

Your family and friends can help.

Ask them:

- To face you and keeping their heads fairly still when speaking.
- To keep their mouth visible and not to hide lip movements behind their hands or other objects.
- Not to shout or speak too fast or slow-keep a constant rhythm and articulate well.
- To attract your attention before speaking to ensure you are ready to listen.
- Not to distract your attention with unnecessary hand gestures.
- If possible, to remove their glasses before they speak to you. A great deal of expressive information can be gathered from an individual's eyes; dark glasses can block this.
- To make the subject of conversation as clear as possible.
- To repeat something that isn't understood and also rephrasing what they want to say to help make things clearer.



Audiology Services

How to adapt to using a hearing aid & Listening Strategies

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How to adapt to your hearing aid

A HEARING AID CANNOT RESTORE NORMAL HEARING! But it can help the hearing impaired overcome the worst aspects of their disability.

To get the most out of your hearing aid and derive the greatest benefit, it is crucial to wear the aid consistently. Frequent use will increase your hearing sensitivity but it will take practice and perseverance to improve your **listening skills**. The infrequent user will experience very little enjoyment or satisfaction.

- 1) To begin, wear your hearing aid in the comfort of your own home for 2-3 hours a day for the first week.
- 2) Actively listen and identify all the sounds around your home. Some sounds will be familiar, others you may not have heard in a while. For example, practice listening to a familiar voice or programme on the TV.

Listening Strategies

When someone communicates to you, clues are gained from what you see as well as what you hear. You may be able to create a situation so that as many clues are available as possible.

- 3) Increase the length of time you wear the hearing aid to around 5~6 hours per day. Try wearing your aid outside, listening to the sounds around you. Initially, environmental sounds may be overwhelming and some sounds may annoy you. It is important to realize people with normal hearing also hear the same sounds; however they do not have the same impact or awareness as they do on a new hearing aid user. This is because over time, they have developed an automatic strategy of filtering out repetitive background sounds. Perseverance of use will lead to a similar position; however, this will take at least 3 months of continuous use of your aid.
- 4) Many other sounds, such as clocks ticking, footsteps, doors closing etc. may be annoying to begin with but persevering with your hearing aid and wearing it continuously will allow you to ignore these sounds.
- 5) Finally, progress to wearing the hearing aid all the time. Even when you are on your own, you are training yourself to **listen** and **adapt** to your sound environment.

(1)
Rooms with soft furnishings such as carpets and curtains will help absorb sounds and reduce echo. This will make the listening environment sound less noisy.

(2)
Try to reduce background noise. If possible turn your back to main source of any noise.

(3)
Ask others to face you, speak clearly and a little louder. Mumbling and shouting will make it more difficult for you to pick out the words of the speaker.

(4)
Try to position yourself so that you can see everyone easily. Avoid people sitting between you and a window as this will cause their face to be in shadow.

How to improve conversation

(1)
Don't be afraid to tell people that you have difficulty hearing. Your family and friends will be able to help you easier if they understand what your impairment means and how it affects you.

(2)
Make sure the room you are in is well lit if possible. Also make sure your eye sight has recently been tested as you don't want to be straining to see.

(3)
Try to watch the speaker's lips. This will help to pick up clues in the conversation.

(4)
Position yourself approximately 3 to 6 ft away from the speaker as lip reading is difficult if the speaker is too far away.