

Abderrahmane Mira University-Bejaia  
Faculty of Arts and Languages  
Department of Art and French Language



Lecturer: Ms. Aloui. Z

Module: English

3 LMD/ Group: 08

## The Active and Passive Voice

### Voice

Voice is that form of the verb, which indicates whether the subject of the sentence acts or is acted upon. In other words, in the active and passive voice the subject of the sentence is either the “doer” or the “receiver” of the action expressed by the verb.

#### a)- Active Voice

In the active voice the subject of the sentence performs the action.

**E.g.** The student asked the lecturer for help.

**Tip** The active voice makes your writing:

- Clear
- Concise
- Direct

#### b)- Passive Voice

When we want the receiver of the action to be the subject, the verb is said to be in the passive voice. Most academic writing should be in the active voice. However, there are some instances where using the passive voice is more appropriate.

1. If the protagonist of the action is not known. **E.g.** My laptop was stolen from the library.
2. If the protagonist of the action is unimportant. **E.g.** I was advised to apply for a visa.

3. When you want to emphasise the object or person acted on. **E.g.** The art collection containing over 2000 works was lost in the fire.
4. When it is clear who performed the action. **E.g.** The thief was sentenced to three years in prison.
5. When you are talking about a general truth. **E.g.** Laws are established to make society run smoothly.
6. When you want to be vague about who was responsible for the action. **E.g.** Errors were made in the calculation of the budget.

### Form of Passive Verbs

Passive verbs are formed using the appropriate tense of the verb “to be” + the “past participle,” (i.e. **Subject + Be + P.P + By + Noun**).

Tense “To Be”	Form
Present	Is/ are
Present Perfect	Has been/ have been
Past	Was/ were
Past Perfect	Had been
Future	Will be

### ***Please Note!***

Only verbs which have an object can be made into the passive voice. These verbs are referred to as “transitive verbs.” Intransitive verbs do not have an object. **E.g.** The student sneezed (**Sneezed = Intransitive Verb = No Passive Form**).

### Past Participles

Past participles often have the same form as the past tense. **E.g.** Studied, experimented, argued, etc. Nevertheless, in English, there are plenty of irregular verbs.

Past Tense	Past Participle
Ran	Run
Chose	Chosen
Stole	Stolen
Made	Made
Knew	Known
Went	Gone
Saw	Seen

Tense	Active Voice	Passive Voice
<b>Present Simple</b>	The children eat the chocolate	The chocolate is eaten by the children
<b>Present Continuous</b>	The children are eating the chocolate	The chocolate is being eaten by the children
<b>Present Perfect</b>	The children have eaten the chocolate	The chocolate has been eaten by the children
<b>Past Simple</b>	The children ate the chocolate	The chocolate was eaten by the children
<b>Past Continuous</b>	The children were eating the chocolate	The chocolate was being eaten by the children
<b>Past Perfect</b>	The children had eaten the chocolate	The chocolate had been eaten by the children
<b>Future Simple</b>	The children will eat the chocolate	The chocolate will be eaten by the children
<b>Future Continuous</b>	The children will be eating the chocolate	The chocolate will be being eaten by the children
<b>Future Perfect</b>	The children will have eaten the chocolate	The chocolate will have been eaten by the children