

# Passive and Active Voice

Active voice is often more effective and concise than using the passive voice. Active voice creates a clearer, stronger sentence. In order to change a sentence from passive voice to active voice, make the subject of the passive sentence the direct object and make the actor the subject of the active sentence.

**Passive/Weak-** Sentences in which the object is being acted upon *are preferred* by most instructors.

**Active/Strong-** Most *instructors prefer* sentences in which the subject is performing the action.

**Tip: Using a single verb creates an active sentence, while using verb phrases often creates passive sentences!**

**Example-**

**Active Voice-** The subject is performing the action.

The gentleman opened the door.

**Subject/Actor → Transitive verb in active voice → Direct object.**

**Passive Voice-** The subject receives the action or the actor is unclear.

The door was opened by the gentleman.

The car was stolen.

**Subject/object of action → Transitive verb in passive voice → (optional) by actor.**

**However!**

There are two situations where the passive voice is acceptable:

1. When the actor is unknown

**Example-** Mistakes were made.

2. When the action is more important than the actor.

**Example-** The antique toys were sold on Ebay by the collector.

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