

## Verbs which can't be used in the passive

Most verbs can be changed from the active to the passive.

	Active voice		Passive voice
Sentence	We tested the samples.	>	The samples were tested.

If the verb can be followed by a direct object (a direct object answers the question who or what after the verb) it can be made passive.

Part of speech		verb	direct object
Senetnce	These difficulties	may delay	the completion of the project.

But the verb *occur*, for example, cannot take a direct object.

Part of speech		Verb	Indirect object
Sentence	A solution	occurred	to him.

This cannot be transformed to the passive since there is no direct object to become the subject.

Some verbs which can be used only in the active

are: *occur, rise, happen, arise, fall, exist, consist (of), depend (on), result (from)*.

Active and passive verbs			
Active (correct)		Passive (incorrect)	
Problems may	occur happen arise exist	Problems may be	occurred happened arisen existed
They	consist of depend on	They are	consist of depend on
Note: 'They are dependent on . . .' is correct since 'dependent' is an adjective.			

**A special case:**

Part of speech	Subject	Verb	Object
Sentence	They	lack	resources.

**Lack** can take a direct object but cannot be transformed to the passive:

Resources are lacked (incorrect).

However, you could write:

Resources are lacking.

Label these sentences *correct* or *incorrect*

1. These problems may be happened quite frequently.   

2. Problems may arise in the early stages.   

3. The solution occurred to him yesterday.   

4. Failure may be occurred during heating.   

5. Difficulties may be existed.   

6. Difficulties may arise.   

## Concern and involve

Whether or not they can be used in the passive depends on the meaning.

**To involve** has three meanings:

1. To participate, to take part
2. To include
3. To require

Only the first meaning, *to participate*, *to take part* can be used in the passive form.

This week, students **are involved** in lab work.

The active voice must be used with the second meaning, *to include*.

### Example

He often **involves** his students in his research.

The active voice must also be used with the third meaning, *to require*.

**Example**

The project **involves** buying new software.

Use the correct form of *involve* (active or passive) in the following sentences.

1. Effective group leadership   a variety of skills.
2. A good leader   all group members in decision making.
3. All members of the group should   in project planning.

---

Concerned about means 'worried about'. Concerned with means 'involved in'.

The passive voice can be used with both meanings.

Complete these sentences with the correct preposition (with or about) in the following sentences.

1. The students are concerned   their next assignment.
2. Engineers nowadays are concerned   the development of sustainable technology.