**Active and Passive Voice**

* **Your Diagnosis.** You are overusing the **passive voice** which can make your writing sluggish instead of crisp, clear, and precise. A verb may either be in the active voice or the passive voice.
* **Your Treatment Plan**. First, you’ll have to identify which sentences are in the passive voice.

In **active** voice, the **subject of the sentence** does the action in the verb: EXAMPLE: The batter hit the ball.

In **passive** voice, the subject is **acted upon by the verb**. EXAMPLE: The ball was hit by the batter. (the real subject of the sentence, the batter, comes after the verb)

* **The Cure!** To correct this, make sure you are stating your sentences in a straightforward way and that your subject is the “doer” of the action. If the verbs in your writing are in passive voice, **rewrite them**, changing the verbs to active voice by moving the subject.

* **Be on the lookout for…**

**“Extra” words or helping verbs that are weighing your sentence down:**

* + PASSIVE VOICE: The troops were given the orders by the General.
    - *Does my sentence sound clear and succinct?*
  + REVISED: The General gave the orders to the troops.

**The subject isn’t in the right place:**

* + PASSIVE VOICE: A good time was had by all.
    - *Wait? Who had a good time? Am I being clear here?*
  + REVISED: We all had a good time.

**Try it out! Complete the practice exercises on the OTHER SIDE of this page.  🡪**

**If the verbs in the following sentences are passive-voice, rewrite them,** changing the verbs to active voice. Note: Change only the words that are necessary to make the verb active-voiced.

1. The newest member of the committee was appointed by the Governor.
2. The people of Germany were ruled by the infamous Adolph Hitler during World War II.
3. In 1789, a royal fortress called the Bastille was stormed by a mob of angry Parisians.
4. Through the back door near the display table came the guest speaker.
5. The new policy on trade was proposed by the President two years ago.