

WRITING YOUR METHOD

Writing in the passive voice

What is passive voice?

"Voice" refers to the way the verb is used in the sentence. Remember that a sentence has to have a *subject* and a *verb*, and many verbs require *direct objects*. Here's an example of *active voice*:

<i>subject</i>	<i>verb</i>	<i>direct object</i>
Purdue Pete	hit	the baseball.
<i>doer</i>	<i>action</i>	<i>receives action</i>

In *passive voice*, the subject of the sentence also receives the action. The doer of the action is someone else. Here's an example of *passive voice*:

<i>subject</i>	<i>verb</i>	
The baseball	is hit	by Purdue Pete.
<i>receives action</i>	<i>action</i>	<i>who did the action</i>

Examples of passive voice in lab reports

Correct:

200mL of distilled water was poured into a 500 mL beaker.

Incorrect:

I poured 200mL of distilled water in a beaker. (active voice)

Pour 200mL water in a beaker. (direction/command)

Correct:

The covered crucible was mounted on a ring stand.

Incorrect:

We put the crucible on a ring stand. (active voice)

Set the crucible on a ring stand. (direction/command)

Correct:

The temperature was initially measured at 75°C.

Incorrect:

I measured the temperature at 75°C. (active voice)

Measure and write down the temperature. (direction/command)

It's understood that all actions were done by the experimenter.

Examples of past passive voice in biology lab reports

The sample was taken from the Freshwater Stream

The macroinvertebrates were sorted into the compartments of a white specimen tray.