

Unit 7: Grammar

Active and Passive
germynd og þolmynd

The Passive

Here is a sentence in the Active voice:

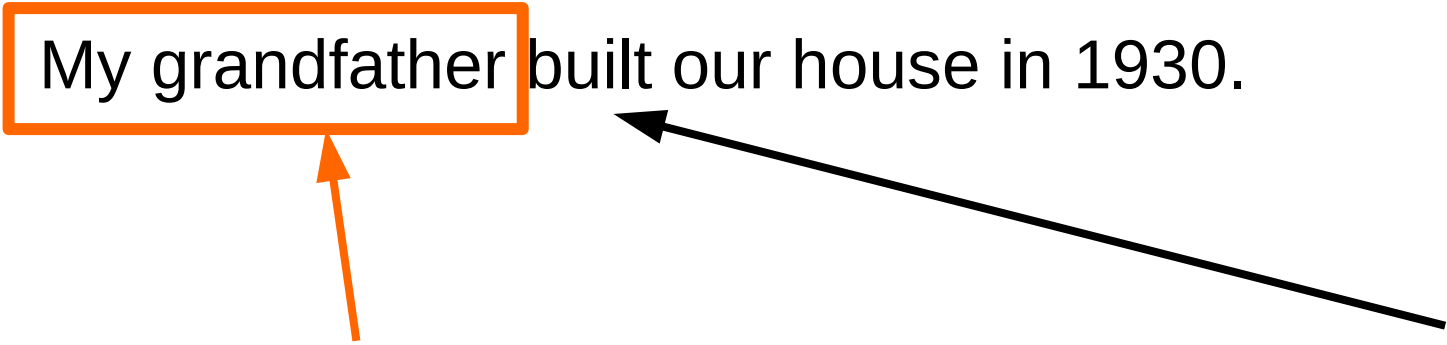
My grandfather built our house in 1930.

The Passive

Here is a sentence in the Active voice:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.

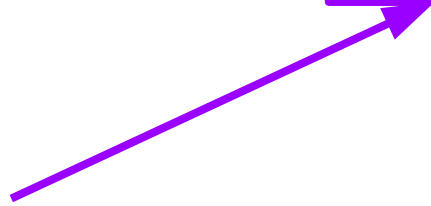
The **SUBJECT** is the one who performs the verb (gerandi).



The Passive

Here is a sentence in the Active voice:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.



The **OBJECT** is the recipient of the action of the verb (polandi)

The Passive

Here is a sentence in the Active voice:

My grandfather built **our house** in 1930.

Sometimes we want to emphasise the action or draw attention to the subject. We do that by making the **subject** and **object change places** and by **changing the verb** a little.

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.

Our house ...



We begin by moving the **OBJECT** to the front and making it the subject of the sentence.

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.



Our house **was** ...

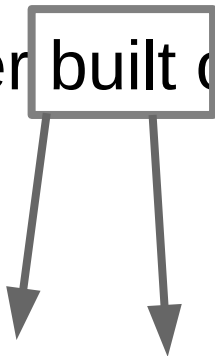
Next we change
the verb:

we put in the verb
TO BE and make it
the same tense as
the main verb.

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.



Our house **was built** ...

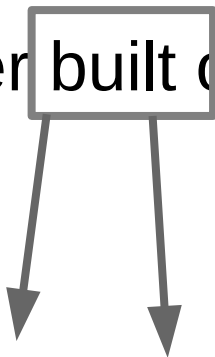
Next we change the verb:

then we add the **past participle** (lýsingarháttur þátíðar) of the **main verb**

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather **built** our house in 1930.



Our house **was built** ...

It is actually the **verb** that defines the voice, active or passive

Next we change the verb:

then we add the **past participle** (lýsingarháttur þátíðar) of the **main verb**

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.

Our house was built ...

Now we can add the old subject, which now
becomes the object of the sentence
IF WE NEED HIM

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.

He is now called
THE AGENT
(gerandi).

Our house was built **by my grandfather ...**

This is also called a
prepositional phrase
because it begins with
BY.

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.

Our house was built by my grandfather in 1930.

Now we can
add the rest of
the sentence.

The Passive

Let's change this sentence into the passive:

My grandfather built our house in 1930.

So ...

Our house was built by my grandfather in 1930.

The Passive

Here are some more examples. Note the tense of the verb:

Simple Present:

- Beautiful giraffes **roam** the savannah.
- The savannah **is roamed** by beautiful giraffes.

Simple Past:

- Sue **changed** the flat tire.
- The flat tire **was changed** by Sue.

The Passive

Here are some more examples. Note the tense of the verb:

Simple Future:

- I **will clean** the house every Saturday.
- The house **will be cleaned** by me every Saturday.

And if it does not matter who does it:

- The house will be cleaned every Saturday.

The Passive

Here are some more examples. Note the tense of the verb:

Present Perfect:

- Head Office **has notified** us.
- We **have been notified** by Head Office.

With a Modal Verb:

- A thief **could take** your bicycle.
- Your bicycle **could be taken** by a thief.

The Passive

Here are some more examples. Note the tense of the verb:

Present Perfect:

- Head Office **has notified** us.
- We **have been notified** by Head Office.

With a Modal Verb:

- A thief **could take** your bicycle.
- Your bicycle **could be taken**.