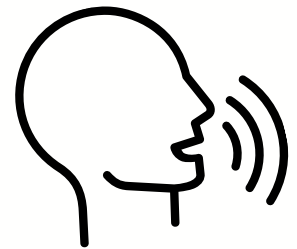


# Active vs. Passive Voice

## Rule of thumb

- When a sentence is in active voice, the subject of the sentence is the one doing the action.
- When a sentence is in passive voice, the subject is the person or thing being acted on or affected by the verbs action



## Active Voice

Asserts that the person or thing represented performs the action represented by the verb.

- Subject + Verb + Object

"**She** slammed on the brakes as the car sped downhill"

- This is an example of active voice because the sentence subject performs the action

## More Examples of Active Voice

- " The **dog** chases the ball"
  - The subject "dog," is performing the action, "chase," on the target of the action "ball."

## Final Reminders

- It does not matter the verb you are using, structuring your sentence so the subject (noun) performs the verb, IS writing in active voice
- Use active voice when you want your reader to focus on the subject of your sentence and the action it is doing rather than on the action's target
- Active voice is preferred in formal and academic writing. It is seen as more direct and often makes sentences easier to read or understand.

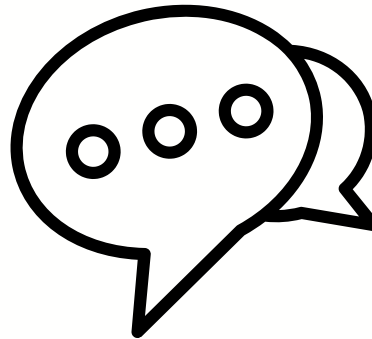
# Passive Voice

Tell us what is done to someone or something. The subject is being acted upon.

- Object + verb + subject

A way to recognize passive-voice expressions is that sentences will include a form of "be" such as:

- am
- is
- was
- were
- are
- been



- In passive voice, the person or thing acted on comes first, and the actor is added at the end.
  - E.g. "The uncertainty principle was formulated by Werner Heisenberg in 1927"
- There are times where passive voice works better than active voice such as certain formal, professional, and legal discussion.
  - E.g.
    - Reports of crimes or incidents with unknown perpetrators
    - Scientific contexts
    - when you want to emphasize an action itself and the doer of the action is irrelevant or distracting.