

VOICE CHANGE

DEFINITION

Voice is the grammatical category that describes the relationship between the **subject, verb, and object** in a sentence — specifically, whether the subject performs or receives the action.

VOICE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Active	Subject performs the action.	The scientist published the findings.
Passive	Subject receives the action; emphasis shifts to the object.	The findings were published by the scientist.
Quasi-Passive	Active in grammatical form but passive in meaning.	This novel reads effortlessly. / The bridge is constructing.

RULES FOR CONVERSION (Active → Passive)

- ✦ Place the object of the active sentence as the subject of the passive sentence.
- ✦ Choose the auxiliary verb (is / am / are / was / were / has been / have been / had been / will be / etc.) according to the tense and number of the new subject.
- ✦ Use the Past Participle (V3) form of the main verb.
- ✦ Use the preposition 'by' before the passive object (the original subject).
- ✦ Change subject pronouns: I → me, he → him, she → her, they → them, we → us.
- ✦ Omit 'by + passive object' when the agent is unknown, obvious, or unimportant.

TENSE-WISE CONVERSION

1. Simple Present Tense

ACTIVE VOICE Subject + V1 (+s/es) + Object	PASSIVE VOICE Passive Subject + is/am/are + V3 + by + Passive Object
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Examples:

- The government allocates funds for rural development.**
→ *Funds are allocated for rural development by the government.*
- She writes the annual report every December.**
→ *The annual report is written every December by her.*
- Citizens elect representatives to Parliament.**
→ *Representatives are elected to Parliament by citizens.*

2. Present Continuous Tense

ACTIVE VOICE Subject + is/am/are + V1-ing + Object	PASSIVE VOICE Passive Subject + is/am/are + being + V3 + by + Passive Object
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Examples:

4. The Board of Directors is reviewing the merger proposal.
→ The merger proposal is being reviewed by the Board of Directors.
5. Archaeologists are excavating the ancient ruins.
→ The ancient ruins are being excavated by archaeologists.

3. Present Perfect Tense

ACTIVE VOICE Subject + has/have + V3 + Object	PASSIVE VOICE Passive Subject + has/have + been + V3 + by + Passive Object
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Examples:

6. The committee has approved the revised syllabus.
→ The revised syllabus has been approved by the committee.
7. Scientists have discovered a new exoplanet beyond the solar system.
→ A new exoplanet beyond the solar system has been discovered by scientists.

4. Simple Past Tense

ACTIVE VOICE Subject + V2 + Object	PASSIVE VOICE Passive Subject + was/were + V3 + by + Passive Object
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Examples:

8. Rabindranath Tagore wrote Gitanjali in Bengali.
→ Gitanjali was written in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore.
9. The Supreme Court delivered a landmark judgement yesterday.
→ A landmark judgement was delivered by the Supreme Court yesterday.

5. Past Continuous Tense

ACTIVE VOICE Subject + was/were + V1-ing + Object	PASSIVE VOICE Passive Subject + was/were + being + V3 + by + Passive Object
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Examples:

10. The students were debating the environmental policy.
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→ The environmental policy was being debated by the students.

11. The technician was repairing the server when the power failed.

→ The server was being repaired by the technician when the power failed.

6. Past Perfect Tense

ACTIVE VOICE

Subject + had + V3 + Object

PASSIVE VOICE

Passive Subject + had + been + V3 +
by + Passive Object

Examples:

12. The negotiators had finalised the treaty before dawn.

→ The treaty had been finalised by the negotiators before dawn.

13. She had completed the research well before the deadline.

→ The research had been completed well before the deadline by her.

7. Simple Future Tense

ACTIVE VOICE

Subject + will/shall + V1 + Object

PASSIVE VOICE

Passive Subject + will/shall + be +
V3 + by + Passive Object

Examples:

14. The authorities will announce the results by Friday.

→ The results will be announced by the authorities by Friday.

15. ISRO will launch a lunar module next year.

→ A lunar module will be launched by ISRO next year.

8. Future Perfect Tense

ACTIVE VOICE

Subject + will/shall + have + V3 +
Object

PASSIVE VOICE

Passive Subject + will/shall + have
+ been + V3 + by + Passive Object

Examples:

16. The engineers will have completed the bridge by 2027.

→ The bridge will have been completed by the engineers by 2027.

17. She will have submitted her doctoral thesis by September.

→ Her doctoral thesis will have been submitted by her by September.

✂ Passive voice CANNOT be formed for: Present Perfect Continuous, Past Perfect Continuous, Future Continuous, and Future Perfect Continuous tenses.

✂ Intransitive verbs (verbs with no object) cannot be converted into the passive voice.

PASSIVE VOICE WITH MODAL AUXILIARIES

ACTIVE VOICE Subject + Modal (can/could/may/might/should/must/ought to/need to/have to) + V1 + Object	PASSIVE VOICE Passive Subject + Modal + be + V3 + by + Passive Object
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Examples:

18. **Citizens must abide by the Constitution of India.**
→ *The Constitution of India must be abided by citizens.*
19. **The administration should address the grievances promptly.**
→ *The grievances should be addressed promptly by the administration.*
20. **We ought to preserve our cultural heritage.**
→ *Our cultural heritage ought to be preserved.*
21. **You need not submit the form today.**
→ *The form need not be submitted today.*

INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES

A. Yes / No Questions

- ✦ Step 1: Convert the Yes/No question into a statement (assertive form).
- ✦ Step 2: Apply the standard passive voice rules.
- ✦ Step 3: Invert the auxiliary and the passive subject to restore question form.
- ✦ Step 4: Add a question mark.

Examples:

22. **Did the editor review the manuscript carefully?**
→ *Was the manuscript reviewed carefully by the editor?*
23. **Has the principal signed the transfer certificate?**
→ *Has the transfer certificate been signed by the principal?*
24. **Were the delegates discussing the peace accord?**
→ *Was the peace accord being discussed by the delegates?*

B. Wh- Questions

- ✦ Step 1: Temporarily set aside the wh-word.
- ✦ Step 2: Convert the remaining Yes/No question into a statement.

- ✦ Step 3: Apply passive voice rules.
- ✦ Step 4: Restore question form (auxiliary before subject).
- ✦ Step 5: Prefix the wh-word. If 'Who?' is the active subject, write 'By whom?' in the passive.

Examples:

25. **Why did the committee reject the proposal?**
→ *Why was the proposal rejected by the committee?*
26. **Who drafted the new education policy?**
→ *By whom was the new education policy drafted?*
27. **What were the workers loading onto the trucks?**
→ *What was being loaded onto the trucks by the workers?*
28. **When will the court deliver the verdict?**
→ *When will the verdict be delivered by the court?*

IMPERATIVE SENTENCES

Imperatives express commands, requests, advice, suggestions, or orders. The passive conversion varies according to the type of imperative.

MOOD	ACTIVE VOICE	PASSIVE VOICE
Command	Verb + Object	Let + Object + be + V3
Order	Verb + Object	You are ordered to + V1 + Object
Request	Please + Verb + Object	You are requested to + V1 + Object
Advice	Verb + Object	You are advised to + V1 + Object
Suggestion	Verb + Object	Object + should be + V3

Examples:

29. **Submit the assignment before the deadline.**
→ *Let the assignment be submitted before the deadline.*
30. **Please revise your answers carefully.**
→ *You are requested to revise your answers carefully.*
31. **Consult a specialist before taking medication.**
→ *You are advised to consult a specialist before taking medication.*
32. **Maintain decorum in the examination hall.**
→ *Decorum should be maintained in the examination hall.*

Imperatives beginning with 'Let'

ACTIVE VOICE Let + Indirect Object + V1 + Direct Object	PASSIVE VOICE Let + Direct Object + be + V3 + by + Indirect Object
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33. Let her present her findings to the panel.

→ *Let her findings be presented to the panel by her.*

34. Let me handle the crisis communication.

→ *Let the crisis communication be handled by me.*

ACTIVE VOICE Let us + V1 (Suggestion)	PASSIVE VOICE It is suggested that we should + V1
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35. Let us deliberate on the consequences.

→ *It is suggested that we should deliberate on the consequences.*

36. Let us strive for a sustainable future.

→ *It is suggested that we should strive for a sustainable future.*

TRANSITIVE VERBS WITH TWO OBJECTS

When a verb takes both a direct object and an indirect object, either object may become the passive subject. The remaining object is called the **retained object**.

✎ The indirect (personal) object is generally preferred as the passive subject.

Examples:

37. The professor offered the students an extension.

→ *The students were offered an extension by the professor. (preferred)*

→ *An extension was offered to the students by the professor. (also correct)*

38. The editor sent the journalist a detailed brief.

→ *The journalist was sent a detailed brief by the editor. (preferred)*

→ *A detailed brief was sent to the journalist by the editor. (also correct)*

PASSIVE VOICE WITH SPECIAL PREPOSITIONS

Certain verbs and adjectives in the passive voice take prepositions other than 'by'. These must be memorised.

WORD / ADJECTIVE	PREPOSITION USED	EXAMPLE
Pleased	with	We were pleased with the outcome.
Interested	in	She is interested in environmental law.

Astonished / Surprised	at	I was astonished at his composure.
Disgusted	with / at	They were disgusted at the negligence.
Married	to	He was married to a diplomat.
Provide / Supply	with	The lab was provided with equipment.
Prefer	to	Silence is preferred to argument here.
Congratulate	on	She was congratulated on her promotion.
Compare	with / to	This work was compared with his earlier novel.
Known	to	The formula is known to all chemists.
Aimed	at	The scheme is aimed at rural upliftment.
Shocked	at / by	He was shocked at the revelation.

Examples:

39. **The anomaly surprised the entire research team.**

→ *The entire research team was surprised at the anomaly.*

40. **His achievement in the Olympics pleased the nation.**

→ *The nation was pleased with his achievement in the Olympics.*

41. **Everybody knows Einstein's theory of relativity.**

→ *Einstein's theory of relativity is known to everybody.*

QUASI-PASSIVE VOICE

A quasi-passive sentence is **active in form but passive in sense**. Such constructions arise with verbs of sensation, quality, or ongoing action.

A. Verbs with Complement

42. **This fabric feels smooth.**

→ *This fabric is smooth when it is felt.*

43. **The proposal sounds feasible.**

→ *The proposal is feasible when it is heard.*

44. **Fresh coffee smells invigorating.**

→ *Fresh coffee is invigorating when it is smelt.*

B. Verbs without Complement (ongoing action)

45. **The metro line is constructing rapidly.**

→ *The metro line is being constructed rapidly.*

46. **The new hospital is building near the highway.**

→ *The new hospital is being built near the highway.*

PASSIVE OF INFINITIVES & PECULIARITIES

A. 'To + Verb' Constructions

47. **There are many issues to address in the summit.**

→ *There are many issues to be addressed in the summit.*

48. **It is time to implement the new policy.**

→ *It is time for the new policy to be implemented.*

B. Verbs of Perception + Plain Infinitive

✎ When 'see / hear / watch / notice / feel / make / let' is followed by an object and a bare infinitive, the passive form adds 'to' before the infinitive.

49. **The witness saw the suspect flee the scene.**

→ *The suspect was seen to flee the scene by the witness.*

50. **The teacher made the students rewrite the essay.**

→ *The students were made to rewrite the essay by the teacher.*

C. Omitting the Agent ('by + Object')

✎ Omit the passive agent when it is: (i) unknown, (ii) irrelevant, or (iii) a vague pronoun such as 'one', 'someone', 'people', 'they'.

51. **Someone hacked the government database.**

→ *The government database was hacked.*

52. **People widely regard him as the father of the nation.**

→ *He is widely regarded as the father of the nation.*

D. Factitive Object (Object used as Complement)

53. **The people elected her Prime Minister.**

→ *She was elected Prime Minister by the people.*

54. **His peers consider him a visionary leader.**

→ *He is considered a visionary leader by his peers.*

E. Reflexive Object

✎ Reflexive pronouns (himself, herself, themselves, etc.) remain as they are in the passive.

55. **She contradicted herself during the debate.**

→ *She was contradicted by herself during the debate.*

F. Avoiding Double Passives

- ✂ A double passive occurs when two passives appear in the same clause. This is grammatically incorrect.
- ✂ Incorrect: A resolution was proposed to be passed by the council.
- ✂ Correct: It was proposed by the council to pass a resolution.

QUICK REFERENCE: PRONOUN CHANGES

PERSON	ACTIVE (Subject)	PASSIVE (Object)	PASSIVE (Subject)
1st Singular	I	me	I
1st Plural	we	us	we
2nd Person	you	you	you
3rd M Singular	he	him	he
3rd F Singular	she	her	she
3rd Plural	they	them	they