

Aggie Grammar Guide: Passive Voice Formation

Intermediate Practice

For each sentence, first determine if it is active or passive and write your answer. Second, revise each sentence to change active voice to passive voice and passive voice to active voice. Remember, if a passive sentence does not have a doer, you will have to include one when forming the active.

There may be multiple correct ways to revise each sentence, although you will see only one option after you submit each response. Optional "by" phrases appear in parentheses in the possible revisions. Make sure your answer has the same verb form and tense as the suggested answer.

*Example: My professor **appreciated** my question.*

Answer: Active

*Example: My professor **appreciated** my question.*

*Passive Revision: My question **was appreciated** by my professor.*

- 1) The reasons **are stated** by Humboldt State University.
- 2) In 1983, a century after the invention of the telephone, mobile telephones **were developed** by two AT&T Labs researchers, Richard H. Frenkiel and Joel S. Engel.
- 3) The physical problems that **are caused** by the beach cruiser are problems that happen with all types of bikes.
- 4) The teachers **required** her to speak English all the time.
- 5) Apple, Samsung, and Nokia **are known** by almost every individual as three well-known companies in the smartphone market.
- 6) People **consider** having corn in their diet a blessing because of the values it has.
- 7) The Wright brothers **invented** the first airplanes.
- 8) More recently, people **have used** mobile phones to send a text message.

- 9) The college student **will be forced** to practice the language.
- 10) Studying abroad **has been considered** by many college students.

Advanced Practice

For each set of grammatically correct active and passive sentences, first write which sentence is stylistically more effective from the choices, and second, explain your choice in complete.

Please note, there may be multiple ways to write your explanation. Compare your explanation to the one provided in the answer key and determine if one is more effective.

Example:

- **Passive:** *Much research was being done on babies to understand their way of learning.*
- **Active:** *Scientists were doing much research on babies to understand their way of learning.*

Explain why your choice is more effective

AGG Response: Passive is preferred.

The passive is preferred as the sentence emphasizes the research, rather than any doer of the research. Using the active and inserting a doer narrows the scope of the action considerably and may exclude others who could conduct this research (for example, educators). Furthermore, the passive voice is often a convention used in scientific writing.

- 1) Passive: In the 1890s, lower crossbars **were designed** to make women feel more comfortable and safer on bicycles.
Active: In the 1890s, bicycle builders **designed** lower crossbars to make women feel more comfortable and safer on bicycles.
- 2) Passive: To respond to the questions that **were asked** by students, Hadfield recorded experiments in space and posted the recordings on YouTube.
Active (a): To respond to students' questions, Hadfield recorded experiments in space and posted the recordings on YouTube.
Active (b): The students **asked** questions to which Hadfield responded by recording experiments in space and posting the recordings on YouTube.

- 3) Passive: If the problem **is** not **solved**, the Winter Olympics will pay the consequences.
Active: If someone **does** not **solve** the problem, the Winter Olympics will pay the consequences.
- 4) Passive: The author defines this action as a "legitimizing myth," which **is talked** about in the beginning paragraphs of the article.
Active (a): The author defines this action as a "legitimizing myth," which the author **talks** about in the beginning paragraphs of the article.
Active (b): The author **defines** this action as a "legitimizing myth" in the beginning paragraphs of the article.