VOICE; PASSIVE AND ACTIVE

Voice refers to the form of a verb that indicates when a ***grammatical subject performs the action*** or ***is the receiver of the action***. When a sentence is written in the active voice, ***the subject performs the action***; in the passive voice, ***the subject receives the action***. In ***academic writing***, it is generally preferred to choose an ***active verb*** and pair it with a subject that names the person or thing doing or performing the action. ***Active verbs are stronger*** and usually ***more emphatic*** than forms of the verb ***"be"*** or ***verbs*** in the ***passive*** voice.

EXAMPLES;

Active: **The award-winning chef prepares** each meal with loving care.
Passive: Each meal **is prepared** with loving care **by** the award-winning chef.

In the above example of an active sentence, the simple subject is **"chef"** and **"prepares"** is the verb: the chef prepares "each meal with loving care." In the passive sentence, **"meal" is the simple subject** and **"is prepared"** is the verb: each meal is prepared "by the award-winning chef."

In effect, the ***object*** of the active sentence becomes the ***subject*** in the passive sentence. Although both sentences have the same basic components, their structure makes them different from each other.

Active sentences are about what people (or things) do, while passive sentences are about what happens to people (or things).

USING THE AUXILIARY VERB "BE"

The passive voice is formed by using a form of the auxiliary verb "be" (***be, am, is, are, was, were, being, been)*** followed by the ***past participle*** of the main verb.

ACTIVE	**PASSIVE**
He **loves** me.	I **am loved**.
We **took** our children to the circus.	The children **were taken** to the circus.
A thief **stole** my money.	My money **was stolen**.

Notice how the "be" auxiliaries change the meaning of the verbs from action to condition or from ***"doing"*** to ***"being."***

He **remembers** his grandmother. ("He" is doing an action: **remembering**)

His grandmother **is remembered**. ("She" is in a condition: **being remembered**)

In this way, the past participle functions very much like an adjective; it describes the subject.

The woman is pretty. She is a pretty woman

The woman is married. She is a married woman.

VERB TENSES USED IN ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

The following is a summary of active and passive forms of all verb tenses. Remember that in active forms the subject of the sentence is the person or thing that does the action. In passive constructions, the verb is performed by someone or something other than the subject; often, the action is done to the subject by someone else.

PRESENT TIME; SIMPLE PRESENT

Use the simple present tense to:

- make a generalization,
- present a state of being, or
- indicate a habitual or repeated action.

ACTIVE	**PASSIVE**
Base form or "-s/-es" form	**am/is/are + past participle**
Professor Bogale teaches at Hunter.	Sofia **is taught** by Professor Bogale.
All humans **are** equal.	All humans **are created** equal.
Marta **cleans** the cafeteria.	The cafeteria **is cleaned.**

Baty **is** a class coordinator. Baty **is selected** as class coordinator.
He **eats** bread and better for breakfast. Bread and better **is eaten** for breakfast.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE
Use the ***present progressive*** to describe ***an ongoing activity*** or ***a temporary action***.
ACTIVE
PASSIVE
am/is/are + -ing **am/is/are + being + -ed/-en**
The students **are learning** English. Classes **are being conducted** in English.
He **is working** at Jimma. He **is being hired** to work at Jimma.
I **am going** to the shop. I **am being sent** to the shop.
The issue **is** killing me in laugh. I **am being died.**
She **is sitting** in cafeteria.

_____
We **are leaving** to Nairobi.

_____
By the time tomorrow, we **are arriving** at Logos._____

PRESENT PERFECT
Use the present perfect to describe:
- an **action occurring in the past** but relevant to the present, or
- Extending to the present.

ACTIVE
PASSIVE
has/have + -ed/-en(v3) **has/have + been + -ed/-en (v3)**

JU **has opened** a language institute in JiT.

The language institute **has been opened** to relocate students off the main campus.

JU **has offered** E.F.L courses for twenty years.

E.F.L. courses **have been offered** since the beginning of Open Admissions

PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE

Use the **present perfect progressive** to describe an ***ongoing action beginning before now*** and is ***still relevant to the present.***

ACTIVE	**PASSIVE**
has/have + been + -ing	**has/have + been + being + -ed/-en (v3)**

JU **has been awarding** BA and MA diplomas for over ten hundred years.

Note: Because of awkward construction, the perfect progressive form is not used in the passive voice. Instead, an adverb may be used to show continuing action:

"We have been **repeatedly** scolded for being late."

PAST TIME; SIMPLE PAST

Use the simple past to indicate a **general** or **habitual action occurring in the past or at a specific time in the past.**

ACTIVE	**PASSIVE**
base + -ed or irregular form	**was/were + -ed/-en(v3)**

Our family **bought** all our clothes at sears when I was young.

All my clothes **were bought** by my mother

On my fifteenth birthday, my uncle **gave**

me one hundred ETB.

The money **was given** to me to buy new clothes.

When I was in high school, my friends and I **went** to the mall on weekends.

We **were** always **gone** to the mall with my friend's older brother.

In informal conversation, speakers of English often express habitual behavior in the past using the modal "**would**."

ACTIVE **PASSIVE**

would + base **would + be + -ed/-en(v3)**

We **would** usually **eat** burgers in the food court. Most of the French fries **would be eaten** before we got to the table.

PAST PROGRESSIVE

Use the past progressive to indicate an **ongoing action in the past or an action continuing through a specific past time**.

ACTIVE **PASSIVE**

was/were + -ing **was/were + being + -ed/-en(v3)**

Mekides and habte **were quarrelling** in those days.

One afternoon, Mekides **was being bit** by Habte when her mother passed by.

Exactly by this time last year, we **were passing** our vacation in Gondar.

Our vacation time **was being passed** at Gondar exactly by this time last year.

PAST PERFECT

Use the past perfect to indicate an action completed **prior to a particular time** or **before another action** in the past.

ACTIVE

PASSIVE

had + -ed/-en **had + been + -ed/-en(v3)**
Completed:
Mary's mother was shocked because she **had forbidden** her daughter to date. Mary **had been beaten** many times before that day.
Hellen was fallen in love before she **had departed** her boyfriend.
Hellen **had been sat** in the garden before her father came in.

PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE

Use the past perfect progressive to indicate a continuing action that began before a past action or time.

ACTIVE **PASSIVE**
had + been + -ing **had + been + being + -ed/-en(v3)**
Mary **had been trying** to tell her mother about Paul for a long time.

FUTURE TIME, SIMPLE FUTURE

Use the future to indicate an action that is expected to take place at a future time.

ACTIVE **PASSIVE**
will + base **will + be + -ed/-en**
Paul and Mary **will marry** in June. They **will be married** by a priest and a rabbi.

Or
or
am/is/are going to + base **am/is/are + going to be + -ed/-en(v3)**
Mary **is going to wear** her grandmother's gown. The gown **is going to be adjusted** to fit Mary.

America **is going to attack** China because of Chinese trade policy.
_____by America of its trade policy.

FUTURE PROGRESSIVE

Use the future progressive to indicate an action in future with emphasis on continuing action.

ACTIVE	**PASSIVE**
will + base + -ing	**will + be + being + -ed/en(v3)**

Mary and Paul **will be spending** lots of time on the beach.

Note: Not used in the passive voice.

FUTURE PERFECT

Use the future perfect to indicate a future action expected to be completed before another future action or time.

ACTIVE	**PASSIVE**
will + have + -ed/-en	**will + have + been + -ed/en**

By their wedding date, they **will have saved** enough money to buy a house.

Note: Not used in the passive voice

FUTURE PERFECT PROGRESSIVE

Use the future perfect progressive to indicate an action projected to have been going on for a while before a time in the future.

ACTIVE	**PASSIVE**
will + have + been + -ing	**will + have + been + being + -ed/-en(v3)**

When they celebrate their first anniversary,
they **will have been living** together for a full year.

Note: Not used in the passive voice

WHEN TO USE PASSIVE VOICE

Although active voice is generally preferred in academic writing, passive voice is acceptable under certain conditions.

USE PASSIVE VOICE

to emphasize the receiver of the action instead of the doer

Quizzes are given regularly.
Grades for all students are averaged.
Questions are encouraged.

to keep the focus on the same subject through several sentences or paragraphs

My sister and I grew up and went to school in Jimma. We **were educated** according to the Ethiopian system. In 2004, we **were given** the opportunity to come to the Sudan. We decided to finish high school before leaving our own residence. We **were concerned** that the education in this city might not be as good as the one we had there, and we wanted to improve our English too.

when we do not know who performed the action:

Ray's calculator **was made** in Germany.
The answers **have been filled** in.

when we do not wish to mention the doer of the action:

Many problems have been ignored for too long.
I was given some bad advice.
Note: This use often reveals an unwillingness to take responsibility (or place it on someone else).

SUBSTITUTE:	**FOR:**
"A mistake was made.	I made a mistake."
"Not enough has been done to end homelessness."	"We have not done enough to end homelessness."
"You have been misinformed.	You are wrong."

when we want to sound objective or avoid using the subject "I"

- Studies have shown . . .
- It is well-known . . .
- *Hamlet* is considered . . .
- It can be assumed . . .
- It has been established . . .