

11.3 Active and Passive Voice

Differences Between Active and Passive Voice

Voice is the form of a verb that shows whether or not the subject is performing the action. A verb is active if its subject performs the action. A verb is passive if its action is performed upon the subject.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
Alice <i>left</i> a message. We called the doctor.	A message <i>was left</i> by Alice. The doctor <i>was called</i> .

The Forms of Passive Verbs

A passive verb is made from a form of *be* plus the past participle of a transitive verb.

THE VERB FOLLOW IN THE PASSIVE VOICE		
Tense	Basic Forms	Progressive Forms
Present	I am followed.	I am being followed.
Past	I was followed.	I was being followed.
Future	I will be followed.	
Present Perfect	I have been followed.	
Past Perfect	I had been followed.	
Future Perfect	I will have been followed.	

EXERCISE A: Distinguishing Between the Active and Passive Voice. After each sentence, write *active* or *passive* to describe the verb.

EXAMPLE: That book was autographed by the author. passive

- The authorities have been notified. _____
- This lettuce was grown in our own garden. _____
- Mom added fresh mushrooms just before serving the salad. _____
- Delegates to the convention have already been selected. _____
- Every scrap of food was eaten during the party. _____
- The team will elect a new captain tomorrow. _____
- That car was stolen from the municipal parking lot. _____
- Lydia has been visiting us this week. _____
- Damian has already chosen his courses. _____
- The governor has been asked to speak. _____

EXERCISE B: Forming the Tenses of Passive Verbs. Write the basic forms of each of the following verbs in the passive voice.

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| 1. say (with <i>it</i>) | 2. drive (with <i>they</i>) | 3. tell (with <i>you</i>) | 4. praise (with <i>we</i>) |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
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