

UP YOUR WORDPOWER

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Nearly everyone, not excluding, pardon the expression, many readers of Word Ways, is scared stiff of big words. A word don't have to be long to be a big word. Any word out of the, as they say, every day casual conversation type of word is big. And what fear such words can strike in the hearts and minds of them who meets them. Wow!

I, too, I must confess, used to get wobbly knees, shaking hands, and a funny crack in my voice whenever I heard or spoke them. But then I found the simple foolproof secret to success. A whole new world opened up for me. I ain't kidding. I now have WORDPOWER, the source of fun, love, health, riches, money, and happiness.

I just look at each and every new big word that comes my way and MASTER it. Here's how I do it. I BREAK UP THE WORD INTO EASIER WORDS. Bet you never thought of that!

The first part may not be a word at all, you know, but a prefix. Please don't panic. prefix = pre + fix = ahead of time + repair. Try it out in a casual way. "If we would prefix the washing machine, we'd save on repair bills." See how easy it is?

The last part may be what is called by the experts in the know a suffix. suffix = suf + fix = enough + repair. As in, "Call the repairman, honey, the job I did on it didn't suffix."

The middle parts are what is called roots. These are what hold the word down and make it work. "The damn thing bounces around because it has broken roots".

Just the other day I seen the big chartreuse. See how this has got the prefix in the middle to confuse you. chartreuse = chart + re + use = map + again + use. "If you had chartreused at that last turn five miles back we wouldn't be lost now".

I admit I was thrown for a loss for a time with the word germane. Looked to me like a German E. But Herman says they only have S's. Then I figured it was some kind of bug killer. But it didn't look quite right. Finally it hit me while I was watching Lawrence Welk. It's ger + mane = old age + long hair. Them guys Einstein, Stokowski, and Ben Gurion sure was germane.