GRADE 6 ENGLISH

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

Complete Notes, Rules and Practice

PART A: NOTES AND RULES

Section 1: What are Active and Passive Voice?

Voice shows whether the **subject** of a sentence **does** the action or **receives** it.

Voice	Meaning	Example
Active voice	The subject **performs** the action.	**Sara** wrote the letter.
Passive voice	The subject **receives** the action.	The **letter** was written by Sara.

When do we use the passive voice?

- When we **do not know** who did the action: *My bicycle was stolen.*
- When the doer is **not important** or **obvious**: *The road is being repaired.*
- When the **action or the receiver** is more important than the doer: *The Taj Mahal was built in the 17th century.*
- In **formal writing**, news reports, notices and science experiments: *The mixture is heated for two minutes.*

Section 2: What is a Passive Verb?

A **passive verb** is a verb group that shows the subject is **receiving** the action. It is always made from two parts: a form of the verb **to be** and the **past participle** (V3) of the main verb.

THE PASSIVE VERB FORMULA

Passive verb = form of “be” + past participle (V3)

is written | was built | are grown | has been eaten | will be sent

- The **form of “be”** (am, is, are, was, were, be, been, being) shows the **tense**.
- The **main verb** is always in the **past participle (V3)** form: *written*, *eaten*, *cleaned*.
- The form of “be” must **agree with the new subject**: *The window **is** broken. The windows **are** broken.*

Past participles (V3) you must know

Base (V1)	Past (V2)	V3	Base (V1)	Past (V2)	V3
write	wrote	**written**	break	broke	**broken**
eat	ate	**eaten**	choose	chose	**chosen**
take	took	**taken**	speak	spoke	**spoken**
give	gave	**given**	steal	stole	**stolen**
see	saw	**seen**	sing	sang	**sung**
do	did	**done**	draw	drew	**drawn**
make	made	**made**	build	built	**built**
buy	bought	**bought**	catch	caught	**caught**
bring	brought	**brought**	teach	taught	**taught**
clean (regular)	cleaned	**cleaned**	paint (regular)	painted	**painted**

Remember

Regular verbs add **-ed** (clean, cleaned, cleaned). Irregular verbs must be learnt by heart. Never use V2 in a passive verb: The cake was **ate** is wrong; The cake was **eaten** is correct.

Section 3: How the Passive Verb Changes with the Tense

The **tense of the passive verb must be the same as the tense of the active verb.** Only the form of "be" shows the tense; the main verb is always V3.

Tense	Active voice	Passive voice	Passive verb pattern
Simple present	Ali writes a letter.	A letter **is written** by Ali.	am / is / are + V3
Present continuous	Ali is writing a letter.	A letter **is being written** by Ali.	am / is / are + **being** + V3
Present perfect	Ali has written a letter.	A letter **has been written** by Ali.	has / have + **been** + V3
Simple past	Ali wrote a letter.	A letter **was written** by Ali.	was / were + V3
Past continuous	Ali was writing a letter.	A letter **was being written** by Ali.	was / were + **being** + V3
Past perfect	Ali had written a letter.	A letter **had been written** by Ali.	had + **been** + V3
Simple future	Ali will write a letter.	A letter **will be written** by Ali.	will + **be** + V3
Future (going to)	Ali is going to write a letter.	A letter **is going to be written** by Ali.	am / is / are going to + **be** + V3
Modal verbs (can, could, may, might, must, should, would)	Ali can write a letter.	A letter **can be written** by Ali.	modal + **be** + V3

Memory Trick: Three Quick Checks

1. **Find the tense** of the active verb (wrote = simple past).
2. **Put "be" in that tense** to agree with the new subject (simple past = was / were).
3. **Change the main verb to V3** (write becomes written). Result: **was written**.

Section 4: Changing Active Voice into Passive Voice: Four Steps

Step	What to do
1	Find the **subject**, the **verb** and the **object** of the active sentence.
2	Make the **object** the **new subject** (at the start of the passive sentence).
3	Change the verb into the **passive verb** (be + V3) in the **same tense**, agreeing with the new subject.
4	Add **by** + the old subject (if it is needed). Change pronouns using the table below.

Worked Example

Active: The children are cleaning the classroom.
Step 1: Subject = *The children*; verb = *are cleaning*; object = *the classroom*.
Step 2: New subject = *The classroom*.
Step 3: are cleaning (present continuous) becomes **is being cleaned** (the classroom is singular).
Step 4: Add *by the children*.

Passive: The classroom is being cleaned by the children.

Pronoun changes

Subject (active)	I	we	you	he	she	they	it
After **by** in passive	me	us	you	him	her	them	it
Object (active)	me	us	you	him	her	them	it
New subject (passive)	I	we	you	he	she	they	it

Active voice	Passive voice
She helped him.	He was helped by her.
They invited us.	We were invited by them.

Section 5: When Is "by + doer" Left Out?

The doer (agent) can be dropped when it is unknown, obvious, unimportant, or general (someone, people, they, we).

Active voice	Passive voice
Someone stole my bag.	My bag was stolen. (doer unknown)
The police arrested the thief.	The thief was arrested. (doer obvious)
People speak English in many countries.	English is spoken in many countries. (general doer)
They will announce the results tomorrow.	The results will be announced tomorrow.

Section 6: Passive Voice in Negatives, Questions and Special Sentences

Type	Active voice	Passive voice	Rule
Negative	Sana did not finish her work.	Her work **was not finished** by Sana.	Put **not** after the first helping verb.
Yes/No question	Did Tom break the window?	**Was** the window **broken** by Tom?	The helping verb comes first; the main verb is V3.
Wh-question	Who wrote this poem?	By whom **was** this poem **written**?	Keep the question word; use be + V3.
Command	Close the door.	Let the door **be closed**.	Use **Let ... be + V3**.
Two objects	She gave me a gift.	I **was given** a gift by her. A gift **was given** to me by her.	Either object can become the subject.
Modal	You must keep the books clean.	The books **must be kept** clean.	modal + be + V3

Important: Only Some Verbs Can Be Passive

Only **transitive verbs** (verbs that take an object) can be changed into the passive. Verbs such as *arrive, go, sleep, fall, happen, die, come* have no object, so they have **no passive**. The accident was happened is wrong; The accident happened is correct.

Section 7: Common Mistakes to Avoid

Mistake	Correct form	Reason
The picture is painted yesterday.	The picture **was painted** yesterday.	Use the same tense as the time word (past).
The books was returned.	The books **were returned**.	“Be” must agree with the plural subject.
The cake was ate by the children.	The cake was **eaten** by the children.	Use V3, not V2.
The work will be finish tomorrow.	The work will be **finished** tomorrow.	After be, always use V3.
The cat was chased by I.	The cat was chased by **me**.	Use the object pronoun after by.
The match was happened last night.	The match **happened** last night.	Intransitive verbs have no passive.
A letter is writing by Ali.	A letter is **written** by Ali.	Do not use -ing without *being*.

Section 8: Examination Tips and Quick Revision

- **Spot the passive:** look for a form of *be* followed by V3 (*is made, was taken, has been seen*). The word *by* often follows.
- **Identify the tense first.** The tense of the passive verb must match the active verb.
- **Check agreement.** Singular subject: is / was. Plural subject: are / were.
- **Check the main verb:** is it in V3? Check the spelling of irregular forms.
- **Keep the meaning the same.** Do not add or remove information.

One-Minute Revision

- Active: subject **does** the action. Passive: subject **receives** the action.
- **Passive verb = be + V3**. The form of "be" shows the tense.
- Continuous passive uses **being**; perfect passive uses **been**; future and modals use **be**.
- Object becomes subject; add **by + old subject** (object pronoun) if needed.
- Only transitive verbs have a passive.

PART C: PRACTICE EXERCISES

Instructions

Attempt every exercise in the spaces provided. Use the notes in Part A if you need help, but try each question first. Record your marks in the Score Record at the end.

Exercise 1: Active or Passive?

[10 marks] *Write A if the sentence is in the active voice and P if it is in the passive voice.*

1. The cake was baked by Mum. **[ ]**

2. Ali kicked the ball. **[ ]**

3. The windows are cleaned every Friday. **[ ]**

4. The teacher is checking the notebooks. **[ ]**

5. A new bridge has been built in our city. **[ ]**

6. Birds build nests. **[ ]**

7. The letter will be posted tomorrow. **[ ]**

8. The boys were playing cricket. **[ ]**

9. English is spoken all over the world. **[ ]**

10. She has finished her project. **[ ]**

Exercise 2: Identify the Passive Verb and Its Tense

[10 marks] *Write the passive verb from each sentence and name its tense.*

1. The homework was completed on time.

2. Rice is grown in warm countries.

3. The match has been cancelled.

4. The room is being painted.

5. The prize will be given tomorrow.

6. The thief had been caught before the police arrived.

7. The garden was being watered.

8. The door must be locked at night.

9. Lunch is served at noon.

10. The dishes were washed.

Exercise 3: Fill in the Blanks with the Correct Passive Verb

[10 marks] *Complete each sentence with the correct passive form of the verb in brackets.*

1. The letters _____ (write) by the clerk every day.

2. The window _____ (break) by the storm last night.

3. A new school _____ (build) in our town at the moment.

4. The tickets _____ (sell) already.

5. The results _____ (announce) tomorrow.

6. The thief _____ (arrest) before he reached the border.

7. Dinner _____ (cook) when the guests arrived.

8. Fruit and vegetables _____ (sell) in this shop.

9. The rules must _____ (follow) by everyone.

10. The trees _____ (plant) by the students last year.

Exercise 4: Active into Passive

[12 marks] *Rewrite each sentence in the passive voice.*

1. Ravi writes a poem.

2. The chef cooked the meal.

3. The children are cleaning the classroom.

4. Mum has made a cake.

5. The teacher will announce the results.

6. The gardener was watering the plants.

7. Farmers grow wheat in this region.

8. The police have caught the thief.

9. Sana did not finish her work.

10. Did Tom break the window?

11. You must keep the books clean.

12. She gave me a gift.

Exercise 5: Passive into Active

[6 marks] *Rewrite each sentence in the active voice.*

1. The ball was kicked by Sam.

2. The song is being sung by the choir.

3. A cake has been baked by Rima.

4. The windows will be cleaned by the workers.

5. The thief was chased by the dog.

6. The report was written by her.

Exercise 6: Error Correction

[6 marks] *Each sentence has one mistake. Rewrite the sentence correctly.*

1. The picture is painted yesterday.

2. The books was returned by me.

3. The cake has been ate by the children.

4. The match was happened last night.

5. The work will be finish by him tomorrow.

6. The cat was chased by I.

Score Record

Exercise	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Marks available	10	10	10	12	6	6	**54**
Marks obtained							