



# Active and Passive Voice

Passive voice has the subject of the sentence acted upon, while in active voice, the subject completes the action. Active voice is more direct and to the point while passive voice typically uses more language to discuss the same action. Generally, writers should assess what their purpose is when deciding to use active or passive voice.

## When to use Passive Voice

Is the subject of your text more important or less important than its action or process? If the most important part of your text isn't who or what is doing, but what is being done, passive voice is the way to go! For instance, many times those writing about scientific experiments or observations focus on the process instead of the subject. In those cases, passive voice may be the best option.

## Examples

### Passive

The man was kissed by the puppy.



### Active

The puppy kissed the baby.



The sandwich was made by the chef.



My mom made the sandwich.



The same action is happening, but the wording is different. The left picture is passive voice, letting the subject be acted upon, while the right is active voice, letting the subject do the actions.



## Test yourself

Change these sentences from passive voice to active voice!

1. The cheeseburger was eaten by Bubba.

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2. The subdivision was devastated by the tornado.

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Change these sentences from active voice to passive voice!

1. Sally uploaded the pictures to Facebook.

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2. Ed Sheeran sings my favorite song.

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**Further Assistance:** For more detailed help or if you have questions, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library or call 815-836-5427.

**Sources Consulted:** Purdue OWL, Towson University