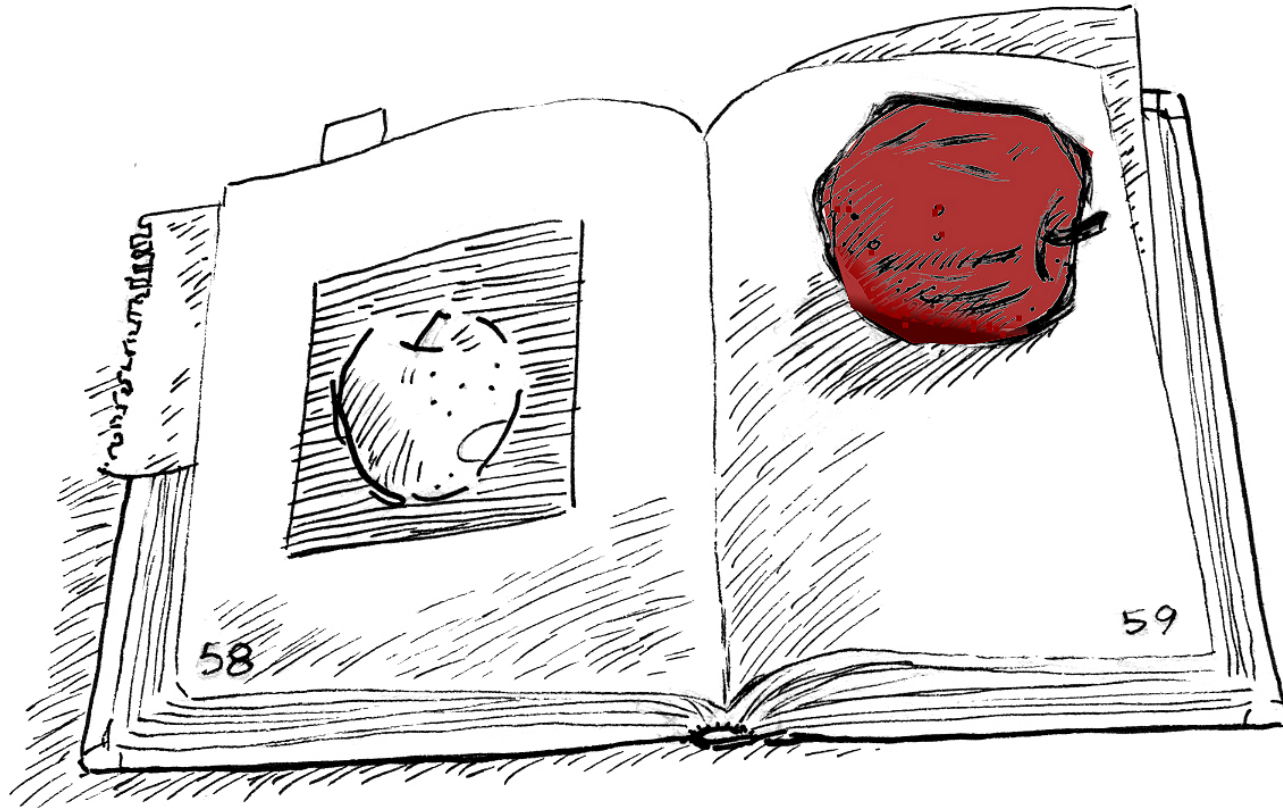


Passive Voice vs. Active Voice



Passive Verbs

Avoid excessive use of passive verbs. They can bog down descriptive writing and create boring sentences. (See *Bedford* p 142.)

Situations which *require* passive verbs (see *Bedford* p 144):

- thesis statements
- legal documents
- hard-news journalism
- speeches
- scientific, academic research papers
- strong declarations
- statements which require emphasis

—but even in these cases, over-use of passive voice can hinder flow of sentences.

Passive Verbs

Generally, these verbs are used *to show a state of being*. They do not show *action*.

The chef *is* the serial killer in the latest murder mystery.

is/are	will be	has	can	must have
am	shall be	have	can (may) be	may have been
was	would be	had	could have been	might have been
were	should be	has had	should have been	has been
will	could be	must	would have been	had been
		may		
do			will (shall) have	
did			will (shall) have been	

Passive Verbs

The snake *is* under the front porch.

Passive Verbs

The snake *is* under the front porch.

The snake *coils* under the front porch.

The snake *slithers* under the front porch.

The snake *twisted* under the front porch.

The snake *shifted* under the front porch.

The snake *moves* under the front porch.

The snake *escapes* under the front porch.

The snake *lives* under the front porch.

The snake *died* under the front porch.