

Word for Word

Ultrasonography vs. Ultrasound

Ultrasonography and *ultrasound* are often used interchangeably. However, they have different meanings.

Ultrasonography is an imaging procedure that uses sound waves to form images of organs, tissues, and other internal structures, and *ultrasound* refers to the sound waves used during the imaging procedure.¹

In informal writing and conversation, *ultrasound* is often used in place of *ultrasonography* to refer to the imaging procedure. However, in formal scientific writing, *ultrasonography* is the preferred term.

Incorrect: A follow-up breast ultrasound revealed that the patient had multiple benign cysts in her left breast.

Correct: The physician ordered a diagnostic ultrasonography for his patient as part of her workup for severe back pain.

Correct: The ultrasound waves penetrated the patient's body, resulting in an image that revealed several kidney stones.

Reference

1. Frey T, Young RK. Correct and Preferred Usage. In: *AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors*, 11th ed. (New York: online ed; 2020).
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jama/9780190246556.003.0011>. Accessed October 11, 2023.

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