

# Correcting Shifts in Verb Voice

In grammar, **voice** communicates whether the subject of a clause performs or receives the action of the verb.

If a sentence is written in **active voice**, the subject performs the action of the verb.

**Janay solved the problem.**

If a sentence is written in **passive voice**, the subject receives the action of the verb.

**The problem was solved by Janay.**

**Note:** Though passive voice can be appropriate in certain circumstances, active voice is generally preferred in formal writing. It is best to avoid shifting from active voice to passive voice, especially if there is no reason to do so.

**Each paragraph below has a sentence that is written using passive voice. Cross out that sentence and rewrite it using active voice on the lines below. Be sure to retain the correct meaning and match the active voice of the rest of the paragraph.**

1. Vincent van Gogh's paintings are the very embodiment of the impressionist movement in art. Some say that his still life of sunflowers in a vase on a yellow background, featured in London's National Gallery, is the most famous of all his paintings. Thousands visit the gallery's gift shop each year, purchasing postcards and posters of the iconic sunflower image. However, few know that this painting is part of a series that van Gogh created in the South of France between 1888 and 1889. Seven versions of sunflowers in a vase were painted by van Gogh while he was in Arles, France. Though some of the paintings have blue backgrounds and some have yellow, they all have similar compositions and are instantly recognizable as van Gogh masterpieces.




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2. After gliding off the chairlift into the soft, fresh snow, I swiftly weaved through a small crowd of skiers and skidded to an abrupt stop. The slope extended below me, white mounds of snow rising and falling all the way down. The sign said "Wolf's Run" and had one black diamond—a mark of difficulty, a mark of skill, and for me, a mark of dread. Wolf's Run had been described by my brothers as "gnarly" and "sick," thanks to its steep slope and sharp turns. But as someone stuck somewhere between intermediate and expert, I had just tried my first black diamond trail earlier that day after months of green circles and blue squares. I knew I was stalling, and the line of skiers behind me was growing. I exhaled a long white cloud of breath into the icy air. Time to go!




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**Keep going! Each paragraph below has a sentence that is written using passive voice. Cross out that sentence and rewrite it using active voice on the lines below. Be sure to retain the correct meaning and match the active voice of the rest of the paragraph.**

3. In the winter of 1805–1806, the Lewis and Clark Expedition camped for the season at Fort Clatsop. They built their camp near what is now the Oregon Coast, at the mouth of the Columbia River. They had just crossed the continent and needed to shelter, rest, and resupply before traveling back. The group had exhausted its supply of salt, which was essential not just for seasoning, but also for preserving meat. Sea water was evaporated by boiling it down, leaving the salt in the pots. When the expedition departed 106 days after its initial arrival, it carried plenty of salt and salted meat for the remainder of the journey.




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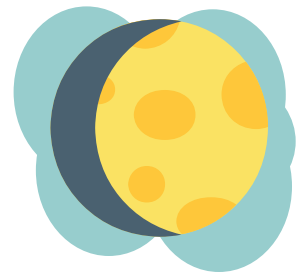


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4. Despite the brightness and illumination of a full moon on a clear night, the moon does not create its own light; it reflects the sun's. From Earth, we see the reflection of sunlight on the moon's surface. During a lunar eclipse, however, the sun's light is blocked by the shadow of the Earth. In other words, the moon's surface briefly stops reflecting the sun's light because the Earth is in between the other two celestial bodies. Total lunar eclipses are rare, but partial eclipses, where the Earth only partially blocks the sun's light from reaching the moon's surface, are much more common.




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5. Addison and her Aunt Sara blinked in the sharp morning sun as they emerged from the Bowling Green subway station. They were about to embark on their yearly trek from Battery Park at the tip of Manhattan to the southern end of Central Park, just over 5 miles away. This tradition was dearly loved by both Addison and her aunt. They would start by gazing at the Statue of Liberty and then turn and amble up towards the park. Every year they took a different route—they might pass by the lion sculptures in front of the New York Public Library or veer off into Chinatown or Little Italy. They might eat lunch near the impressive arch in Washington Square Park. The excursion would only take a couple of hours if they did not stop anywhere, but it always took them most of the day. At the end of the thrilling yet exhausting day, they would trudge wearily into the 5th Avenue station to catch the train home to Brooklyn.




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