People who can use passive voice appropriately are considered to have a good level of English. Go through the article to learn about the correct usage of passive voice.

**Difference in Active and Passive voice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A sentence starts with a subject</td>
<td>A sentence starts with an object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers do the work.</td>
<td>The work is done by workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Object</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rules for changing Active to Passive Voice**

**Subject is changed as per the following rule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVE</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THEY</td>
<td>THEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>HIM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHE</td>
<td>HER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>WHOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOU</td>
<td>YOU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT</td>
<td>WHAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHICH</td>
<td>WHICH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General rule used to make passive voice

Object + To be + Past Participle of Verb + by Subject

‘To be’ varies according to the tense and rest of the rule remains the same.

Present Indefinite

The forms of ‘To be’ – is/am/are

Object + is/am/are + Past Participle of Verb + by Subject

Examples

**Active** – He plays football.
**Passive** – Football is passed by him.

**Active** – I teach English.
**Passive** – English is taught by me.

Past Indefinite

The forms of ‘To be’ – was/ were
So rule would be modified as
Object + was/were + Past Participle of Verb + by Subject

Example

**Active** – Her Teacher punished her.
**Passive**– She was punished by her teacher.

Perfect Tenses (Present, Past & Future)

The form of ‘To be’ – been

Object + been + Past Participle of Verb + by Subject

Examples

**Present Perfect:**

**Active** – He has written a letter.
**Passive** – A Letter has been written by him.

**Past Perfect:**

**Active** – They had already watched the movie.
**Passive** – The movie had already been watched by them.

**Future Perfect:**

**Active** – The children will have seen the show.
**Passive** – The show will have been seen by the children.

Continuous Tense

The form of ‘To be’ – being
**Present Continuous:**

**Active** – He is eating ice cream.

**Passive**– Ice cream is being eaten by him.

**Past Continuous:**

**Active** – They were watching the movie.

**Passive**– The movie was being watched by them.

**NOTE:** Passive voice of Future Continuous and Perfect Continuous Tenses is not possible.

**MODALS (can, should etc.) and Future Indefinite**

The form of ‘To be’ – be

**EXAMPLES**

**Active** – Government should ban smoking

**Passive**– Smoking should be banned by the government.

**Active** – I will finish the job tomorrow.

**Passive**– The job will be finished by me tomorrow.

**SUMMARY**

So, changing Active Voice into Passive requires two steps:
Identify type of tense used in Active Voice

Apply the corresponding rule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TENSE</th>
<th>FORMS OF ‘TO BE’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present Indefinite</td>
<td>Is/am/are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Indefinite</td>
<td>Was/were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect (Present, Perfect, Future)</td>
<td>been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous(Present, Past)</td>
<td>being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modals and Future Indefinite</td>
<td>be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Change the following sentences into the passive voice.

He likes coffee.

I received a parcel.

You will never forget this lesson.

They have brought a gift for you.

They had prepared the dinner before we arrived.

She will have taken the test.

She is doing the cooking.

They were giving a performance.

They should hire professionals.

ANSWERS
Coffee is liked by him. (Present Indefinite)

A parcel was received by me. (Past Indefinite)

This lesson will never be forgotten by you. (Future Indefinite)

A gift has been brought to you by them. (Present Perfect)

The dinner had been prepared before we arrived. (Past Perfect)

The test will have been taken by her. (Future Perfect)

The cooking is being done by her. (Present continuous)

A performance was being given by them. (Past Continuous)

Professionals should be hired by them. (Modals)