

## PASSIVE VOICE – PRESENT TENSE

The structure for the passive voice in the present tense is as follows:

| ADJECTIVE | + NOUN  | + TO BE (Present Tense) | + Past Participle | + COMPLEMENTIZER |
|-----------|---------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Good      | tea     | is                      | grown             | in China.        |
| Beautiful | flowers | are                     | exported          | by Ecuador.      |
| Excellent | beer    | is                      | produced          | by Germany.      |
| Accurate  | watches | are                     | made              | by the Swiss.    |

Note: The adjective is optional.

*Examples:*

They print many news papers around the world.(active voice)  
(object)

Many newspapers are printed each day around the world. (passive voice)  
(subject)

Thousands of tourists visit Mount Rainier each year. (active voice)  
(object)

Mount Rainier is visited by thousands of tourists each year.(passive voice)  
(subject)

Malaysia produces good quality rubber. (active voice)  
(object)

Good quality rubber is produced in Malaysia. (passive voice)  
(subject)

## PASSIVE VOICE – PAST TENSE

The passive voice is also used in the past tense.

*Examples:*

Hemingway wrote good novels. (active voice)  
(object)

Good novels were written by Hemingway. (passive voice)  
(subject)

The Romans defeated many armies. (active voice)  
(object)

Many armies were defeated by the Romans. (passive voice)  
(subject)

A hurricane destroyed the village. (active voice)  
(object)

The village was destroyed by a hurricane. (passive voice)  
(subject)

The structure for the passive voice in the past is the same as it is in the present except we use the past of “to be”.

| <b>SUBJECT</b> | <b>+ TO BE (PAST TENSE)</b> | <b>+ PAST PARTICIPLE</b> | <b>+ COMPLEMENTIZER</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Great pyramids | were                        | built                    | by the Egyptians.       |
| Large statues  | were                        | discovered               | on Eastern Island.      |
| Earth          | was                         | produced                 | by dinosaurs.           |
| San Francisco  | was                         | destroyed                | by an earthquake.       |

*Examples:*

A powerful typhoon hit Japan yesterday. (active voice)  
(object)

Japan was hit by a powerful typhoon yesterday. (passive voice)  
(subject)

Drunk drivers caused 1,250 accidents last year. (active voice)  
(object)

1,250 accidents were caused by drunk drivers last year. (passive voice)  
(subject)

## **PASSIVE VOICE – WITH THE PERFECT TENSE**

The perfect tenses are not exception to the passive voice. Here we have some examples that illustrate the use of the passive voice with the perfect tense.

I have changed many things in my life. (active)  
(object)

Many things have been change by me in my life. (passive)  
(subject)

The scientist have made new discoveries recently. (active)  
(object)

New discoveries have been made by the scientists recently. (passive)  
(subject)

Management has found a new sponsor. (active)  
(object)

A new sponsor has been found by management. (passive)  
(subject)

The structure for the passive voice with the perfect tense is as follows:

| <b>OBJECT</b>   | <b>+ HAVE/HAS BEEN</b> | <b>+ PAST PARTICIPLE</b> | <b>+ COMPLEMENTIZER</b>     |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Many things     | have been              | changed                  | by me In my life.           |
| New discoveries | have been              | made                     | by the scientists recently. |
| A new sponsor   | has been               | found                    | by management.              |

## PASSIVE VOICE – FUTURE TENSE

The passive voice can also be used in the future tense. The structure is a little bit different for the passive future voice than it is in the present and the past passive voice.

*Examples:*

Scientists will make great discoveries of the universe in the future. (active voice)  
(object)

Great discoveries of the universe will be made by scientists in the future. (passive voice)  
(subject)

Brazil will win the next World Cup. (active voice)  
(object)

The next World Cup will be won by Brazil. (passive voice)  
(subject)

Sony will continue to make good products. (active voice)  
(object)

Good products will continue to be made by Sony. (passive voice)  
(subject)

The structure for the passive voice in the future is as follows:

| <b>SUBJECT</b> | <b>+ WILL BE</b> | <b>+ PAST PARTICIPLE</b> | <b>+ COMPLEMENTIZER</b>              |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| She            | will be          | congratulated            | by many people.                      |
| Ecuador        | will be          | visited                  | by thousands of tourists.            |
| Many people    | will be          | educated                 | by brilliant teachers in the future. |
| Oil            | will be          | replaced                 | by more efficient forms of fuel.     |

*Examples:*

Many students will be expelled if they don't change their behavior. (passive voice)

The planet will be destroyed if we don't take care of it. (passive voice)

Many planets will be visited by people in the future. (passive voice)

A cure for AIDS will be discovered by scientists soon. (passive voice)

Many bottles of champagne will be sold in stores during the New Year's Eve celebration.  
(passive voice)

## PASSIVE VOICE – WITH MODAL VERBS

As with all other structures in English we can use the passive voice with modal verbs.

*Examples:*

The scientist might develop a vaccine very soon.

(active)

(object)

A vaccine might be developed by the scientists very soon. (passive)

(subject)

We must finish this job by Friday.

(active) (object)

This job must be finished by Friday. (passive) (subject)

We should mail the letter as soon as possible. (active)

(object)

The letter should be mailed as soon as possible. (passive)

(subject)

The company can buy a new computer easily.

(active) (object)

A new computer can be bought by the company easily. (passive)

(subject)

The management should find a new sponsor for the team.

(active) (object)

A new sponsor for the team should be found by management. (passive)

(subject)

The structure for the passive voice with other modal verbs is the same as the one for the passive voice with "will".

| OBJECT         | + MODAL VERB | + BE | + PAST PARTICIPLE | + COMPLEMENTIZER           |
|----------------|--------------|------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| The letter     | should       | be   | mailed            | as soon as possible.       |
| This job       | must         | be   | finished          | by Friday. No matter what. |
| The decree     | can          | be   | signed            | now.                       |
| A new vaccine  | might        | be   | developed         | by the scientist.          |
| A new computer | could        | be   | bought            | easily.                    |



This is a general passive voice review exercise. Change the following active voice sentences to passive voice. Don't forget to pay attention to spelling and capitalization.

Examples:

**Active voice:** We might mail the letters tomorrow.

**Passive voice:** The letters might be mailed by us tomorrow.

1. We can pay the bill at the end of the moth.

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2. Researchers will discover new forms of life.

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3. She is going to wash the dishes.

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4. The Russians put in orbit the first artificial satellite.

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5. Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492.

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6. Our company should buy new computers for the office.

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7. The banks are closing many checking accounts.

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8. Gabriel Garcia Marquez wrote One Hundred Years of Solitude.

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9. The doctor examined the patient thoroughly.

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10. The enemy shot down one of our helicopters.

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11. The real estate company might sell out house soon.

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12. The sanitation workers will pick up the garbage tomorrow.

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13. The company will issue a check for your services.

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14. Someone has stolen my car.

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15. Politicians should consider global warming more seriously.

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16. The bank could increase the amount of his mortgage.

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17. The credit cards have increased the APR one more time.

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18. The graphic designer must finish this job today.

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19. They have found the missing documents.

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20. You attached and sent the funny picture.

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