



Now Hear This:

Tips for Better Hearing at Home and in the Community

Do you have trouble hearing or understanding when people speak with you?

If you talk openly with friends and family about your hearing loss, you will eventually feel relief because you'll use less psysical energy on hiding your hearing loss. In fact, you may even hear better just because you are more relaxed!

If you are having trouble hearing, consider the following suggestions:

- Get help, visit an Otolaryngologist (Ear-nose-throat doctor) or Audiologist for a hearing exam.
- Wear your hearing aids and use assistive listening devices that can help you communicate.
- Bring a buddy. If you know you will be meeting new people at a social event, it's a good idea to go with someone you know well, so you can ask for help if needed. Agree that you will use a special sign to indicate that you are having trouble.
- Admit to your hearing loss so people don't think you are ignoring them.
- Tell family and friends that you wear hearing aids. Let children hold the aids in their hands. Explain how the aids work.
- Avoid loud or noisy situations with a lot of background noise.
- Be careful where you store your hearing aids when not in use.
- Sit in a place in the room that has good lighting.
- Ask people to catch your attention, for example, by tapping on your shoulder before they speak to you.
- Verify the information throughout the conversation to avoid miscommunication, for example, "Did you say we are going to Mary's on the 15th or 16th? Are you bringing dessert or am I?"
- Sit close to the person with whom you are speaking.
- Let the person know exactly what you did or did not hear.
- Have a pen and paper ready. Ask the person to "write it down" if you can't hear them well.



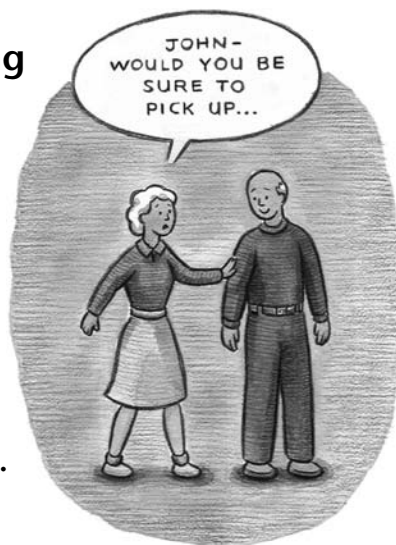
Some tips for speaking with a person that is hard of hearing

Speak louder, but don't shout. Shouting distorts speech and actually makes it more difficult to understand.

Speak slowly, giving the person more time to understand you, but don't make your speech unnaturally inflected.

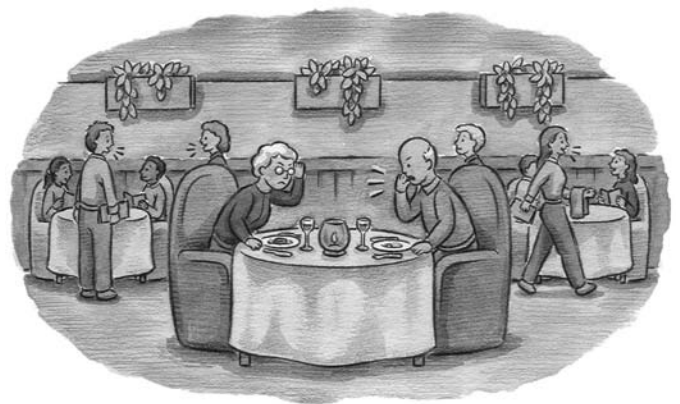
Provide more information, perhaps by repeating the same thing in different ways. For example if you said "Joe is coming over at three o'clock," and the message was not understood, you could provide more information and rephrase – "Your son Joe is coming for a visit at three o'clock."

Make sure the person is paying attention to you and knows that you are speaking. Attract their attention visually or by touching them.



If the person depends on visual input, such as lip reading, make sure your mouth is not hidden. Move your hand from your face, if you smoke remove the cigarette from your mouth, and don't chew gum.

Avoid noisy environments. Turn down the TV or go into a quiet room.



Don't call out or try to have a conversation from another room. Make sure you are face to face before you begin.

Give the person with hearing loss cues about the topic of conversation. For example, if you want to discuss an event, introduce first – "I would like to tell you about my trip to Chicago..."