

Passive Voice (1)

(To understand news)

Grammar



English Grammar

- **The structure of expressions in English language.**
- **This includes the structure of words, phrases, clauses and sentences.**

Grammar → Word Classes and Phrases

Word Classes = Parts of Speech

Nouns / Determiners / Pronouns / Verbs

Adjectives / Adverbs / Prepositions / Conjunctions

Verbs form the second largest word class after nouns.

Verbs

- Tenses
- Auxiliary Verbs / Modal Verbs
- Transitive Verbs / Intransitive Verbs
- Active Voice / Passive Voice
- The basic form of the verb → Infinitive

Why do we use the passive voice?

******Remember******

No Object → No Passive Voice

You are smart.

Why do we use the passive voice?

**Reason #1:
The object of the verb is more important.**

A body was found in the park.

**The active voice is:
The police found a body in the park.**

**Which one is more important?
the police (the subject) or *the body* (the object)?**

A body was found in the park (by the police).

Reason #2:
We don't know who the actor is.

John F. Kennedy was killed in 1963.

The active voice is:

Someone killed John F. Kennedy in 1963.

- the subject ("*someone*") doesn't give us any useful information.
- We don't know *who* killed John F. Kennedy so there isn't really a reason to make "someone" the subject.
- Like reason #1, the object of the verb (John F. Kennedy) is the most important thing.

Reason #3:

The actor is obvious so you don't need to say it.

English is spoken in many countries.

The active voice is:

People speak English in many countries.

Does the active sentence give us any useful information?

**In this case, we can make a passive sentence
to focus on the object (English).**

Reason #4: You don't want to say who the actor is.

Unfortunately, the report wasn't finished on time.

The active voice could be:

Unfortunately, John didn't finish the report on time.

- Are you John's friend?
- If so, you might want to use the passive sentence.
- The passive sentence doesn't focus on the actor.
- In fact, it doesn't even mention John.
- By using the passive voice, we can take the attention away from the actor and just focus on the object that received the action (the report).
- The report wasn't finished on time.
- By not including the actor, the listener doesn't know who to blame.

A good example of why we use the passive voice can be seen in this simple conversation:

A: When were you born?

B: I was born in 1978.

- Did you know that both the question and the answer are in the passive voice?
- The word 'born' is the past participle of the verb bear (bear/bore/born).
- We don't ask "When did your mother bear you?" nor do we answer "My mother bore me in 1978" because we want to talk about *you*, not your mother.
- Your mother is not important (Rule #1).
- In addition, we don't use the active voice because we know that your mother bore you.
- The only person that can give birth to a person is his or her mother.
- The actor is obvious so we don't need to say it (Rule #3)

Note:

- You can only use the passive voice with **transitive verbs**. Transitive verbs, such as *eat*, *throw*, and *read*, are followed by a direct object.
- You can eat something, throw something, and read something.
- **Intransitive verbs**, such as *happen*, *come*, and *die*, are not followed by a direct object.
- You cannot happen something, you cannot come something, you cannot die something.
- Because intransitive verbs do not have a direct object, they cannot be used in the passive voice.

Passive Form

******Remember******

No Object → No Passive Voice

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Passive Form

Active:

S + V + O

Passive:

O + V. to be + V.3 (past participle) + (by S)

V. to be → be / is / am / are / was / were / been

Auxiliary verb / Modal verb

V. to have

(have / has / had)

Passive Voice Exercise

- **Change the active sentences to the passive voice.
(Only present simple and past simple tenses)**
 1. He didn't fix the car.
 2. The police protect the town.
 3. Mary's uncle raised her in a small town.
 4. Someone painted this building last two years.
 5. Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin in 1928.
 6. Nowadays, some students study grammar on the Internet.

What is “news”?

News & Media

Where does news come from?

What is “news”?

News & Media
(newspaper / radio / television)

Where does news come from?

Where does news come from?

- Literature and Drama
- Crime
- Conflicts
- Disaster and Tragedy
- Progress and Development
- Money
- Religions
- Famous People
- Health
- Weather
- Food and Drink
- Entertainment
- Sport
- Human Interest

Passive Voice in News



To understand news

**How is “Passive Voice”
related to “the news”?**

CRIME INVESTIGATION

Bank Robbery at ABC National Bank

100,000 Baht was stolen.

The police were called to the ABC National Bank yesterday. The bank was robbed at 1 p.m. A hundred thousand baht was stolen. No customers were hurt, but one robber was shot by the police.



**The bank robber has not been found.
Many clues were left at the bank.**



No bank customers were hurt.

Several customers were interviewed about the robbery.



Thirteen customers were in the bank at the time of robbery. They followed the instructions of the robbers, and dropped to the ground. No customers were hurt in the robbery. One robber was shot by a police officer when he tried to leave the bank. The robber was hit by one bullet, but he escaped with the other robbers. They drove away in a black truck. Some of the customers were interviewed on TV about the robbery. They were happy to be alive after this terrible experience.

“When the robber was shot, I screamed.”

Clues are being investigated

Fingerprints were found at the bank.



Many clues were left at the bank. The most important clues are fingerprints of the robbers. The fingerprints were found on the desk, on the doors, and on the gun. Two guns were left at the bank as the robbers escaped in a car.

One robber was shot, and the blood he left on the floor is another important clue. The fingerprints and the blood are being studied by police investigators.

**The robbers were caught on video.
The robbery was filmed by security cameras.**



The robbers were filmed by the bank's cameras, but they have not been identified yet. The video is being analyzed by the police if you have any information.

**The passive is used when the subject
is unknown or not important**

The bank was robbed.

(We don't know who did it.)

Many clues were found.

(It's not important who found them)

The focus is on the object.

Why do we use the passive voice?

- Reason #1: The object of the verb is more important.
A body was found in the park.
- Reason #2: We don't know who the actor is.
John F. Kennedy was killed in 1963.
- Reason #3: The actor is obvious so you don't need to say it.
English is spoken in many countries.
- Reason #4: You don't want to say who the actor is.
Unfortunately, the report wasn't finished on time.

**Now read the newspaper again and
find the passive voice sentences.**

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Passive Voice (1)

(To understand news)

Grammar



Passive Voice (2)
(To understand news)

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Writing personal letter

What is “personal letter”?

A **Personal letter** is sent from one individual to another individual or organization in order to address matters of an informal nature. Examples of these can include;

- **Apologies**
- **Thank you's**
- **Personal reference**
- **Congratulations**
- **Invitations**
- **Condolences**

They differ from formal types in that they can be used to express personal feelings and depending on the relationship between the sender and receiver do not require formal concise language.

