

Active and Passive Voice

Aside from showing action, verbs also show voice—the form of the verb that shows whether the subject performs the action or received the action.

Active-when the subject performs the action

Ex.: *We made a mistake*

I played a blank tape at full volume. The mime next door complained

Passive-when the action is performed upon the subject

Ex.: *A mistake has been made* (no one is taking credit for the mistake)

A tape was played by me at full volume. A complaint was made by the mime next door (the action is performed upon the subjects)

Writing tip #14: Always write in the Active Voice

-Make the passive sentences ACTIVE. Leave the ACTIVE sentence alone.

1. In the men's room at work, a sign had been placed by the boss directly above the sink.
2. It had a single word on it—"Think!"
3. The next day, the men's room was entered by Harvey.
4. The sign was looked at by him.
5. Right below the sign. Immediately above the soap dispenser, another sign had been written by someone.
6. The sign read—"Thoap!"