

## Compare these two active and passive voice sentences.

1. Rama beats Harry.
2. Harry is beaten by Rama.

It will be seen that these two sentences express the same meaning.

**But in sentence 1**, the form of the **Verb** shows that the person denoted by the subject does something.

- Rama (the person denoted by the **subject**) does something.
- The Verb beats is said to be in the **Active Voice**.

**In sentence 2**, the form of the Verb shows that something is done to the person denoted by the Subject.

- Something is done to Hari (the person denoted by the Subject )
- The Verb beaten is said to be in the Passive Voice

## What is active voice?

A verb is in the Active Voice when its form shows (as in sentence 1) that the person or thing denoted by the Subject does something ; or, in other words, is the *doer* of the action.

*The Active Voice is so called because the person denoted by the Subject acts.*

## What is Passive voice?

A Verb is in the Passive Voice when its form shows (as in sentence 2) that something is done to the person or thing denoted by the Subject.

*The Passive Voice is so called because the person or thing denoted by the Subject is not active but passive, that is, suffers or receives some action.*

## What is Voice?

Voice is that form of a Verb which shows whether what is denoted by the Subject does something or has something done to it.

It will be noticed that when the Verb is changed from the Active Voice to the Passive Voice, the Object of the Transitive Verb in the Active Voice becomes the subject of the Verb in the Passive Voice.

**Thus in sentence 1**, Ayesha, which is the object of loves in the Active Voice, becomes the Subject of is loved in the Passive Voice.

Since the Object of a verb in the active voice becomes the Subject of the passive form, it follows that only Transitive Verbs can be used in the Passive Voice, because an Intransitive Verb has no Object.

The passive voice is formed with the suitable tense of the verb be followed by the past participle. Study this table:

<b>Tense (or Modal + base)</b>	<b>Active Voice</b>	<b>Passive Voice</b>
Simple present	take, takes	am taken, is taken, are taken
Present continuous	am taking is taking are taking	am taken, is taken, are taken
Present perfect	has taken have taken	has been taken, have been taken
Simple past	took	was taken, were taken
Past continuous	was taking were taking	was being taken, were being taken
Past perfect	had taken	had been taken
Simple future	will take shall take	will be taken, shall be taken
Can/may/must, etc. + base	can take must take	can be taken, must be taken

Students must know when to use active voice and when to use passive voice. The ability to change the active voice into passive voice and vice versa is not sufficient. When to use active voice? When to use Passive voice?

### **When to use active voice?**

The Active Voice is used when the agent (i.e. doer of the action) is to be made prominent ; the Passive, when the person or thing acted upon is to be made prominent.

### **When to use Passive voice?**

The Passive is, therefore. generally preferred when the active form would involve the use of an indefinite or vague pronoun or noun (somebody they people. we. etc.) as subject : that is, when we do not know the agent or when it is clear enough who the agent is.

- My pen has been stolen. (Somebody has stolen my pen )
- I was asked my name. (They asked me my names)
- English IS spoken ail over the world. (People speak English over the world)
- I have been invited to the party (Someone has invited me to the party )
- All orders be executed promptly (we will execute all orders promptly.)

In such cases the agent with by is usually avoided.

Note, however, that, as in the examples given earlier, the by-phrase cannot be avoided where the agent has some importance and is necessary to complete the sense.

## Exercises for Active and Passive voice

Note the change from the Active Voice to the Passive Voice in the following sentences :

### Solved exercises for active and passive

Active voice	Passive Voice
1. Ayesha loves Ali.	1. Ali is loved by Ayesha.
2. The mason is building the wall.	2. The wall is being built by the meson.
3. The peon opened the gate.	3. The gate was opened by the peon.
4. Some boys were helping the wounded man.	4. The wounded man was being helped by the some boys.
5. He will finish the work in a fortnight.	5. The work will be finished by him in a fortnight.
6. Who did this?	6. By whom was this done?
7. Why did your brother write such a letter?	7. Why was such a letter written by your brother.

### Practice Exercises for active and passive 1

1. The cat kitted the mouse.
2. We compelled the enemy to surrender.
3. The boy was bitten by a dog.
4. The thief was caught.
5. The boy made a kite.
6. The ship was burned.
7. The young man made a disturbance at the meeting.
8. The captive was bound to a tree.
9. The bird was killed by a cruel boy.
10. The sudden noise frightened the horse.
11. He is loved by all.
12. The exhibition was opened by the Governor.
13. I see a dark cloud.
14. His command was promptly obeyed.
15. Some of the cargo had been damaged by the sea water.

16. Nothing will be gained by hurry.
17. The dog chased the sheep.
18. This letter was posted last night.
19. The field is ploughed.
20. The dog was teased by the boy.
21. The cat drank all the milk.
22. A stone struck me on the head.
23. The old gentleman takes snuff.
24. The money was lost.
25. The letter has just been posted.

## **Practice Exercises for active and passive 2**

1. The cat killed the mouse.
2. The man cut down the tree.
3. Columbus discovered America
4. His teacher praised.
5. The boy teased the dog.
6. The syce feeds the horse every day.
7. The police arrested him.
8. Rama was making a kite.
9. The boy caught the ball.
10. My father will write a letter.
11. I will conquer him.
12. He kept me waiting.
13. The hunter shot the lion.
14. Hart opened the door.
15. A policeman caught the thief.
16. Sohrab threw the ball.
17. He scored twenty runs.
18. Your behavior vexes.
19. He made a remarkable discovery.
20. Everyone loves him.
21. My cousin has drawn this picture.
22. We expect good news.
23. The farmer gathers the harvest.
24. His own brother swindled him.
25. The recitation pleased the inspector.
26. Somebody has put out the light.
27. The enemy have defeated our army.
28. I have sold my bicycle.

### **Practice Exercises for active and passive 3**

1. We saw you and him.
2. They asked me my name.
3. We refused them admission.
4. I bought the baby a doll.
5. They found him guilty of murder.
6. A thunderstorm often turns milk sour.
7. You cannot pump the ocean dry.
8. He keeps me waiting.
9. They painted the house red.
10. He told me to leave the room.
11. He promised me a present.
12. I shall order the carriage.
13. The boy is climbing the cliff.
14. One may accomplish many things by a little effort.
15. I am watching you very carefully.

### **Practice Exercises for active and passive 4**

1. He was praised by his father.
2. The first railway was built by George Stephenson.
3. The horse was frightened by the noise.
4. Not a word was spoken by Latif.
5. The teacher was pleased with the boy's work.
6. He was taken to the hospital by his friends.
7. The town was destroyed by an earthquake
8. The road was lined With people.
9. The President was welcomed by the people.
10. Shakuntala was written by Kalidas.
11. The building was damaged by the fire.