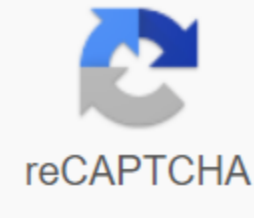




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Active and passive voice exercises p

There are two voices in English grammar: an active voice and a passive voice. The difference is subtle at first, but it's easy to master once grammar understands the basics. Examine the subject and the main verb in the two sentences below: (A) The boy hit the ball. (B) The ball was struck. (Or, the ball was struck by a boy). In Sentence, we can ask ourselves, what is a blow? The answer to that question, boy. This topic actively executes the verb; it actively makes the verb hit a direct object (ball). It is a virtuous proposal in an active voice. In Proposition B, we might ask ourselves what is the subject? (ball.) What does the subject do? (Nothing.) The theme doesn't hit anything else. So who makes the verb strike? It is unclear if we will not stick to the preposition phrase boy at the end of the sentence. The subject sits passively, doing nothing, while some external agent performs an action (strike). Because the subject matter is grammatical, the sentence is a passive voice. Note: Sometimes a passive voice offer is necessary when the speaker wants to hide the agent or hide what is happening. For example, a governor for re-election might say: At the last election, taxes were raised during the year. Passive voice offer hides the agent. He would be uncomfortable telling potential voters, At the last election, I raised taxes for a year. In that last sentence, whoever makes the action is painfully clear! This type of situation is one of the few cases that passive form proves useful, albeit in a somewhat deceptive way I would discourage. You can also use a passive voice to focus the reader's attention on specific words or for the sake of diversity. In most other cases, it is better to use active voice. This is the best choice for several reasons: (1) Active voice suggestions are often more concise than passive voice. The expression of the same idea in a passive voice often takes 30% to 40% more words: the fighter hit Ali and dodged the uppercut. (Active voice --8 words) Ali was beaten by a fighter, and then the uppercut dodged him. (Passive voice --14 words, about 40% longer) In the last generation the family built a new home and raised a new brood of children. (Active Voice: 17 Words) In the last generation, the family built a new home, and they raised a new brood of children. (Passive voice --25 words, about 30% longer) (2) Passive voice requires more weak words. It uses abstract words like there are /am/are/were/being/been/has/had/had, a certain article (the), and prepositions, both from. They are boring and colorless compared to concrete nouns, powerful verbs and bright adjectives. Good writers try to avoid these empty, weak words and replace them with strong words. However, passive Writers. To make it clear who is doing what, writers using a passive voice must either mark cumbersome phrases at the end of reservations such as this, or they must leave that phrase and let the sentence become unclear. The plane was flown to Bermuda (pilot). Crackers were eaten (by a puppy). In the moonlight tango danced (couple). To be verbs and prepositions do not add much to the sentence in terms of color. You can express the same idea with an active voice with less length, but not lost content: the pilot flew a plane to Bermuda. This puppy ate crackers. In the moonlight, the pair danced tango. Remember that the heart of your sentence beats in its strong verbs, specific nouns, and vivid description! Prepositions and articles can become dead weight. If you understand that your email will be more direct and powerful, if fewer excuses and articles clog up your suggestions. Using active voice consistently is one way to ensure that this doesn't happen. (3) The passive position of the voice can be confusing or obscure, especially in long sentences. My car was taken to Dallas. (Who? on the dynamics? hijacker? Sixteen thousand calories were consumed in one meal. (Who makes this monstrous act of dietary vandalism?) Five FBI agents entered the room, and the terrorist was plastered against the wall. (Does this mean that five FBI agents plastered a terrorist against a wall? or does that mean that when five FBI agents entered the room, the terrorist plastered against the wall? or someone else completely plastered the terrorist against the wall before the FBI arrived? However, the author often doesn't know who did the action either. The agent doing the action may indeed be unknown. Last night, a woman was robbed in Las Vegas. My diary was stolen! In such sentences, it is difficult to say whether it is better to leave a passive voice (which in this case is fairly concise) or to add an active voice structure (which in these cases adds an additional length). If in doubt, stick to an active voice. The assailant robbed a woman last night in Las Vegas. The thief stole my diary! (4) Passive voice often leads to awkward or stilted writing, especially in academic arguments in which the student dos a pseudo-scientific tone. When the reason should be considered by readers for the argument that was made by the writer, it is only fitting that their analysis will be based on the latest statistics. If consensus could not be reached, compromises should be reached and then the two sides should negotiate with an external arbitration. Uh! What a lousy offer! It hurts me to read them. They sound more like mixed scientific, rather than useful, direct, instructions. If sentence after sentence appears in this twisted format, the writer will drive the reader crazy with its distorted, artificial syntax. Nobody says that, so why write like that? (5) Linguistic studies show that native English speakers are better remembered for the material they read in an active voice than the same material by a passive voice. Something in the mind of the English language is still directed at the Pattern Of subject-Verb-Object. Passive voice suggestions somehow derail this mental retention process. If you want your readers to remember what you're writing, use an active voice. If they better remember the material you spent so much time writing, you have a better chance of creating an argument that will stick to them and change their way of thinking. Three warning signs of a wicked building proposal (Passive voice) Ask yourself three questions to determine the evil sentence. If the sentence fails all three rules, you notice a terrible passive voice, clear your paper of its infernal contagion by converting the sentence into an active voice: 1. Verb Test: Look for the help of verbs, especially forms of verb to be in the sentence, such as there / am/ were /be/were/were/were/have/had/has? (Passive voice clauses usually have or imply one.) 2. zombie test: Can I insert the zombie phrase after the verb? If so, would the sentence still make grammatical sense? If so, you may have a passive voice. For example, dog fed (zombie). 3. Agency check: In the case of action verbs, identify the subject and the main verb (s) in the reservation. Does the subject sit passively while some external agent does the action to him? If so, it's a passive voice. Passive Voice Exercises: Egad! Some grammatical vandals have transformed E.B. White's active voice proposals into a passive voice structure. Save his writing! Transform the passage into an active voice and compare the two. Exercise A: One summer, around 1904, the camp was rented by my father on a lake in Maine, and we were taken there in the month of August. The ringworm was received from some kittens, and the pond extract had to be rubbed on our hands and feet night and morning, and the canoe was moved to my father with all his clothes; outside of this vacation was considered successful, and since then it was believed that there was no place like this lake in Maine. It was returned to summer after the summer - always on the first of August for one month. Since then, I have been made of sea water, but sometimes in the summer I am prepared to wish for the calm of the lake in the forest because of the anxiety of the tides and the terrible cold of sea water in the afternoon and evening, which blows through the incessant wind. A few weeks ago this feeling felt I was so that a pair of bass hooks and a spinner were bought and the lake that had previously visited visited we were returned to me for a week of fishing to be done, and for the old haunts to be revisited. --adapted from Once again to the lake, E.B. White. (Sorry, Mr. White, for the stylistic blasphemy I've made of your work.) Exercise B: Transform the next active voice and hear how much easier it is to understand! My dating life was ruined by my new roommate, Joey. Joey's not a rude guy or anything. Far from it, he's actually friendly and good-natured. Women are kicked out of my life because of the lack of house cleaning. Our apartment is the social equivalent of a cancerous tumor. When the building went into one of my dates, the first object that noticed it was that the trash can molded into an apple half eaten by someone. The edge of the TV is down with a slice of weekly pizza. She buzzed on an angry swarm of flies before a pile of unwashed socks settled back on them. Perhaps these socks glistened white at some distant age, fresh from K-Mart, but not anymore. Visitors are sick of the smell: the coup de grace is governed by this part. When a woman entered the apartment, the girl fought back from the apartment. The invaders are driven away from Joey's sleazyness much more effectively than any security system. Of course, a little conversation will be made by a girl for a while, whose nose is wrinkled up by her. Of course, a drink or two will be had, and the bottle and glass eyes are suspicious for unidentified stains. The problem is that the apartment has never been the length of it, and my phone calls never come back later. I need a new roommate. Otherwise, my love life will be ruined by Joey. Click here to download a PDF handout discussing the same material. Click here to download the PDF handout with passive voice exercise. 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