

Passive and Active Verbs

also known as **do or be done to.**

Verbs are active when the subject of the sentence does the action.

Verbs are passive when the subject of the sentence has the action done to it.

THE SUBJECT

The subject of a sentence is the thing that the sentence is about.

The box of matches fell on the floor.

The subject of the sentence is the box of matches.

Underline the subject in these sentences.

Bryan Ferry is a style icon.

The flag is blowing in the wind.

Lying down in the shade of the tree, the dog felt drowsy.

VERBS

A verb is the doing word in a sentence.

My car runs well.

The doing word is 'runs', from the verb 'to run'.

Underline the verb in these sentences.

Many famous stars live in the Hollywood Hills.

Jake fell over the tree stump.

Some people have a great sense of self-belief.

I am a hopeless dancer!

Passive and Active Verbs

Rewrite these sentences into either an active or a passive form.

The first one is done for you.

ACTIVE	PASSIVE
<u>Kirsty drives</u> a Porsche.	A <u>Porsche</u> is being <u>driven</u> by Kirsty.
	Arsenal were defeated by Tottenham.
Jake took a brilliant photograph.	
Stephen King writes horror stories.	
	Jo was deafened by the loud music.

Which sounds better to you, the active or passive?

Underline the subject and verb in each of the sentences above.

Look at a news item or sports coverage and see which form is used most.

Passive and Active Verbs – Answer Sheet

Underline the subject in these sentences.

Bryan Ferry is a style icon.

Bryan Ferry

The flag is blowing in the wind.

flag

Lying down in the shade of the tree, the dog felt drowsy. dog

Underline the verb in these sentences.

Many famous stars live in the Hollywood Hills. 'live' from the verb 'to live'

Jake fell over the tree stump. 'fell' past tense of 'to fall'

Some people have a great sense of self-belief. 'have' from the verb 'to have'

I am a hopeless dancer! 'am' from the verb 'to be'

ACTIVE	PASSIVE
<u>Kirsty</u> <u>drives</u> a Porsche.	A <u>Porsche</u> is <u>being driven</u> by Kirsty.
<u>Tottenham</u> <u>defeated</u> Arsenal.	<u>Arsenal</u> <u>were defeated</u> by Tottenham.
<u>Jake</u> <u>took</u> a brilliant photograph.	<u>A brilliant photograph</u> <u>was taken</u> by Jake.
<u>Stephen King</u> <u>writes</u> horror stories.	<u>Horror stories</u> <u>are written</u> by Stephen King.
<u>The loud music</u> <u>deafened</u> Jo.	<u>Jo</u> <u>was deafened</u> by the loud music.