



## 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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