

# Verbs and Voices

## **Definition of a Verb**

A verb describes the action performed by a subject.

For example:

- "They will do the work."
- "The teacher has punished the boy."

In these examples, "do" and "punish" are transitive verbs because the actions of the subjects "They" and "The teacher" pass over to the objects "work" and "the boy." Therefore, these verbs are called transitive.

A verb can also tell us what is done to a person or thing. Consider the following sentences:

- "The work will be done by them." (Passive Voice)
- "The boy has been punished by the teacher." (Passive Voice)

## **Defining a Voice**

In active voice, a sentence starts with the subject (e.g., "They," "The teacher"). In passive voice, a sentence begins with the object (e.g., "The work," "The boy"). Only sentences with transitive verbs can be converted to passive voice.

## **Transitive and Intransitive Verbs**

Transitive verbs, such as "punish," require an object. In contrast, intransitive verbs, like "come" and "go," do not take an object and thus do not form passive voice:

- "Jaya came here."
- "Father is going out."

## **Forming Passive Voice**

To convert active voice to passive voice, use the verb "to be" and change the main verb to its past participle form. Place the object before the verb in passive voice.

Examples:

- Active: "She teaches English." -> Passive: "English is taught by her."
- Active: "They selected both friends." -> Passive: "Both friends were selected."

## **The Verb 'To Be'**

The verb "to be" functions as both an auxiliary and an ordinary verb. As an auxiliary verb, it is used in forming passive voice. The table below outlines its forms:

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Tense	Forms of 'To be' in Passive Voice
Infinitive, Modals, Future Indefinite	be + PP (Past Participle) of Transitive verb
Present Indefinite	is, am, are
Past Indefinite	was, were
Perfect (Present, Past, Future)	been
Continuous (Present, Past), Participle/Gerund	being

Using 'To Be' in Passive Sentences

- Infinitive: "He doesn't like to be punished."
- Modals: "The young persons should be taught good manners."
- Future Indefinite: "He will be punished for his misbehaviour."

Examples of Passive Voice in Different Tenses

- Present Indefinite: "She is taught English daily by her class teacher."
- Past Indefinite: "She was punished for her negligence."
- Perfect Tenses: "He has just been elected as a member of the Committee."
- Continuous Tenses: "The match is being telecast now."

Interrogative Pronouns in Passive Voice

- "What are you writing?" -> "What is being written by you?"
- "Who teaches you English?" -> "By whom are you taught English?"

Verbs with Two Objects

- "He gave me a book." -> "I was given a book by him." / "A book was given to me by him."
- "They made him King." -> "He was made King."

Using Different Prepositions in Passive Voice

- "I know him." -> "He is known to me."
- "Her sudden arrival surprised everyone." -> "Everybody was surprised at her sudden arrival."

Imperative Sentences

- Command/Order: "Bring a book." -> "Let a book be brought."
- Request/Advice: "Please come soon." -> "You are requested to come soon."

Participles/Gerund

- "I remember my mother taking me to the doctor." -> "I remember being taken to the doctor by my mother."

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→ "I found his friends laughing at him." -> "I found him being laughed at by his friends."



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#### Miscellaneous Sentences

- Active: "The police arrested a militant and sent him to jail." -> Passive: "A militant was arrested by the police and (was) sent to jail."
- Active: "It is necessary to help the poor." -> Passive: "The poor are required to be helped."

#### The Use of 'To Be' as an Ordinary Verb

As an ordinary verb, "to be" denotes state, condition, existence, quality, time, distance, weather, etc. There is no action in these sentences:

- "She is a naughty child."
- "She was healthy."

In these sentences, "to be" functions alone and is used as an ordinary verb. These can be referred to as "no verb sentences" for convenience.