

21. PASSIVE VOICE

A sentence can be either in the active or passive voice. In an "active" sentence, the subject performs the action. In a "passive" sentence, the subject receives the action. To make an active sentence into a passive sentence, follow these steps.

1. Place the complement of the active sentence at the beginning of the passive sentence.
2. If there are any auxiliaries in the active sentence, place them immediately after the new subject agreeing in number with the subject.
3. Insert the verb *be* after the auxiliary or auxiliaries in the same form as the main verb in the active sentence.
4. Place the main verb from the active sentence after the auxiliaries and *be* in the past participle.
5. Place the subject of the active sentence after the verb in the passive sentence preceded by the preposition *by*. (This can be eliminated completely if it is not important or is understood.)

Study the following possible word orders for passive voice.

SIMPLE PRESENT OR SIMPLE PAST	
$\left. \begin{array}{l} am \\ is \\ are \\ was \\ were \end{array} \right\}$	+ [verb in past participle]

Active: Hurricanes destroy a great deal of property each year.
subject present complement

Passive: A great deal of property is destroyed by hurricanes each year.
singular subject be past participle