

Hints and tips on caring for and inserting a hearing aid

How do I put my hearing aids in?

If your hearing aid has an earmould it will look like this (see picture below). It's important to get the earmould into your ear properly. Your audiologist should show you how to do this in the clinic, but it will take more practice at home before you are an expert.



Step-by-step guide to fitting BTE hearing aids with an earmould:



Hold the earmould at the back with your finger and thumb. Pull it back past your ear.



Put the part that goes down the ear canal into position.



Then put in place the bit that goes into the crease at the top of your ear.



Use your other hand to pull down your earlobe. Push your earmould firmly in.



Correctly fitted aid.



Top part of the earmould not properly tucked into the crease at the top of the ear. **Incorrect.**

Step-by-step guide to fitting 'open-ear-fitting' BTE hearing aids:

Hearing aids often have a colour-coded dot on them so that you know which ear the aid is for. **This dot is always red for the right ear and blue for the left.**



Hold the hearing aid behind your ear with the soft tip facing towards your head.



Place the soft tip in your ear with the tail facing backwards. Push the tip in as far as it will comfortably go, otherwise you won't hear as well as you should.



Fold the tail backwards into the bowl of your ear. Sometimes, when it is new, the tail does not stay in place, but after a few days it should mould itself to the shape of your ear.



Correctly fitted aid.

What's the best way to get used to my hearing aids?

Once you get your hearing aids, it's important to practise using them and their various controls. Start by wearing them once or twice a day for about an hour in quiet situations. Listen to everyday noises – such as the kettle boiling, the fridge humming or doors opening and shutting – to get used to how they sound.

Remember that your brain may have adjusted to not hearing a lot of sounds and may need time to re-learn the significance of them and to ignore unimportant ones. Then try conversations with one person, again in a quiet room. Make sure that the other person sits facing you in good light, so it's easier to lipread them.

Next, try conversations with two people or in small groups.

What's the best way to clean my hearing aids?

Hearing aids with earmoulds

Clean the main part of your hearing aid by wiping it carefully with a soft, dry cloth or tissue. Take care not to get it wet. Wipe the earmould with a soft, dry cloth or tissue every night. Don't use any chemicals as they could damage it. Use a pin or similar item to remove any wax or debris that has got into the channel that goes through the earmould. About once a week, you should separate the earmould from the hearing aid and wash it. However, you should check this with your audiologist first.

Follow the instructions below for washing the earmould:



Gently pull the soft tubing off the hooked part of the hearing aid by holding onto the tubing with one hand and the hook of the aid with the other and tugging gently.

Don't pull the tubing out of the earmould as you won't get it back in again.



Wash the earmould (with its tubing still in place) in warm, soapy water. Use a nailbrush or a vent cleaner (or both) to remove any wax. Rinse it well, blow down the tubing to get the water out and leave it to dry overnight. Then push the

tubing back onto the hearing aid.



The picture on the left shows the earmould put back the **wrong** way round. Make sure the curve of the earmould goes the same way as

the curve of your hearing aid, as shown in the picture on the right.

Open-ear-fitting hearing aids

The step-by-step guide below shows you how to clean the tubing of your open-ear fitting.

The way you take off the tubing for cleaning is a bit different from one model to another. So, before you start, you'll need to check the instructions you have been given



In-the-ear (ITE) and in-the-canal (ITC) hearing aids



You must not wash these types of hearing aids (see picture on the left). Wipe them with a dry tissue and use a soft, dry brush to remove wax from the opening.

Don't poke anything into the opening as you may damage the earphone. These hearing aids often come with instructions and cleaning tools to help you.

[This information has been provided by Action on Hearing Loss. For more information please visit their website at: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk. Alternatively, you can phone them via telephone on 0808 808 0123 (freephone) or by textphone 0808 808 9000 (freephone).]

Caring for your hearing aid

SWITCHING ON AND OFF

Your new hearing aid does not have an on/off switch. To switch the hearing aid ON close the battery door. To switch the hearing aid OFF open the battery door slightly.

REPLACING THE BATTERY

Your hearing aid will bleep when the battery needs changed.

When replacing the battery, open the battery door and ensure you line up, side by side, the +sticker on the battery, with the +sign on the battery door.

To activate the battery, remove + sticker from the battery, before closing the battery door. If the door does not close over easily, the battery may be in the wrong way. Never force the battery door closed as this may damage the hearing aid.

VOLUME CONTROL (Not available on all hearing aids)

As the aid is programmed for your hearing loss, only minimal adjustment is available using the volume control wheel/button. To INCREASE the volume, push the volume control wheel/button up, to DECREASE the volume push the volume control wheel/button down.

DAILY CARE AND CLEANING

Keep your hearing aid clean and dry. Be aware moisture can gather in the tube, stopping sound reaching your eardrum. To remove this, detach the tubing from the hearing aid and shake the ear mould and tubing until moisture is removed. It is important on a daily basis, to check the end of the tube in your ear mould for wax, as a blockage of wax will prevent sound reaching your eardrum. Remove any wax using the wax pin provided. Clean your ear mould by wiping with a fresh wet wipe. The ear mould may discolour with time, this is very common and has no effect on the performance of the aid.

TUBING & REPAIRS

Through washing and wearing, the tubing in your ear mould will become hard and will affect the way you hear. It is therefore necessary that every 5-6 months you attend the Open Repair Clinic, so that staff can change your tubing. If your hearing aid requires a repair or adjustment, please Telephone: 01698-456556 for an appointment. Any time you attend please bring your service booklet.

HEARING AID BATTERIES

Replacement batteries may be obtained by taking your service booklet, to your local Health Centre.

Batteries can also be obtained at the Open Repair Clinic or by using the Postal Service. If you wish to use the Postal Service, send your service booklet along with two First Class stamps on a self-addressed envelope to the address shown on the back of your service booklet.

USING YOUR HEARING AID WITH THE TELEPHONE

Hold the telephone receiver close to the top of the hearing aid, slightly above the ear. This is where the microphone is situated.

Using a telephone with a hearing aid may involve some practise. If you find this difficult, telephones can be purchased with the Telecoil System installed. More information is available on these phones from Action on Hearing Loss- 0808 808 0123