

Active vs. Passive Voice

What's the difference?

In **active voice** sentences the subject *does* the action.

Examples:

Liz played the piano.

I fed the cat.

He broke her heart.

Jimmy ate the pizza.

In **passive voice** sentences the subject *receives* the action.

Examples:

The piano was played.

The cat was fed.

Her heart was broken.

The pizza was eaten.

Did you know?

- The sentence that uses active voice is stronger, uses fewer words, and clearly shows who performs the action.
- The sentence that uses passive voice is weaker and less direct. It is not grammatically incorrect.

Did you know?

- Sometimes the doer of the action is omitted in passive voice sentences.

Examples:

The piano was played.

The cat was fed.

Her heart was broken.

The pizza was eaten.

What to do?

To find the passive voice in your own writing (and to switch it to active voice), first locate all “to be” verbs. Eight verbs to look for are

am

were

is

be

are

being

was

been

What to do?

If the verb is irregular, the past participle may not end with “ed.”

- View [this list of irregular past participles](#)
- Record 5 examples in your packet

Active or Passive?

- The damsel was rescued.
 - *passive*
- How can we make the sentence *active*?
 - The prince saved the damsel.

Active or Passive?

- The tight end likes celebrating in the end zone.
– *active*
- How can we make the sentence *passive*?
– The touchdown was celebrated by the tight end.



Active or Passive?

- Spiderman saved the day.
– *active*
- How can we make the sentence *passive*?
– The day was saved by Spiderman.