# Source:-

# http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impersonal\_passive\_voice

# Impersonal passive voice

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **impersonal passive voice** is a [verb](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verb) [voice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grammatical_voice) that decreases the [valency](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valency_%28linguistics%29) of an [intransitive verb](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intransitive_verb) (which has valency one) to zero.

The impersonal passive deletes the [subject](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subject_%28grammar%29) of an [intransitive verb](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intransitive_verb).  In place of the verb's subject, the construction instead may include a syntactic placeholder, also called a *dummy*.  This placeholder has neither thematic nor referential content.  (A similar example is the word "there" in the English phrase "There are three books.")

The deleted [argument](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verb_argument) can be reintroduced as an *oblique argument* or *complement*.

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**Source:-**

**http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/passive**

**Personal and Impersonal Passive**

*Personal Passive* simply means that the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence. So every verb that needs an object (transitive verb) can form a personal passive.

Example: They build houses. – Houses are built.

Verbs without an object (intransitive verb) normally cannot form a personal passive sentence (as there is no object that can become the subject of the passive sentence). If you want to use an intransitive verb in passive voice, you need an impersonal construction – therefore this passive is called *Impersonal Passive*.

Example: he says – it is said

*Impersonal Passive* is not as common in English as in some other languages (e.g. German, Latin). In English, *Impersonal Passive* is only possible with verbs of perception (e. g. say, think, know).

Example: They say that women live longer than men. – It is said that women live longer than men.

Although *Impersonal Passive* is possible here, *Personal Passive* is more common.

Example: They say that women live longer than men. – Women are said to live longer than men.

The subject of the subordinate clause (women) goes to the beginning of the sentence; the verb of perception is put into passive voice. The rest of the sentence is added using an infinitive construction with 'to' (certain auxiliary verbs and *that* are dropped).

Sometimes the term *Personal Passive* is used in English lessons if the indirect object of an active sentence is to become the subject of the passive sentence.