passive. Choose if you need the agent or not.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1) The Government is planning a new road near my house.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 2) My grandfather built this house in 1943.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 3) Picasso was painting Guernica at that time.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 4) The cleaner has cleaned the office.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 5) He had written three books before 1867.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 6) John will tell you later.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 7) By this time tomorrow we will have signed the deal.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 8) Somebody should do the work.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 9) The traffic might have delayed Jimmy.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 10) People speak Portuguese in Brazil.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 11) Everybody loves Mr Brown.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 12) They are building a new stadium near the station.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 13) The wolf ate the princess.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 14) At six o'clock someone was telling a story.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 15) Somebody has drunk all the milk!    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 16) I had cleaned all the windows before the storm.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 17) A workman will repair the computer tomorrow.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 18) By next year the students will have studied the passive.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 19) James might cook dinner.    [ . ] | Check Show |
| 20) Somebody must have taken my wallet.    From: | Check Show |

https://www.perfect-english-grammar.com/passive-exercise-5.html