

## Passive VS Active Voice

### Introduction

1) In sentences written in the active voice, the subject performs the action. In sentences written in the passive voice, the subject receives the action.

*I **wrote** a book. (Active Voice)*

*That book **was written** by me. (Passive Voice)*

2) The passive form is made up of the verb *to be* and *the past participle*. Depending on the tense, the form of the verb *to be* can change.

*The dinner **is being cooked**. (Present Continuous)*

*The dinner **was cooked**. (Past Simple)*

*The dinner **has been cooked**. (Present Perfect)*

The passive voice is usually used:

a) to emphasize the action rather than the person or thing performing it.

*The decision **has been made**.*

b) to avoid mentioning the person or thing performing the action.

*The rumours **have been spreading** at the office. (Either you know who spreads the rumours or you are not sure who does that.)*

c) to describe a situation where the subject is not important.

*Up to 7 billion trees **are being cut down** every year.*

d) to give instructions, set rules etc.

*Smoking **is prohibited**.*

*Anyone under the age of 18 **is not allowed** in any bar.*

### Short Story Dialogue

– *I came across an interesting study. **It is said** that 16 million people in the US **are diagnosed** with clinical depression every year.*

– *Wow, the number is very high!*

– *Thankfully, **it is possible** to treat it effectively with medications, therapy, and proper mental support.*

– *Yeah, but more importantly, diagnosis **should be made** by a mental health professional.*

**Independent Practice - Passive VS Active Voice**

**1) Mark the sentences in the active voice as A and the ones in the passive voice as P.**

- a. I can't imagine him living alone.
- b. I can see why his words were misinterpreted.
- c. We predict that Max is going to win this competition.
- d. The letter was delivered by air mail.
- e. It can be concluded that the experiment was successful.
- f. When John was a kid, he was bitten by a dog.

**2) Write sentences in the passive voice using the phrases in brackets.**

a. (to decorate a Christmas tree; children)
.....
b. (to be said that; women live longer than men)
.....
c. (Macbeth; Shakespeare)
.....
d. (to greet/with a warm smile)
.....

---

## Independent Practice: Answers - Passive VS Active Voice

**1) Mark the sentences in the active voice as A and the ones in the passive voice as P.**

- a. I can't imagine him living alone. **(A)**
- b. I can see why **his words were misinterpreted**. **(P)**
- c. We predict that Max is going to win this competition. **(A)**
- d. **The letter was delivered by air mail**. **(P)**
- e. **It can be concluded** that the experiment was successful. **(P)**
- f. When John was a kid, **he was bitten by a dog**. **(P)**

**2) Write sentences in the passive voice using the phrases in brackets. Sample Answers:**

- a. A Christmas tree was decorated by children.
- b. It is said that women live longer than men.
- c. Macbeth was written by Shakespeare.
- d. I was greeted with a warm smile.