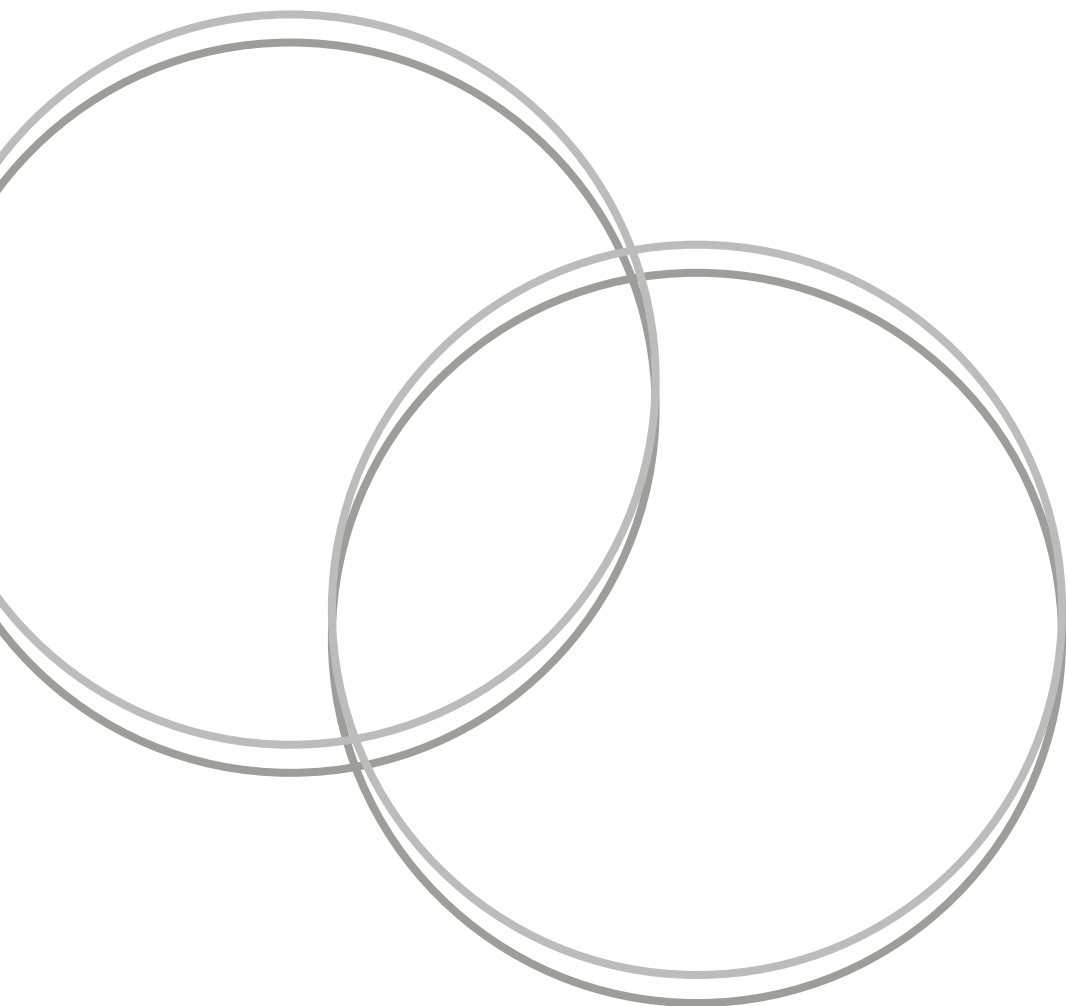




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Managing your Hearing Aids: Open Fit

Information for patients



How do I get used to my hearing aid?

Hearing aids take a bit of time to get used to, especially if you have never worn one before. Your brain needs to relearn the sounds it has learnt to live without whilst your hearing has been deteriorating.

In the early stages, you will hear lots of sounds that you are not expecting to, and speech may sound strange. You might not feel comfortable wearing the hearing aid all the time.

You can start by using them for a few hours at home in a relaxed setting. Then, slowly increase the time until you can use them all day after a few weeks.

Wait until you feel comfortable with the sound at home before trying difficult listening environments (for example where there is a lot of background noise).

Remember that you are teaching yourself to listen again. The more you wear your hearing aids, the faster you will get used to them.

Can I just wear the hearing aid when I feel I need it?

Adjusting to hearing aids takes time and practice. If you only use them sometimes, things will always sound strange. It helps to wear hearing aids most of the time. Your brain can then adjust to the sounds they amplify. You might need to hear something important such as the telephone or the doorbell.

Does that mean I need to wear hearing aids all the time?

No. Always take your hearing aid out before going to bed or getting in the bath or shower. You must also take the hearing aids out in very noisy situations and wear hearing protection.

Will my own voice sound strange with the hearing aid in?

Yes. It is common for your own voice to sound strange when you first use a new hearing aid. This usually settles within a few weeks if you wear it regularly.

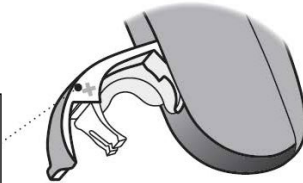
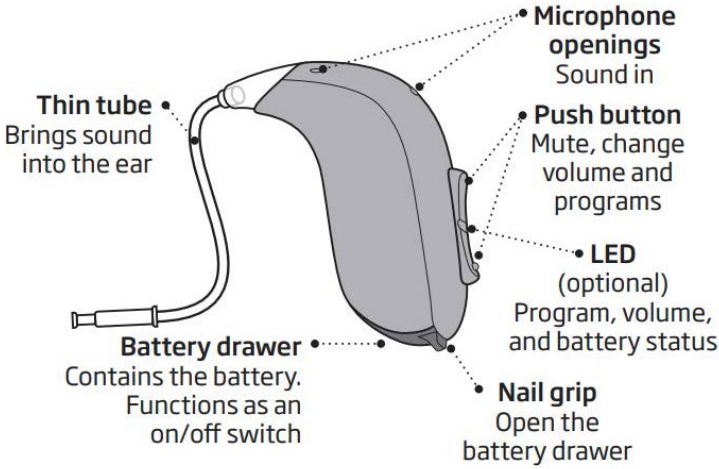
My hearing aid sounds very loud. Is this normal?

Yes. It is normal for a hearing aid to make things sound louder than you are used to, but it should not be uncomfortable. If you are unable to wear the hearing aid, please tell us.

I have had one hearing aid for a long time and now I have been given two – what will this feel like?

It can take a little bit of time to adjust to the new hearing aids. Please keep wearing both. It may feel like you are back at the beginning for a while. However, if you use them regularly, two hearing aids will help you to find the direction of sounds and give a more balanced listening experience.

Your hearing aid



Red = right
Blue = left
There will be a red or blue marker in the battery drawer

How to put your hearing aid in

The following pictures show putting in a right hearing aid. Please use the opposite hand if you have a left hearing aid.



1. Hold the hearing aid between your right thumb and index finger.



2. Place your hearing aid behind your ear using your finger and thumb.



3. Hold the hearing aid in place using your opposite hand. Use your finger and thumb to find your ear canal. Put the dome into the canal.



4. Use your finger to push the dome in as far as it feels comfortable.



5. Find the tail of the thin tube and put it into the curve of your ear to secure the dome and thin tube.



6. The tail helps stop the hearing aid from coming out of your ear. It also helps you remove the hearing aid.

For help putting your hearing aids in, please look at these online videos:

www.c2hearonline.com

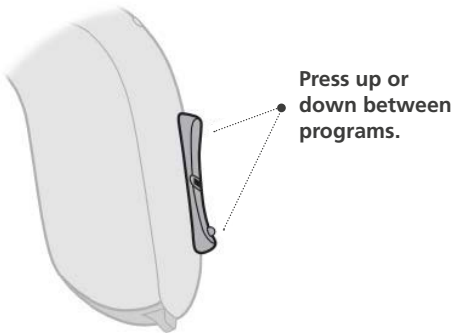
Hearing aid programmes

When switching between the different programmes, your hearing aid will beep. The number of beeps will tell you which programme you are using.

Press and hold the upper button for two seconds to **go forward** in the programme cycle (for example programme 1 to programme 2)

Press and hold the lower button for two seconds to **go back** in the programme cycle (for example programme 2 to programme 1)

You might not have any additional programmes on your hearing aids when you first get them. Please ask your audiologist about your options.



Your programmes

Programme 1	Default setting - daily use
Programme 2	
Programme 3	
Programme 4	

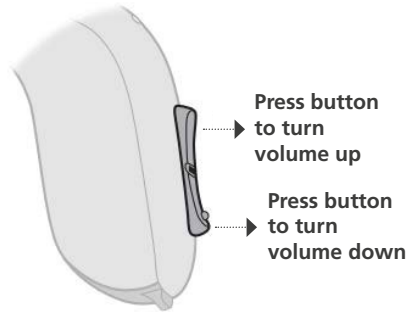
Volume control

You might have a volume control. This lets you change the volume in different listening situations to the level you feel comfortable with.

To turn the **volume up**, press the upper button once

To turn the **volume down**, press the lower button once.

Every time you press the button, the volume will go either up or down a step until you reach the maximum or minimum volume.



Switching your hearing aid on and off

The hearing aid uses batteries.

To turn the hearing aid on, close the battery compartment.

If you hold the hearing aid while it's switched on, it might make a whistling sound. This will stop when the hearing aid is properly fitted in your ear.

Turn ON
Close the battery drawer with the battery in place.



Turn OFF
Open the battery drawer.



Important: Do **not** use your hearing aid when you sleep. You also cannot use it in the shower or bath. Always open the battery compartment when you are not using your hearing aid.

Battery replacement

Low battery warning

The hearing aid will beep to warn you that the battery is running low. Please replace the battery as soon as possible before the hearing aid stops working.

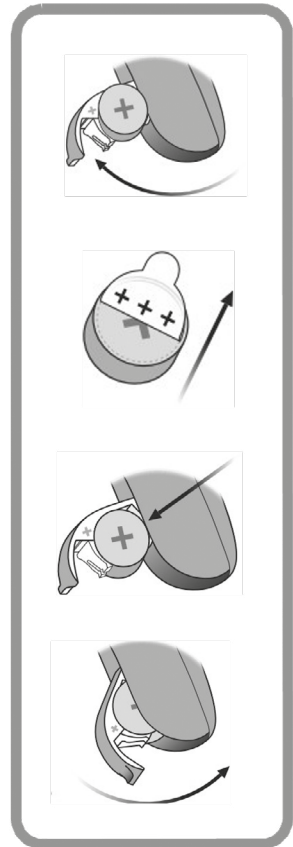
- 1 Open the battery door
- 2 Remove the old battery
- 3 Remove the sticker from your new battery
- 4 Insert the new battery with the + symbol upwards
- 5 Close the battery door

Each battery normally lasts between 7-10 days.

Take the battery out of the hearing aid when you are not using it. Leaving it in for a long time might damage the hearing aid.

Keep the batteries clean, dry, and away from extreme heat.

Carry a spare battery pack with you so your hearing aid does not run out suddenly.



Collecting batteries

You might be able to collect batteries from your GP reception. You will be asked for your battery record card.

If you are not able to attend your GP surgery, or they do not have batteries, please email or call the department and we will post them to you.

Disposing of expired or dead batteries

Please do not throw batteries away at home as this could lead to fire and harm the environment.

Ask your local council what you should do with your batteries. Some supermarkets have bins at the entrance.

You can also return your dead or expired batteries to one of our audiology clinics and we will dispose of them safely for you.

Never throw batteries into the fire, they may explode!

Important:

Don't leave batteries where small children or pets can reach them. If anyone swallows a battery, **they need to go to A&E immediately.**

Lost hearing aids

Your hearing aid is on loan to you from the NHS.

If you lose or break your hearing aid, you will need to pay **£110** per aid.

You will not have to pay if the hearing aid is lost by a hospital or care home. There are also other reasons you might not have to pay, for example if you get certain benefits. Please tell us if you think one of them might apply to you.

We can give you your money back if you find your lost hearing aid within 4 weeks of payment and give the new one back to us.

Care and maintenance of your hearing aid

Cleaning your ear mould

The following pictures show you how to clean a hearing aid with a thin tube.

Detach the corda tube by pulling the tube away from the hearing aid.

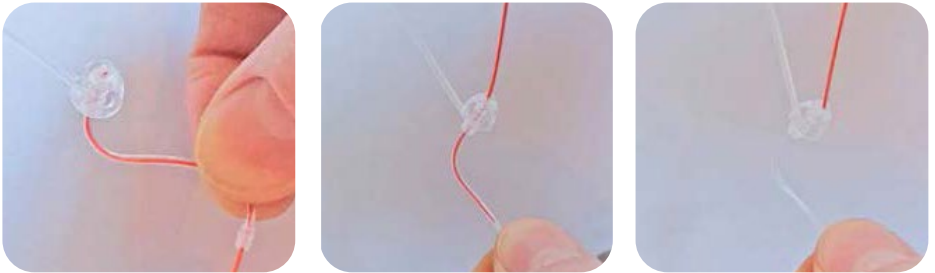


Retubing your hearing aid

Put the cleaning tool into the top part of the tube and feed it all the way through to the dome.



Carefully push the cleaning tool through the dome, without removing the dome.



To clean the dome, wipe the dome gently with a wet-wipe or damp cloth to remove any excess wax.

Always clean the dome from tip to base.

Re-attach the corda tube by pushing it back on to the hearing aid with a simple click fit action.



Please note: If the dome is removed, always replace with a new dome. Never put a used dome back onto the tube. Your thin tube/corda and domes will need **replacing every 6 months**. We can post replacements to you.

Getting your hearing aid repaired

Our postal repairs service is the fastest way to get your hearing aid fixed or serviced.

Through our postal repairs service, we can:

- Send you new cordas and domes
- Replace lost or damaged hearing aids
- Repair or replace a faulty hearing aid

Send your hearing aid by tracked delivery to:

Audiology Department Level LG1,
West Wing
John Radcliffe Hospital
Headley Way
Oxford OX3 9DU

Include a note inside the package with your details and a description of what you would like us to do.

We also have repair appointments available. Some problems can be solved with a remote appointment, so you would not have to come to the hospital. Ask us for more information.

At a repair appointment, we can:

- Fine tune your hearing aid
- Repair or replace a faulty hearing aid
- Give you advice on how to look after your hearing aid, including how to put it in and clean it

Recommended hearing aid usage

The time frames below can be used as a guide to help new hearing aid users get the best results from their hearing aid(s). However, it is important that you use your hearing aids as much and as often as you can.

The more you wear your hearing aids, the better they will work.

Length of wear	1-3 hours per day	3-5 hours per day	5-6 hours per day	6-7 hours per day	Full-time use
Recommended situations	Watching TV and 1-1 conversations at home	Conversations in small groups	In gardens, quieter streets, restaurants, shops, and in gatherings	Small groups, busy shops, restaurants, and theatres	In a variety of daily listening situations
Realistic expectations	Your hearing aid will amplify a lot of sounds you have not heard properly in a long time Voices will become more intelligible and background noise may be loud. You may also hear your own voice louder.	Your hearing aid will amplify a lot of sounds you have not heard properly in a long time Voices will become more intelligible and background noise may be loud. You may also hear your own voice louder.	You should by this stage get used to your own voice and tolerate louder sounds. Voices will become clearer.	You should by this stage get used to your own voice and tolerate louder sounds. Voices will become clearer.	The hearing aid should be comfortable and loud enough in most situations.

Experienced or existing hearing aid users may get used to new hearing aids faster. But it may still take some time to get used to new sounds from new hearing aids.

If you still feel that you are not hearing as well as you should, we might need to see you again. You can arrange an appointment by calling us on **01865 234 585** or emailing **adult.audiology@ouh.nhs.uk**

Using your hearing aids with the phone

When you use the phone, you should hold the receiver to the hearing aid and not your ear. Sound needs to pass through your hearing aid before reaching your ear.

Your new hearing aids have Bluetooth. It might be possible to stream sound directly from your smartphone to your hearing aids. This depends on the model of your hearing aids and the model of your smartphone. Please ask us for more information.

Using the Telecoil/Loop

The telecoil (or 'loop') is an assistive listening system that sends sound straight to your hearing aids.

If you have the telecoil activated on your hearing aids, you can change to it by switching to the right programme.

It can make it easier to hear in places where there is lots of background noise (like a supermarket checkout), or where there is distance between you and the speaker (like a church or the theatre). Some telephones also have a built-in telecoil.



Troubleshooting guide

If your hearing aid is **not working properly**:

1. Try a new battery, making sure the battery drawer is fully closed
2. Check the hearing aid is inserted correctly into your ear
3. With the hearing aid switched on, remove the tube from the hearing aid and cup the hearing aid in your hand. If the hearing aid whistles, the problem is likely to be with the tube
4. Clean the tube with the red cleaning wire and wipe the dome

If you have tried the above steps and are still having problems with the hearing aid, please use our postal repairs service or contact us to arrange an appointment.

Communication tactics for you

Even when you wear your hearing aids, other people need to help you by using good communication strategies.

The following strategies may be useful to you:

Be open. Tell the person you are speaking to that you have a hearing loss.

Ask people to get your attention before they start talking to you.

Get a better view. Stand a reasonable distance from the person so you can see their face and lips.

Ask people to slow down and speak more clearly.

If you don't catch what someone says, just ask them to say it again or in a different way.

Keep calm. If you get anxious, you might find it harder to follow the conversation.

Play to your strengths: if your hearing is better in one ear, try turning that side towards the person speaking to you.

Use the additional programmes on your hearing aid if you have them.

Be kind to yourself, no one hears correctly all the time!

You can also try to change your environment:

Reduce unnecessary background noise (for example, turn the TV or radio down).

Move yourself so you can see the speaker clearly.

Move away from distractions or to a quieter room.

Rooms with soft furnishings (for example, thick carpeting or curtains) reduce echo.

Speak to people from the same room.

Make sure the light falls on the speaker so you can see them clearly.

Communication tactics for family and friends

You can give people these tips, to help them understand how to talk to someone with a hearing loss:

Get the listener's attention first. Make sure you are in the same room as the person that you want to talk to.

Do not speak too fast. If someone does not understand what you're saying, you need to try and slow down your speech.

Always turn and face the person as it helps them pick up any visual clues.

Do not cover your mouth. Speak clearly and use normal lip movements, natural facial expressions and gestures.

Rephrase the sentence if they do not understand the first time.

Ask questions to see if they have understood what you are talking about.

Useful contacts

RNID

126 Fairlie Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 4PY

Email: contact@rnid.org.uk

Phone: **0808 808 0123**

Website: www.rnid.org.uk

Hearing Link

Hearing Link Services, The Grange, Wycombe Road, Saunderton, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9NS

Email: enquiries@hearingdogs.org.uk

Phone: **01844 348100**

Website: www.hearinglink.org

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

The Grange, Wycombe Road, Saunderton, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, HP27 9NS

Email: info@hearingdogs.org.uk

Phone: **01844 348 100**

Text Relay: 18001 01844 348100

Website: www.hearingdogs.org.uk

Hearing Impairment Team

Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JD

Email: hearing.impairment@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Phone: **01865 894925**

Text: 07713329501

Website: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/adultlearning

Tinnitus UK

Tinnitus UK, Acorn Business Park, Woodseats Close, Sheffield, S8 0TB

Email: helpline@tinnitus.org.uk

Phone: **0800 018 0527**

Text: 07537 416841

Website: tinnitus.org.uk

Connevans

Connevans Limited, Bridge House, 1 Nutfield Rd,
Merstham, Redhill, RH1 3EB

Email: askaquestion@connevans.com

Phone: **01737 247571**

Website: www.connevans.co.uk

C2Hear

Website: www.c2hearonline.com

Sense

101 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9LG

Email: info@sense.org.uk

Website: www.sense.org.uk

National Association of Deafened People

Email: enquiries@nadp.org.uk

Text: **07818 132 961**

Website: www.nadp.org.uk

Contact us

Email: adult.audiology@ouh.nhs.uk

Phone: **01865 234585**

Post: Audiology Department, Level LG1, West Wing, John Radcliffe
Hospital, Headley Way, Oxford, OX3 9DU

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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