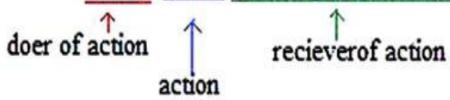
# **PASSIVE VOICE**



## Patterns: Active vs. Passive Voice

### **ACTIVE VOICE:**

Alex wrote the essay on Alzheimer's.



## PASSIVE VOICE:

The essay on Alzheimer's was written by Alex.

receiver of action action doer of action

#### Changing from Active into Passive

#### To change a sentence from active into the passive:

- a) the object of the active sentence becomes the subject in the passive sentence,
- b) the active verb remains in the same tense, but changes into a passive form,
- the subject of the active sentence becomes the agent, and is either introduced with the preposition by or omitted.

	subject	verb	object
active	The mayor	opened	the new school.
	subject	verb	agent

## FORMATION RULES



### A form of TO BE +

- PRESENT: am, is are...
- PAST: was, were...
- FUTURE: will be...
- PRESENT PERFECT: have been...
- PRESENT CONTINUOUS: is/are being...
- PAST CONTINUOUS: was/ were being...

#### PAST PARTICIPLE

- ED/D (regular verbs)
- 3rd form or irregular verbs (taken, seen, brought etc.)

<b>Active Voice</b>	Passive Voice	
The peon opened the gate.	The gate was opened by the peon	
Some boys were helping the old man	The old man was being helped by some boys.	
He will finish the work in a fortnight	The work will be finished by him in a fortnight.	
Why did your brother write such a letter?	Why was such a letter written by your brother	
He handed her a chair.	A chair was handed to her by him.	

	Active Voice	Passive Voice
Present Simple	They serve dinner at 6:00.	Dinner is served at 6:00.
<b>Present Continuous</b>	They are serving dinner now.	Dinner is being served now.
Past Simple	They served dinner.	Dinner was served.
Past Continuous	They were serving dinner.	Dinner was being served.
<b>Future Simple</b>	They will serve dinner.	Dinner will be served.
Present Perfect	They have served dinner.	Dinner has been served.
Past Perfect	They had served dinner.	Dinner had been served.
<b>Future Perfect</b>	They will have served dinner.	Dinner will have been served.
Present infinitive	They should serve dinner.	Dinner should be served.
Perfect infinitive	They should have served dinner.	Dinner should have been served.
-ing form	He likes people serving his dinner.	He likes his dinner being served.
Perfect -ing form	Having served dinner,	Dinner having been served,
Modals + be + p.p.	You must serve dinner.	Dinner must be served.

#### We use the Passive:

- when the agent (the person who does the action) is unknown, unimportant or obvious from the context. The door had been locked. (we don't know who locked it – unknown agent) Repairs are being made to the car. (by the mechanic – obvious agent)
- when we are interested more in the action than the person who carries it out, such as in news reports, formal notices, instructions, processes, headlines, advertisements, etc. The whole area was evacuated. (news report) Breakfast is served from 6.00 to 10.30. (formal notice)
- to make statements more formal or polite. "My new dress has been ruined". (more polite than saying "You ruined my dress").
- to put emphasis on the agent. The Pyramids were built by the ancient Egyptians.
- We use by + agent to say who or what carries out the action. We use with + instrument / material / ingredient to say what the agent used to carry out the action. The cake was made by Ann. It was made with eggs, flour and butter.
- Only transitive verbs (verbs followed by an object) can be changed into the passive:

active: Mary feeds the dogs. (transitive verb)

passive: The dogs are fed by Mary.

**but:** They **sleep** early every night. (The verb sleep in this sentence is intransitive; not followed by an object. The sentence cannot be changed into the passive.)

Some transitive verbs, such as have, fit, suit, resemble, etc. cannot be changed into the passive. She resembles her father in many ways.