

Headway Plus

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Active and Passive voice

-What is an Active Verb?

-How do you know if a verb is active?

Verbs are either 'active' or 'passive' according to whether the subject of the sentence is doing the action or whether they are having it done to them. An active verb is a word that basically **shows an action** within a sentence. In an active sentence, the subject of the sentence is the thing or the **person carrying out the action** (see the below examples). Whereas, in a passive sentence, the thing being acted upon is the subject of the sentence. **So active verbs are those verbs, in sentences, which are being done by the subject of the sentence.** All verbs are doing words and involve action, but examples of 'active verbs' depend on whether the thing being done, (cleaning, eating etcetera), is being done by the subject of the sentence or not.

- I am building a house. Active
- You are driving the car.

- The house was built by me. Passive
- The car was driven by you.

Passive voice

A verb is in the passive voice when the **subject** of the sentence is acted on by the verb. For example, in "The ball was thrown by the pitcher," *the ball* (the subject) receives the action of the verb, and *was thrown* is in the passive voice. The same sentence cast in the active voice would be, "The pitcher threw the ball."

Examples with Explanations

Ali talks for an incredibly long time. The active verb here would be **talks**; as talking is something that Ali can do. **Remember, active verbs express something that a person, animal, or object can do.** That's why they are named Action verbs
Jack cleaned the house. The verb **To Clean** is active here, (cleaned) because the subject of the sentence 'Jack' is doing the cleaning. **The house was cleaned by Jack.** In this sentence, the verb 'To Clean' is **passive** **because the subject of the**

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sentence, the house, is being cleaned. *My parents bought a house.* The verb is active, the subject (my parents) is doing the action of 'buying'. "*Sally brushed the dog*" Here "brushed" is an active verb. Compare this with "The dog was brushed by Sally" – where "was brushed" is a passive verb.

-When should you use the active and passive voice?

-What is the difference between active and passive verbs?

There are 2 types of sentences - active and passive. All verbs have an active and passive voice. Where active verbs detail the action ie: *The teacher taught the lesson.* The passive sentence would read: The students are taught the lesson. The passive voice is used when we want to **emphasize the action (the verb) and the object** of a sentence rather than the subject. Basically it means when someone is not physically doing anything! For example,

Active:

- I am building a house.
- You are driving the car.
- Bill is eating his dinner
- Mary is playing the game.
- Annie washed the dishes
- Katie carried her bag

Passive:

- The house was built by me.
- The car was driven by you.
- The dinner was eaten by Bill.
- The game was played by Mary.
- The dishes were washed by Annie
- The bag was carried by Katie

Quiz 1//

1. I ate a piece of chocolate cake.

- active
- passive

2. The librarian read the book to the students.

- active
- passive

3. The money was stolen.

- active
- passive

4. They are paid on Fridays.

- active
- passive

5. The movie is being made in Hollywood.

- active
- passive

6. I washed my car three weeks ago.

- active
- passive

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7. His hair was cut by a professional.

- active
- passive

8. I will introduce you to my boss this week.

- active
- passive

9. It would have been fixed at the weekend.

- active
- passive

10. The national anthem is being sung by Jason this time.

- active
- passive