

- **Use of Passive**

Passive voice is used when the **focus is on the action**. It is not important or not known, however, who or what is performing the action.

*Example: My bike was stolen.*

In the example above, the focus is on the fact that my bike was stolen. I do not know, however, who did it.

**How to form a passive sentence:** Subject + finite form of *to be* + Past Participle

Example: *A letter was written to the boss.*

When rewriting active sentences in passive voice, note the following:

- the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence
- the finite form of the verb is changed (*to be* + past participle) (**the verb *to be* has the same tense as the active form**)
- the subject of the active sentence becomes the object of the passive sentence (or is dropped)
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<u>Tense</u>		<u>Subject</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Object</u>
<b>Simple Present</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	writes	a letter.
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	is written	by Rita.
<b>Simple Past</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	wrote	a letter.
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	was written	by Rita
<b>Present Perfect</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	has written	a letter
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	has been written	by Rita
<b>Future</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	will write	a letter
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	will be written	by Rita.
<b>Modals</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	can write	a letter
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	can be written	by Rita
<b>Present Progressive</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	is writing	a letter
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	is being written	by Rita.
<b>Past Progressive</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	was writing	a letter
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	was being written	by Rita
<b>Past Perfect</b>	<i>Active</i>	Rita	had written	a letter
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	had been written	by Rita
<b>Conditional</b>	<i>Active:</i>	Rita	would write	a letter
	<i>Passive</i>	A letter	would be written	by Rita

- **Passive Sentences with Two Objects**

Some verbs such as **give, offer, refuse, tell, ask, show, lend, sell, read, post, pass promise, throw, pay, refuse, teach, write etc** can occur with two objects, both a direct object and an indirect object.

*Active:* the children gave Mrs Paterson a lovely birthday card

*Passive:* Mrs Paterson was given a lovely birthday card (by the children).

*Passive:* A lovely birthday card was given to Mrs Paterson (by the children). (**Not very common**)

In these cases, it is possible to make two passive sentences, depending on whether we want to focus on the direct object of the active sentence ('a lovely birthday card') or the indirect object ('Mrs Paterson').

**Most often in such cases the person becomes the subject of the passive verb**

*Active:* Someone gave Mary a big box of chocolate      *Passive:* Mary was given a big box of chocolates.

*Passive:* A big box of chocolates was given to Mary. (**Not very common**)

*Active:* Rita wrote a letter to me

*Passive:* I was written a letter (by Rita).

*Passive:* A letter was written to me (by Rita). (**Not very common**)

*by Rita* is usually dropped.

*I've just been sent the information – We were shown all the different ways of making whisky.*

*I was asked to send the envelope – she was told not to come back – he was made to tell the truth –*





7. Mistakes \_\_\_\_, but we're working on a solution now.  
 have been make                      making                      **have been made**
8. Someone \_\_\_\_ my wallet and left it at reception. (**not a passive sentence**)  
**had found**                      had been found                      was found
9. My phone \_\_\_\_ last week, so I didn't get your message until today.  
**was being fixed**                      was fix                      was fixing
10. A lot of time \_\_\_\_ on pointless meetings in this company.  
 wastes                      **is wasted**                      is wasting
11. Your application \_\_\_\_ by the end of the month.  
 will be reviewing                      **will be reviewed**                      will review
12. Someone \_\_\_\_ my talk at the conference and recommended me as a speaker. (**not a passive sentence**)  
**Saw**                      was seen                      had been seen
13. The suspect \_\_\_\_ near the French border.  
**was caught**                      were caught                      caught

**Rewrite each sentence so that the meaning stays the same.**

- 1 People think that neither side wanted war.  
 Neither side is *thought to have wanted war*.
- 2 People say that fewer than 1,000 blue whales survive in the southern hemisphere.  
 Fewer *than 1,000 blue whales are said to survive in the southern hemisphere*.
- 3 Everyone knows that eating fruit is good for you.  
 Eating fruit *is known to be good for you*.
- 4 People consider that one in three bathing beaches is unfit for swimming.  
 One in three bathing beaches *is considered unfit for swimming*.
- 5 At least 130,000 dolphins are reported to be caught in the nets of tuna fishers every year.  
 It is *reported that at least 130,000 dolphins are caught in the nets of tuna fishers every year*.
- 6 It is estimated that in the past 15 years about 10 million dolphins have been killed.  
 About 10 million dolphins *are estimated to have been killed in the past 15 years*.
- 7 People say that the company invested fifty million pounds last week.  
 The company *is said to have invested fifty million pounds last week*.
- 8 People say Mr Clark was difficult to work with when he was younger.  
 Mr Clark *is said to have been difficult to work with when he was younger*.
- 9 Someone has calculated that the water of the River Rhine contains over 2,000 chemicals.  
 It *has been calculated that the water of the River Rhine contains over...*
- 10 Everyone thought the painting had been destroyed in the fire.  
 The painting *was thought to have been destroyed in the fire*.
- 11 It is believed that the Chinese invented gunpowder.  
 The Chinese *are believed to have invented gunpowder*.
- 12 We hope that the government has prepared a plan.  
 The government *is hoped to have prepared a plan*.
- 13 People say that Mr Bond was having business difficulties when he was charged with fraud.  
 Mr Bond *is said to have been having business difficulties when he was charged with fraud*.