

**25<sup>th</sup> November**  
**OET Writing – Passive Voice**

**Starter**

**How could we change this sentence to focus on Ms Benthos?**

The doctor advised Ms Benthos to take her medication.

Ms Benthos was advised to take her medication.

**To make the passive voice, we use...**

Be + past participle (3<sup>rd</sup> form)

**If we want to change the tense, we change the verb...**

To be

## When do we use the passive voice?

### When we don't know who did the action:

ACTIVE: Someone stole my bike.

PASSIVE: My bike was stolen.

### When the 'doer' of the action is obvious or clear:

ACTIVE: Italians make pasta in Italy.

PASSIVE: Pasta is made in Italy.

### To change the focus of the sentence:

ACTIVE: Leonardo Da Vinci painted the Mona Lisa.

PASSIVE: The Mona Lisa was painted by Leonardo Da Vinci.

### When we use the passive voice...

We can use the preposition 'by' to give the agent of the action (the 'doer'):

"The Mona Lisa was painted by Leonardo Da Vinci"

However, in a lot of passive sentences, the agent is irrelevant:

"My bike was stolen by somebody"

## What tenses or forms are used in these passive sentences?

1. Computers **are used** in most offices  
Present simple – is/am/are + past participle
2. Your room **is being cleaned** at the moment  
Present continuous – is/am/are + being + past participle
3. The thieves **have been detained** by the police  
Present perfect simple – have/has + been + past participle
4. *Avatar* **was directed** by James Cameron  
Past simple – was/were + past participle
5. The road **was being dug** up as I drove past  
Past continuous – was/were + being + past participle
6. The man **had been caught** stealing money  
Past perfect simple – had + been + past participle
7. You **will be asked** twenty questions during the interview  
Future simple – will + be + past participle
8. I'm **going to be given** a present by my colleagues  
Future plans (be going to) – is/am/are + going to be + past participle
9. I used **to be helped** but now I can do things on my own  
Infinitive form – to be + past participle
10. I hate **being spoken** to like a child  
Gerund form – being + past participle
11. Criminals must **be punished**  
Bare infinitive form – be + past participle