

There are **two voices in English, the active and the passive.**

The active tells us what the subject does. Example: The secretary wrote a letter.

The passive tells us what is done to the subject. Example: The letter was written by the secretary.

A) Form

The passive is made with the **verb "to be" and the past participle.**

1. Check to see if the active sentence contains an object(the verb must be transitive).

John ate an apple. (S V O) Passive is possible.

John ate yesterday. (S V) Passive is not possible.

2. Move the object to the front of the sentence. Put the original subject in a "by" phrase .

An apple (V) by John.

3. Put the verb in the form "be" +past participle (3rd column of irregular verbs ;)

An apple " be " eaten by John.

4. Put the "be" in the same tense as the original active sentence.(ate is simple past)

An apple was/were eaten by John. (past tense)

5. Make the first verb agree with the new subject..... An apple was eaten by John.

Tense	Subject	Verb "to be"	Past Participle
Simple present:	Flowers	are	planted every year
Present continuous:	Flowers	are being	planted now.
Simple past:	Flowers	were	planted last year
Past continuous:	Flowers	were being	planted last summer.
Present perfect:	Flowers	have been	planted here for 10 years.
Past perfect:	Flowers	had been	planted until last year.
Future:	Flowers	will be	planted next year.
Future continuous:	Flowers	will be being	planted during the summer.
Present conditional:	Flowers	would be	planted if we had seeds.
Past conditional:	Flowers	would have been	planted if we had had seeds.

By

To state what the cause of a passive action is, you can use *by*. For example:

- This photo was taken **by my friend**.
- I was given this **by my brother**.

It is often not necessary to state the cause of a passive action, especially when clearly understood or irrelevant. For example:

- The meeting was cancelled. (The meeting's cancellation is what is important, not who cancelled it.)
- These boots were made in Italy. (The fact they were made in Italy is what's important, not who made them.)

Born

When talking about the birth of specific people or things we use the passive form "to be born".

For example:

- I was born in Iran.
- The twins were born just last year.

Get

Get can be used instead of *to be* in situations where something happens. For example:

- Our flight **got** cancelled = Our flight **was** cancelled.
- I **got** paid today = I **was** paid today.

B) Passive Sentences with Two Objects

Rewriting an active sentence with two objects in passive voice means that one of the two objects becomes the subject, the other one remains an object. Which object to transform into a subject depends on what you want to put the focus on.

	Subject	Verb	Object 1	Object 2
<i>Active:</i>	Rita	wrote	a letter	to me.
<i>Passive:</i>	A letter	was written	to me	by Rita.
<i>Passive:</i>	I	was written	a letter	by Rita.

C) Use

Passive structures are used when the action is more important than who did it.

The passive is often used:

1.-In advertising,because the product becomes the focus of attention:

Our sportswear is tested by robots and worn by world champions.

2.-In formal,impersonal texts:

Your application has been received and you will be informed on our decision

3.-When the agent is unknown or not important:

The wheel was invented about 5,000 years ago.

D) Warning! Some verbs cannot be used in the passive form. Intransitive Verbs:

Intransitive verbs (verbs which do not take objects) cannot be used to form passive sentences.

Come occur die rain go happen rise walk

John came to the meeting. *John was come to the meeting (incorrect).

The cat died in the street. *The cat was died in the street (incorrect).

We went to the zoo. *We were gone to the zoo (incorrect).

The incident occurred last week. *The incident was occurred last week(incorrect)

It rained this morning. *It was rained this morning (incorrect).

E) Personal and Impersonal Passive

Personal Passive simply means that the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence. So every verb that needs an object (transitive verb) can form a personal passive.

Example: They build houses. – Houses are built.

Verbs without an object (intransitive verb) normally cannot form a personal passive sentence (as there is no object that can become the subject of the passive sentence). If you want to use an intransitive verb in passive voice, you need an impersonal construction – therefore this passive is called Impersonal Passive.

Example: he says – it is said

Impersonal Passive is only possible **with verbs of perception (e. g. say, think, know).**

Example: They say that women live longer than men. – It is said that women live longer than men.

But Personal Passive is more common.

Example: They say that women live longer than men. – Women are said to live longer than men.

The subject of the subordinate clause (women) goes to the beginning of the sentence; the verb of perception is put into passive voice. The rest of the sentence is added using **an infinitive construction with 'to'**