

Name: _____

Active and Passive Voice

There are two different ways to describe action.

Active Voice

The subject of the sentence **performs** an action. The action is done **by** the subject.

Many active voice sentences follow a *Subject + Verb + Direct Object* pattern.

example: The **weeds** **strangled** the wilting **flowers**.

↑ ↑ ↑
subject verb direct object



(starting with *by*) pattern.

example: The wilting **flowers** **were strangled** **by the weeds**.

↑ ↑ ↑
subject verb prepositional phrase

Both active and passive voice can be written in any tense.

	Past	Present	Future
Active	Mom tilled the soil.	Dad is planting new sprouts.	We will grow tulips.
Passive	The soil was tilled by Mom.	New sprouts are being planted by Dad.	Tulips will be grown by us.

Active voice usually sounds more engaging to readers.

Most writing should avoid passive voice.