

The rooster is crowing.
subject → verb

My friend loves dogs.
subject verb object

The Active and Passive Voice



We usually write and speak in the **active voice**.

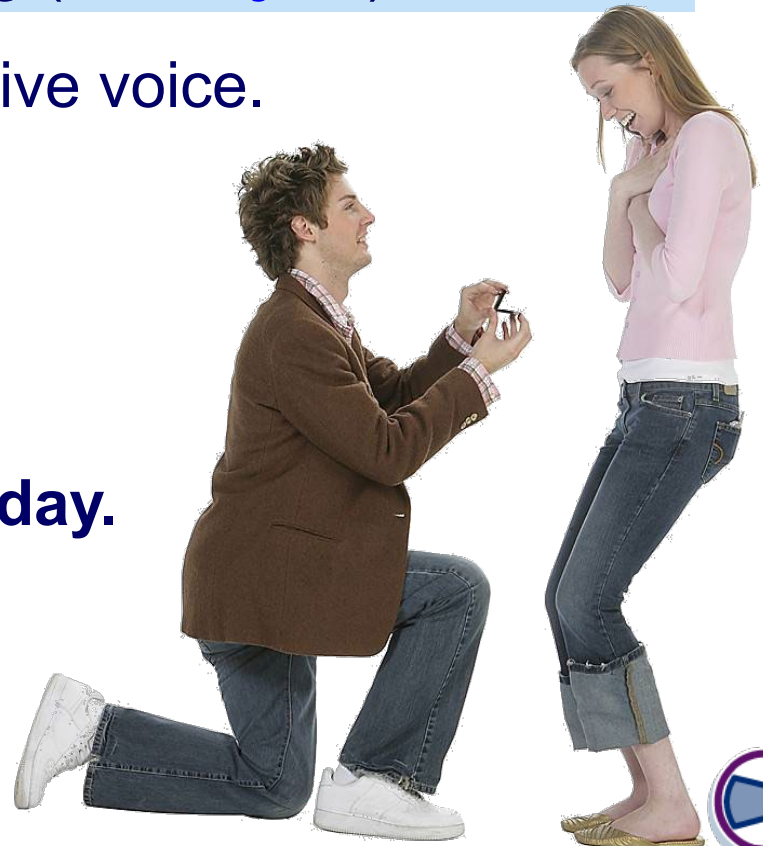
In a sentence in the active voice, the **subject** is the most important thing. It performs the action (**verb**), which is received by someone or something (**the object**).

Look at these sentences in the active voice.

Mark proposed to Caroline.



Katie baked a chocolate cake today.



The passive voice

Sometimes the action that has happened and to *whom* it has happened is more important than the person (subject) who did it. This is when we use the **passive voice**.

In a sentence in the passive voice, the object is moved to the start of the sentence and the subject comes *after* the verb.

Caroline was proposed to by Mark.

A chocolate cake was baked today by Katie.



The subject can sometimes be left out in the passive voice: **A chocolate cake was baked today.**



Active or passive?



Completing passive voice sentences

Use these prompts to write some sentences in the passive voice.

1.man.....hunted.....police.
2. Dave's car.....stolen.....joy riders.
3. The Superbowl.....won.....the Saints.
4. The entire pizza.....eaten.....that night.



Can you turn your completed passive voice sentences into active voice sentences?

These sentences are all in the active voice.

Can you rewrite them in the passive voice?

1. Luz Molina painted the winning picture.
The winning picture was painted by Luz Molina.

2. The police recovered the stolen car.
The stolen car was recovered by the police.

3. I broke the window.
The window was broken by me.

4. A big wave hit the side of the boat.
The side of the boat was hit by a big wave.



Write four of your own sentences in the active voice, then swap them with a partner and try rewriting each other's sentences in the passive voice.

When do we use the passive voice?

The passive voice is a useful way of writing when you want to sound more formal and detached. This is why it is often used in scientific writing, news reports and explanatory texts.

Why do you think these sentences have been written in the passive voice?

1. The mixture was filtered into a beaker.

The action is important here, not who did it, so the passive voice is used.

2. \$10 million was stolen from a bank in Boston last night.

The passive voice is used here because the subject (the person who stole the money) is unknown.



Knowing when to use each voice



Would it be better to use the active or passive voice for each type of writing? Drag each example to the correct box.

Active

Passive

a personal diary

solve

C

↶

?

Activity – writing in the passive voice

To write up a science experiment, it is best to use the passive voice because the actions are the most important thing, not the person who carried them out.

This science practical has been written up in the active voice.

Can you rewrite the report using the passive voice?

Purifying rock salts

I ground the rock salt.

I mixed it with water.

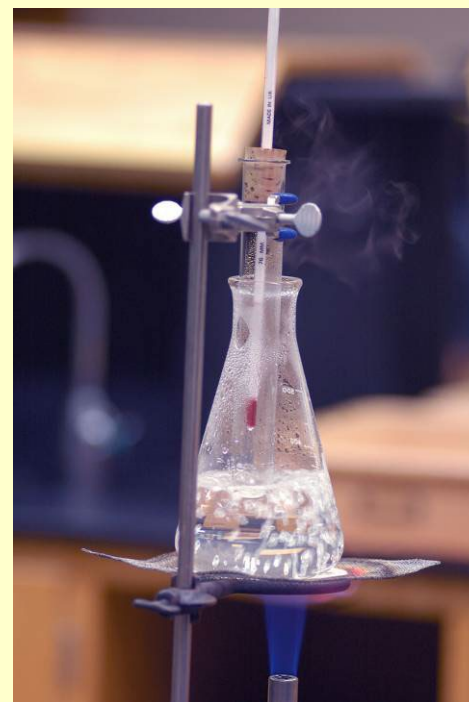
Then I stirred it.

I took a filter, folded it and put it in the funnel.

Next I filtered the solution.

Then I heated it.

Finally, I left it to evaporate.



Press on the answer of your choice!

Test your understanding of the active and passive voice in this quiz.
You will be racing in the blue car.
You must answer each question correctly in order to beat the red car across the finishing line!
Press **start** to begin.

start

