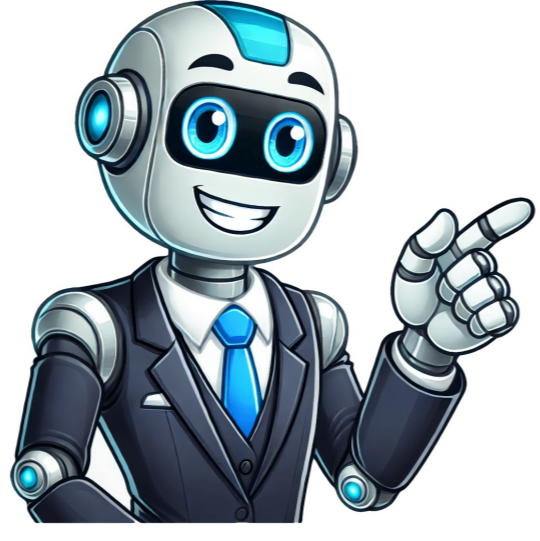


I'm not a robot



The passive voice with modals in your writing builds up a world of expressive possibilities. If you're aiming for a formal tone, expressing necessity, or conveying subtle nuances, this combination can be a game-changer. Let us experiment with different modals in this article and experience the power of passive voice to transform your writing into a sophisticated and versatile masterpiece. Explore Now Test Your English Proficiency with this Editing Quiz! Modals are the auxiliary verbs that express ability, possibility, permission, or obligation. Some of the common modal verbs are as follows: Can: Indicates ability, permission, or possibility. She can sing beautifully. (ability) Can I borrow your pen? (permission) It can get chilly in the evenings. (possibility) Could: Similar to can, but often used in more polite or tentative questions. Could you please pass the salt? (polite request) I could swim when I was five. (past ability) May: Expresses permission, possibility, or wish. You may leave the table. (permission) It may rain later. (possibility) May all your dreams come true. (wish) Might: Similar to may, indicating a lower level of certainty or a more tentative possibility. It might join for dinner. (tentative possibility) It may snow tomorrow. (possibility) Shall: Used to express suggestions, offers, or future actions (often in formal contexts). Shall we go for a walk? (suggestion) I shall do my best. (promise) Should: Indicates obligation, advice, or a recommendation. You should finish your homework before going out. (obligation) She should see a doctor about that cough. (advice) Will: Expresses future actions, predictions, or willingness. I will call you later. (future action) It will rain tomorrow. (prediction) She will help with the project. (willingness) Would: Similar to will, often used in more polite or hypothetical situations. Would you like some tea? (polite offer) If I won the lottery, I would travel the world. (hypothetical situation) Must: Indicates necessity, obligation, or a strong recommendation. You must complete the assignment by Friday. (necessity) We must be at the airport by 6 AM. (obligation) Ought to: Similar to should, expressing obligation, advice, or duty. You ought to apologize for your behavior. (advice) Ought to respect our elders. (Duty) Also Read: Tenses Rules: Charts, Examples, Types [PDF Available] If the passive modal verbs are in the present tense, we insert be into the modal verb, and transform the base verb to the past participle: She should fix her computer (active) Her computer should be fixed (passive) The table below shows how we use modal verbs in the passive voice: Modals in the Active VoiceModals in the Passive VoiceHe can do it. It can be done.You could sell your bicycle.Your bicycle could be sold.She might fix the refrigerator.The refrigerator might be fixed.She may donate.A donation may be made.They must finish it today.It must be finished today.She has to send this email.It has to be sent.She needs to find that document.That document needs to be found.He should fix his writing.His writing should be fixed.Must Read: Subject-Verb Agreement

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possibility, suggestionMust necessity, obligation, assumptionShould recommendation, obligationWill future, suggestion (mainly in British English)Will future, requestsWould past habit, polite requestsSome example sentences with modal verbs:Can She can speak Spanish fluently.Should you should visit the doctor.Must He must finish his work by tomorrow.Might She might come to the party later.Modal verbs add nuance to statements, which is why they are essential in expressing different degrees of certainty or necessity.What is the Passive Voice?In active voice, the subject of the sentence performs the action, e.g., John cleaned the room. But in passive voice, the focus shifts to the object of the action rather than the doer. For example, The room was cleaned by John. In passive voice, the object of the action becomes the subject of the sentence, and the verb changes to a form of be + past participle (e.g., was cleaned). The agent (the person doing the action) can be included or omitted, depending on whether it is necessary for the context.Passive Voice StructureSubject + be + past participle (verb) + (by agent)Lets look at some examples:Active Voice: She reads the book.Passive Voice: The book is read by her.The shift in focus from the subject (She) to the object (The book) is what makes the sentence passive. Passive voice is particularly useful when the doer of the action is unknown or irrelevant.Modal Verbs in the Passive VoiceNow, lets focus on how modal verbs can be used in the passive voice. The structure remains similar to passive voice in general, but with an added modal verb. The structure for using modal verbs in the passive voice is:Modal verb + be + past participleFor example:Active Voice: You must complete the task.Passive Voice: The task must be completed.In the passive voice, the focus shifts from the subject (you) to the object (the task), and the modal verb must is still used to express necessity, but now the sentence emphasizes the action being done to the object.Examples of Modal Verbs in the Passive VoiceActive VoicePassive VoiceShe can solve the problem.The problem can be solved by her.They might visit the museum.The museum might be visited by them.He should write the report.The report should be written by him.You must finish the assignment.The assignment must be finished by you.They could improve the process.The process could be improved by them.We may attend the event.The event may be attended by us.She could ask for a raise.A raise could be asked for by her.He must complete the work.The work must be completed by him.As you can see, we use the modal verb followed by be and the past participle of the main verb. This structure keeps the focus on the action being performed on the object, rather than the person performing it.Modal Verbs in the Past Passive VoiceJust like with the present tense, modal verbs can also be used in the past passive voice. The past passive voice is used when the action was completed in the past, and the emphasis is still on the action or the result of the action, rather than who performed it.The structure for the past passive voice with modal verbs is:Modal verb + have been + past participleFor example:Active Voice: They could have completed the project.Passive Voice: The project could have been completed.This structure helps convey that the action might have occurred in the past, without focusing on the person who performed the action. Now, lets look at how other modal verbs are used in the past passive voice.Examples of Modal Verbs in the Past Passive VoiceActive VoicePassive VoiceThey could have made the decision.The decision could have been made.She might have written the letter.The letter might have been written by her.He should have repaired the car.The car should have been repaired by him.We must have forgotten the meeting.The meeting must have been forgotten by us.They may have discussed the issue.The issue may have been discussed by them.I would have finished the work.The work would have been finished by me.You could have told me earlier.I could have been told earlier by you.She might have helped with the project.The project might have been helped with by her.Understanding the Use of Past Passive Modal VerbsIn the past passive voice, we use modal verbs like could have, should have, and might have to reflect actions that could have occurred or should have been done in the past. This construction is especially useful when you want to express uncertainty or speculation about past events.For example:Active: You should have finished the work.Passive: The work should have been finished by you.The passive voice here shows that the work was expected to be completed by the subject, but we are focusing more on the work itself rather than who did it.Why Use Modal Verbs in the Passive Voice?You may wonder why modal verbs are used in the passive voice. There are several key reasons for using this construction in English, especially in professional, academic, or formal contexts.1. ObjectivityModal verbs in the passive voice help create a more objective tone. This is particularly useful when the focus is on the action or result, rather than on the individual performing the action. This is often seen in scientific writing or official reports where the action is more important than the person completing it.For example:The project must be completed by tomorrow (Passive Voice)You must complete the project by tomorrow (Active Voice)In the first sentence, the focus is on the project, not who is responsible for completing it. This makes the statement sound less personal and more formal.2. PolitenessUsing the passive voice with modal verbs can sound more polite and less direct. This is particularly helpful in formal communication when you want to avoid sounding too commanding or harsh. For example, when giving instructions:Active Voice: You need to finish the report by tomorrow.Passive Voice: The report needs to be finished by tomorrow.By using the passive construction, the tone is less direct and more impersonal, which may be preferred in many professional settings.3. Emphasis on the Action or ResultModal verbs in the passive voice emphasize the action or result rather than the person who performs the action. This is especially useful in formal contexts where the outcome of the action is more important than who is performing it.For example:Active: They must clean the office by Friday.Passive: The office must be cleaned by Friday.In the second example, the emphasis is on the cleaning of the office, not who is doing the cleaning.4. Expressing Speculation about the PastUsing modal verbs in the passive voice is also a great way to express speculation or assumptions about past events. We often use must have been, could have been, or might have been to make educated guesses about what happened.For example:Active Voice: He must have made a mistake.Passive Voice: A mistake must have been made by him.This passive structure helps put the focus on the mistake, rather than who made it, and adds an element of uncertainty about the action itself.Why Do We Use Modal Verbs in the Passive Voice?Using modal verbs in the passive voice serves several important purposes, particularly in formal, academic, and professional communication. The passive voice with modal verbs helps to achieve a tone that is neutral, polite, and often more objective. Lets explore the key reasons why we use this construction.1. Objectivity and NeutralityOne of the main reasons to use modal verbs in the passive voice is to create a sense of objectivity and neutrality. When the focus is on the action or the result, rather than the person performing the action, the sentence becomes less personal and more focused on the event or outcome itself. This is particularly important in professional, scientific, and formal writing where the results or facts take precedence over the individual performing the action.For example:Active Voice: The researcher completed the study.Passive Voice: The study was completed by the researcher.In the second sentence, the emphasis is placed on the study being completed, not on the researcher, making the sentence sound more objective and formal.2. Politeness and TactIn many cases, using the passive voice with modal verbs can make statements sound politer and less direct. This is often used in situations where you want to avoid sounding too commanding, especially in professional settings. By using passive constructions, the tone of the sentence becomes more impersonal, which can soften requests, instructions, or criticism.For example:Active Voice: You must submit the report by tomorrow.Passive Voice: The report must be submitted by tomorrow.In the second example, the passive voice takes the focus off the person (you) and places it on the report, making the statement sound more like a neutral directive than a command.3. Emphasis on the Action or ResultAnother reason to use modal verbs in the passive voice is to emphasize the action or result rather than the subject performing it. This is especially useful when the result of the action is more important than the agent who carries it out. In formal writing, its common to emphasize the process or outcome, as it is often the most significant aspect of the communication.For example:Active Voice: They must complete the project by Friday.Passive Voice: The project must be completed by Friday.In the second sentence, the focus shifts from the doers (they) to the project itself, highlighting the need for completion rather than the person responsible.4. To Avoid Blame or Focus on the AgentSometimes, passive constructions are used when the speaker wants to avoid assigning blame or putting too much focus on the doer of the action. The passive voice allows the speaker to take the focus off the individual and instead concentrate on the task, action, or result.For example:Active Voice: You should have sent the email earlier.Passive Voice: The email should have been sent earlier.By using the passive voice, the speaker avoids directly pointing to you (the person who should have acted), focusing on the email and the action of it being sent instead. This can help reduce potential tension in situations of blame or failure.5. Expressing Speculation or AssumptionsUsing modal verbs in the passive voice also helps to express speculation or assumptions about past or present actions. When discussing events or actions that might have happened, the passive voice allows for a more speculative tone, focusing on what might have occurred rather than who caused it.For example:Active Voice: He might have missed the meeting.Passive Voice: The meeting might have been missed by him.In the passive construction, the focus is placed on the meeting itself, and the possibility of it being missed, rather than the person who missed it.6. In Scientific or Technical WritingIn scientific and technical writing, the use of passive voice with modal verbs is quite common. It helps maintain an impartial tone and focuses on the experiment, process, or result, rather than the person or researcher. This is particularly useful in research papers, where the process and findings are often considered more important than who conducted the research.For example:Active Voice: We have to conduct a series of tests.Passive Voice: A series of tests have to be conducted.Here, the action (conducting tests) is highlighted, which is more relevant to the research than the person conducting the tests.Modal Verbs in the Passive Voice ExerciseExercise 1: Change the Sentence from Active Voice to Passive VoiceRewrite the following active voice sentences into passive voice. Pay attention to the modal verbs and ensure the correct passive voice structure is used.You have to finish your homework by 6 PM.They can solve the problem quickly.He might cancel the meeting.We must complete the project before Friday.You should clean the kitchen.She could finish the task earlier.The team must submit the report tomorrow.He might repair the car next week.You can use the computer to write the document.They should call the client before 3 PM.Exercise 2: Choose the Correct Modal StructureFill in the blanks with the correct form of the modal verb + be + past participle or modal verb + have been + past participle as appropriate.The document _____ (should be / should have been) signed by the manager yesterday.The new rules _____ (might be / might have been) introduced last week.This project _____ (can be / could have been) finished by the end of the day.The instructions _____ (must be / must have been) followed carefully during the procedure.The tickets _____ (could be / could have been) purchased online earlier.Exercise 3: Correct the MistakesBelow are some sentences that incorrectly use modal verbs in the passive voice. Identify and correct the mistakes.The work should have been finished by you before the deadline.The car could be repaired by the mechanic last week.The invitation should be sent by tomorrow.The report must have been submitted before the meeting.Exercise 4: Create Your Own SentencesUsing the modal verbs can, should, must, might, and could, create at least five sentences in the passive voice. Be sure to incorporate different tenses (present and past) and contexts (e.g., obligation, possibility, permission).Conclusion On Modal Verbs in the Passive VoiceUnderstanding modal verbs in the passive voice is essential for expressing different levels of necessity, possibility, or obligation while focusing on the action or the result, rather than on the person performing the action. This construction is especially useful in formal, academic, and professional settings, where clarity, objectivity, and politeness are paramount.Whether youre writing a report, crafting an email, or making a presentation, knowing how to use modal verbs in the passive voice will help you convey your message more effectively and with the appropriate tone.Now that you have a clearer understanding of modal verbs in the passive voice, dont hesitate to practice incorporating them into your daily English use. With consistent practice, youll be able to master this structure and enhance the clarity and impact of your communication.

Modal verbs with passive voice. Modal verbs active and passive voice examples. Passive voice modals examples. Give active voice and passive voice examples for modal verbs.

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