



Passive Voice

What is Passive Voice?

Passive voice indicates that the subject receives the action of the verb. In passive voice, the subject of the sentence does nothing. Passive voice does not refer to past tense, but to voice.

How Passive Voice is Created:

Passive voice is created by using the helping verb *be* followed by the main verb's past participle.

s v-passive
 Ex: The paper was written by Ricky.

Note: *Be*, *being*, and *been* require additional helping verbs to form passive voice:

have}		am}	
has}	<i>been</i> completed	are}	
had}		is}	<i>being</i> completed
		<u>was</u> }	
		<u>were</u> }	

Passive Voice vs. Active Voice:

Passive voice is wordier and more indirect than active voice. In active voice, the subject does something.

s v-active
 Ex: Mary dropped the camera.

s v-passive
 Ex: The camera was dropped by Mary.

Passive Voice is Useful When:

- you do not know who performs the actions, and
- if the object of the action is more important than the actor

Passive Voice is Acceptable:

- when a "true" subject is unknown
 Ex: Mysterious tombs were erected in Egypt.
- when a "true" subject is insignificant or secondary
 Ex: My brother was captured while fighting in Narobi.
- in technical and scientific writing.
 Ex: The diagnostic manual was written to provide instructions.

Remember: In passive voice, the subject is acted upon; it receives the action.