



English Conversation Club

Meets
9:30-11am
on Tuesdays
here!

sbc

The advertisement features four stylized human figures in a row. Above them are three speech bubbles: a green one on the left containing the word 'English', a large red one in the center containing 'Conversation', and an orange one on the right containing 'Club'. A small yellow thought bubble with a red question mark is positioned above the third figure. In the bottom left corner, there is a small logo with a green figure and the letters 'sbc'.

Active and Passive 'voices'

Active voice

The most common way of saying anything!

A typical sentence in the active voice is:

subject – *verb* – *adjective*

Susan is happy

or

subject (of 1st interest) – *verb* – *object* (of 2nd interest)

The cat is chasing the mouse

Passive voice

Use this when the adjective or the object receiving the action are more important than the subject.

adjective – *verb* – *subject*

happy is Susan



or

object (of 1st interest) – *verb* – [*subject* (of 2nd interest)]

the mouse is being chased [by the cat]

Passive voice – use of verbs

The verb in the passive voice in English is made from two elements:

'to be' (*in correct tense*) + **past participle**

<i>present</i>	The house is built of wood (by)
<i>present continuous</i>	The house is being built of wood (by)
<i>past</i>	The house was built of wood (by)
<i>future</i>	The house will be built of wood (by)

When to use (& when not to use) the passive voice

- Use the passive voice when
 - you are interested in the object, not in the person or thing that's the subject
 - you don't know who (or what) is the subject
 - you don't want to say who (or what) is the subject
 - talking about "being born"
 - the verb is usually followed by "to" + a simple or "-ing" verb
 - writing formal reports (in some situations / organisations)
- Use the active voice if you can!

Usually active not passive !

Passive	Active
Your happiness will be shown by a big smile at the camera.	A big smile at the camera will show your happiness .
Our planet is surrounded by the ozone layer.	The ozone layer surrounds our planet .
Nottingham's waste is disposed of at a site near Burntstump.	Nottingham disposes of its waste at a site near Burntstump.

Examples when the subject isn't relevant

The active voice is preferred.

(= we are interested in the active voice, not in who uses it.)

The house was built in 1654.

(= we are interested in the house, not in who built it.)

The road is being repaired.

(= we are interested in the road, not in the people doing the repairs.)

The gate has been opened and the cows have escaped.

(= we don't know who opened the gate, but 'who' did it isn't important!)

My car has been stolen.

(= I don't know who stole my car.)

Convert these: Passive → Active

- “Bohemian Rhapsody” **was written** by Queen.
- This Baptist church building **was built** in 1863.
- In July, while campaigning to become president of the USA, Donald Trump **was** almost **killed** by Thomas Crooks.
- Film stars usually hate **being interviewed**.
- Before getting a visa you have **to be tested** for typhoid.

Possible Active Versions

- Queen **wrote** “Bohemian Rhapsody”.
- Baptists **built** this church building in 1863.
- In July, while campaigning to become president of the USA, Thomas Crooks almost **killed** Donald Trump.
- Film stars usually hate interviews.
- Before getting a visa you **must have** a typhoid test.