



Active Voice vs. Passive Voice

What's the difference between Passive Voice and Active Voice?

Passive voice has the subject of the sentence acted upon, while in **active voice**, the subject completes the action. **Active voice** is more direct and to the point while **passive voice** typically uses more language to discuss the same action. Generally, using **active voice** is the more suitable choice, but when do you use **passive voice**? Good question!

When to use Passive Voice

Is the subject of your text more important or less important than its action or process? If the most important part of your text isn't who or what is doing, but what is being done, **passive voice** is the way to go! For instance, many times those writing about scientific experiments or observations focus on the process instead of the subject. In those cases, **passive voice** may be the best option.

Examples!

Passive Voice



The man was kissed by the puppy.



The sandwich was made by the chef.

Active Voice



The puppy kissed the baby.



My mom made the sandwich.

The same action is happening, but the wording is different. The left picture is **passive voice**, letting the subject be acted upon, while the right is **active voice**, letting the subject do the actions.



Active Voice vs. Passive Voice

Your turn to try!

Change these sentences from **passive voice** to **active voice**!

- 1) The cheeseburger was eaten by Bubba.

- 2) The subdivision was devastated by the tornado.

Change these sentences from **active voice** to **passive voice**!

- 1) Sally uploaded the pictures to Facebook.

- 2) Ed Sheeran sings my favorite song.

Works Consulted:

Active and Passive Voice. (n.d.). *Purdue OWL: Active and Passive Voice*. Retrieved from <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/539/01/>

ACTIVE / PASSIVE VOICE. (n.d.). *Voice: Active and Passive*. Retrieved from <http://www.towson.edu/ows/activepass.htm>

Further Assistance: For more detailed help or if you have questions, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library, or call 815-836-5427.

Sources Consulted: The Purdue Owl, Towson University