

Use the active voice

Passive vs. Active Voice

Passive:

- The subject is acted upon by the verb

The presentation will be given by Sid.

Active:

- **The subject acts upon the verb**

Sid will give the presentation.

Why use the active voice?

- Fewer characters
- Reader has to do less work
- More impactful
- Smooooother

How to use the active voice

There were two awards received by a notable actress.

A notable actress received two awards.

Is the passive voice totally off the table?

- Occasionally helps avoid bias or use of personal pronouns and names.
- More accepted in scientific writing.

Exercise:

Tennis champ's winning streak ended by knee injury

Knee injury ends tennis champ's winning streak

Pro tip

- Less is (often) more

Nix anything redundant

Ask: Do I need this word?

ex.: kind of / basically / currently / specific / different

Two different women were hired as execs.

Two ~~different~~ women were hired as execs.

#1. Edit this sentence

The design Firm has been acquired by a large design-focused agency, whose work centers on interaction design.

The design Firm has been acquired by a large design-focused agency, whose work centers on interaction design.

A large agency focused on interaction design acquired the firm.

A design-focused agency acquired the firm.

The Hemingway App



Hemingway
Editor

Write Edit Help

If you made it to this 8 AM session, I'm proud of you! Thanks for coming — I hope you've got some coffee.

I'm going to try writing until the Hemingway app tells me I've done something I should reconsider. The app can be a helpful tool if you throw in a large block of text. Keep in mind, **however**, that it's not a human, and it might make some suggestions that won't help you. Think **critically**, and you'll be fine!

Readability



Grade 4 (Good)

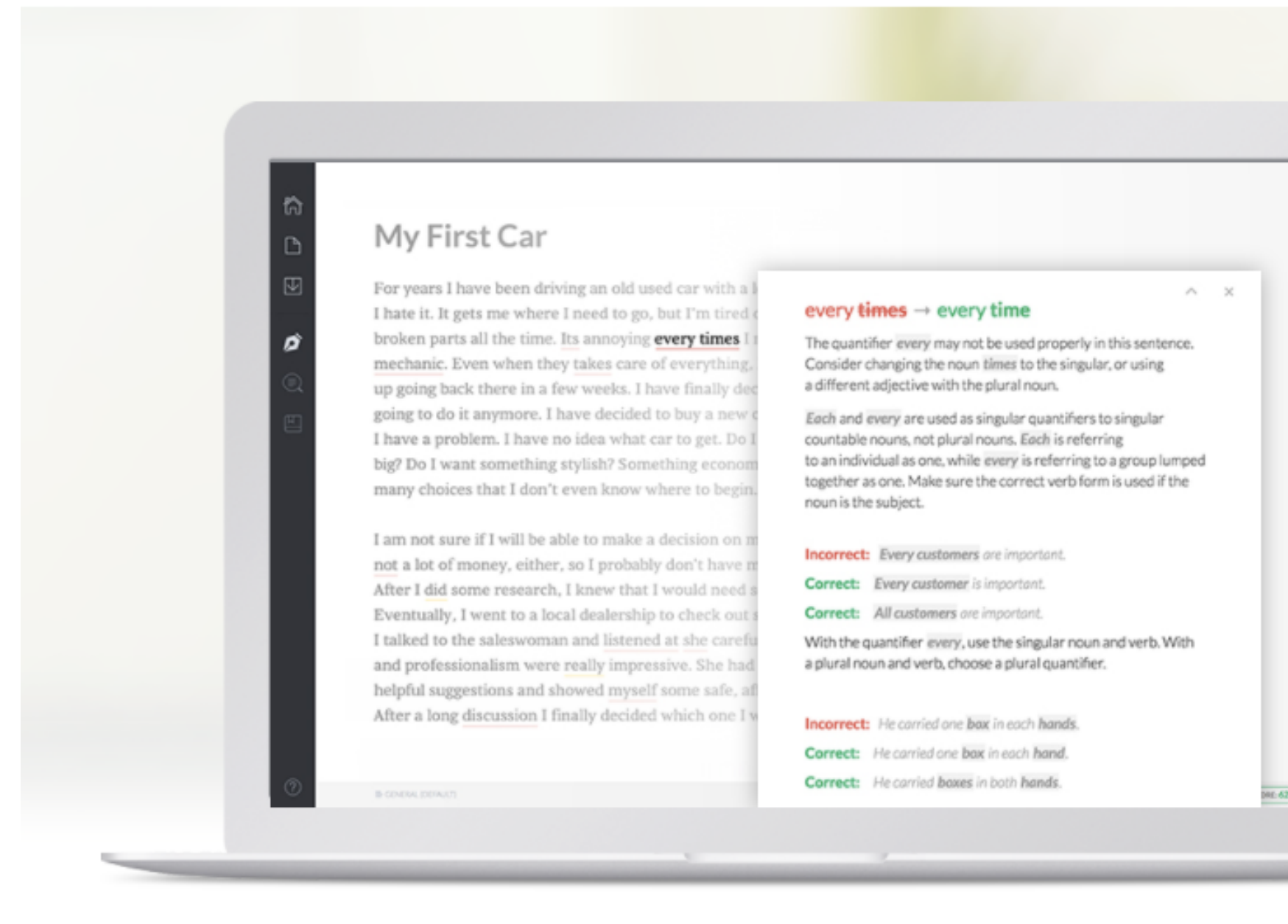
Words: 80 [More](#) ▼

0 of 6 sentences are hard to read.

0 of 6 sentences are very hard to read.

Grammarly

- Chrome
- MS Word



Resources

- Purdue Online Writing Lab: Passive Voice
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/539/03/>
- Grammar Girl <http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl>
- Mail Chimp's Writing for Accessibility
<http://styleguide.mailchimp.com/writing-for-accessibility/>
- The New Yorker's Comma Queen <http://video.newyorker.com/series/comma-queen>
- Grammar from The Oatmeal (you're welcome) <http://theoatmeal.com/tag/grammar>