

# Passive Voice

## Chapter 11



**Wind Energy**

The earliest known use of wind power was the sailboat, and from this technology windmills **were invented**. The first windmills **were developed** in Persia in 500-900 A.D. They **were used** for pumping water and grinding grain. In the 13th and 14th centuries, the first mills in western Europe **were used** for irrigation, grain-grinding, and saw-milling of timber. In the 19th century, when the steam engine **was** invented, the use of wind power declined in Europe. But thousands of miles to the west in the U.S., the next phase of wind power **was being developed** -- windmills **were used** by cowboys and farmers to provide water for livestock and families. And in the late 19th century, they **were used** by scientists to generate electricity.

Don't use a *by*-phrase when the person who did the action is not known or is not important.

The first windmills **were developed** in Persia in 500-900 A.D. *by people*.

Who exactly developed the windmills?

People, but we don't know who exactly.

Is it important to know who?

No.

Don't use a *by*-phrase when the person who did the action is not known or is not important.

Windmills **were used** for pumping water and grinding grain. *by people*.

Who used the windmills?

People, but we don't know who exactly.

Is it important to know who?

No.

Use the *by*-phrase for important interesting information.

And in the late nineteenth century, windmills **were used by scientists** to generate electricity.

Who used the windmills? Scientists.

Is it important or interesting to know who? YES, so use the *by*-phrase.

## Practice 1

Complete the sentences with the verbs in parentheses.  
Some sentences are Passive, and some are Active.

1. At first, wind power (*use*) was used on sailing ships.
2. The earliest windmills (*pump*) pumped water and (*mill*) milled grain.
3. The first windmills (*develop*) were developed in Persia and China.
4. Later, windmills (*serve*) served many purposes in Europe.

## Practice 1

Complete the sentences with the verbs in parentheses.  
Some sentences are Passive, and some are Active.

5. The use of windmills (*decline*) declined in Europe in the nineteenth century when the steam engine (*invent*) was invented.
  
6. In the western United States, windmills (*use*) were used by cowboys and farmers to provide water for their horses and cattle.





In the 20th century, electricity **was** mainly **generated** from fossil fuels, such as oil and coal. However, because of the high cost of fossil fuels, research into wind power and other forms of renewable energy\* **was continued**. Today many windmills **are located** in Spain. In fact, the remote hills of Spain **are dotted** with tall, graceful windmills. Nuclear power and coal **have been replaced** as the country's most efficient source of energy. By 2010, thirty percent of the electricity in Spain will come from renewable energy. Currently, the Navarra region of Spain generates seventy percent of its electricity from renewable energy sources, and one hundred percent **will soon be provided**. By 2010, wind **could be used** to supply half of the energy supplied by renewable energy. **Could** or **should** wind power and other renewable energies **be developed** more extensively in other countries? What do you think?

\*Renewable energy is energy that **gets replenished** by natural sources

Use the passive form of a modal to express a possibility or advisability.

## Possibility

By 2010, wind **could be used** to supply half of the energy supplied by renewable energy.

*By 2010, it is possible for wind to supply half the renewable energy.*

Use the passive form of a modal to express a possibility or advisability.

## Possibility (*could*) and Advisability (*should*)

**Could** or **should** wind power and other renewable energies **be developed** more extensively in other countries?

*Is it possible to develop wind power and other renewable energies in other countries?*

*Is it a good idea to develop wind power and other renewable energies in other countries?*

Use a non-progressive passive to describe an action that happened earlier.

Today in Europe the greatest number of windmills **are located** in Germany.

When were the windmills built?

Sometime earlier;  
in the past.

Use a non-progressive passive when the past participle functions as an adjective.

The remote hills of Spain **are dotted** with tall, graceful windmills.



Use *get* with a past participle to give the idea of “becoming” or “changing”.

**Renewable energy is energy that gets replenished by natural sources.**

*What is the change?*

*Oil and coal can't be replenished.*

*New sources such as wind and solar power can be replenished.*

## Practice 2

Complete the sentences with a passive form of the given verb.

1. Fossil fuels (*located*) are located in the ground. Renewable fuels (*can, find*) can be found in many different places.
2. The government said that wind mills (*build*) are going to be built along the coast over the next two years.
3. As wind power becomes more popular, some hills in Spain (*be, cover*) are being covered with windmills.

## Practice 2

Complete the sentences with a passive form of the given verb.

4. Many scientists think fossil fuels (*could, replace*) could be replaced by renewable energy in the near future.

5. Electricity from windmills and other forms of renewable energy (*get, popular*) is getting popular in many countries.



# REVIEW

Change the active sentences to passive.

1. A hundred years ago, most people heated their homes with wood or coal.

**A hundred years ago, most homes were heated with wood or coal.**

2. Today more and more people are using renewable energy sources such as wind or solar.

**Today renewable energy sources such as wind or solar are being used by more and more people.**

# REVIEW

Change the active sentences to passive.

3. Do you think we should explore alternative forms of energy?

**Do you think alternative forms of energy should be explored?**

## **BONUS QUESTION:**

4. How can we make a difference in our energy usage now in how we live our everyday lives?

**How can a difference in our energy usage be made now in how we live our everyday lives?**

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