



Sophisticated Sentences: Active and Passive Voice

In active voice, the actor and the action are clearly identified.
In passive voice, you do not know who or what is doing the action.

	active voice: The truck tows the car.		active voice: Bob fixed the door.
	passive voice: The car is towed.		passive voice: The door was fixed.

Active voice is usually more direct. Passive voice can hide responsibility. For the most part, you should try to write in active voice.

passive voice: A mistake was made.	active voice: I made a mistake.
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In the sciences, the passive voice is often preferred. The passive voice can be useful if you want to emphasize the action, not the person doing the action.

passive voice: The solution was mixed.	active voice: The scientist mixed the solution.
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A verb is in passive voice when the receiver of the action is the subject of the sentence. Adding the actor at the end of a sentence will not change whether the verb is in active or passive voice.

passive voice: The map was lost by the guide.	active voice: The guide lost the map.
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Verbs that are not action verbs are called **stative verbs**. Only action verbs have active or passive voice. Stative verbs are linking verbs and the verb "to be."

stative voice: I am a college student.	stative voice: The woman felt sick.
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