

**P**ractically everyone can remember the feeling of sitting in a math class and wondering: When are we ever going to have to do this in the real world? And in a lot of ways, we were right. If we needed to find the roots of a polynomial, we'd just use a computer, and for multiplication, we'd reach for a calculator. So, really, why do we need to know this stuff?

In *What's the Use?* celebrated mathematician Ian Stewart provides the answer. Math in the real world isn't about boring computations. It's a means to achieve great things—from organ-donation programs to space exploration—that would not be possible otherwise. Stewart takes us through hospital operating rooms and into computer games to show exactly what math is for: why trigonometry isn't just manipulating triangles but is essential to keeping satellites in orbit, how apparently useless prime numbers power the world's security systems, and why imaginary numbers ("Who needs those?" legions of ninth-graders scream) are the key to augmented reality.

Joyful and exciting, *What's the Use?* is Stewart at his very best. Putting elementary-school homework in its proper place, he shows us how the farthest reaches of modern mathematics are not just interesting or relevant to our daily lives. They are the very fabric of our existence.

**IAN STEWART** is an emeritus professor of mathematics at the University of Warwick. He is the author of numerous books on mathematics including, most recently, *Do Dice Play God?* His work has won the Lewis Thomas Prize for Science Writing and the Euler Book Prize, among others. Stewart is a regular research visitor at Ohio State University and was elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 2001. He lives in Coventry, England.

**READ BY QUENTIN COOPER**



Running Time: Approx. 9 Hours • Unabridged

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WHAT'S THE USE?

HOW MATHEMATICS  
SHAPES EVERYDAY LIFE

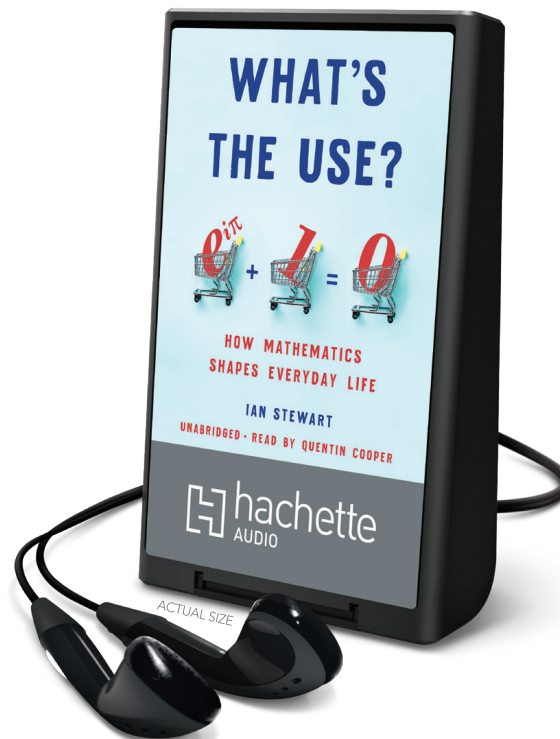
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