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To use

To utilize



To use - To utilize

These two words are often misused today and, because of this misuse (misunderstanding of their correct meaning) many people perpetuate their incorrect use.

The Oxford English Dictionary says:

- **use:** take, hold, or deploy (something) as a means of accomplishing or achieving something; employ
- **utilize:** to make or render useful; to convert to use, turn to account

Utilize is not a more formal, elegant or scientific word than use; it means something different.

We can see that the basic meanings are:

Use – to do something that is “normal”: I use a knife to cut the meat.



Utilize - to do something that is “not normal”: I utilized a knife to turn a screw.



A study of some scientific journals: *Nature*, *The Lancet*, and *Plos One* showed that **use** was the predominant verb and **utilze** was found only once in one journal.

When *use* functions as a verb, the *s* is pronounced as a *z*.

When functioning as a noun, the *s* in *use* is pronounced as an *s*.

The word *use* has been in the English language since at least 1200, derived from the Latin word *usus* from *uti*.

What have we learnt?

Use should be the word of choice over the word *utilize* in nearly all cases.