

active and passive

You can use many verbs in two different ways, known as the **active voice** and the **passive voice**.

The active voice

This sentence is in the **active** voice.

The car hit a wall.

The **car** does the action.

Hit is an active verb.

The **wall** receives the action.

The passive voice

This sentence is in the **passive** voice.

The wall was hit by a car.

The **wall** is on the receiving end of the action.

Was hit is a passive verb.

The **car** is the doer of the action, and is shown using the word **by**.

Both the sentences above give you the same information, but their focus is different. The first one is about what the car **did**. The second is about what **happened to** the wall.

Using the passive voice

The passive voice brings more attention to a person or thing that an action is being done to.

Active

We saw them.

He has mended it.

A snake bit Ben.

Passive

They were seen.

It has been mended.

Ben was bitten by a snake.