



Living and Traveling With Hearing Loss

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First, Living With Hearing Loss



If you are hard of hearing,



YOU
ARE
NOT
ALONE



HEARING LOSS STATISTICS

- There are 48 million Americans with measurable hearing loss.
- Only 1 out of 5 people who could benefit from wearing hearing aids actually wears them.

Hearing loss affects all age groups

- 65% of people with hearing loss are under age 65.
- 15% of school age children have a measurable hearing loss.

SOURCE: Better Hearing Institute

FIRST THINGS FIRST!

If you even suspect you have a hearing loss,
GET A HEARING TEST

- Tests are free from many vendors - dispensers cannot charge for them California.
- You're under no obligation to purchase hearing aids from any office after testing.
- If you are to be charged for the test, you (or your insurance company) has paid for it and you are entitled to a copy of your audiogram.

If prescribed, invest in hearing aids

Decorative horizontal bars in blue and green are located at the bottom of the slide.

Some benefits of wearing hearing aids:

- ✓ Hear much better in 1 on 1 conversations or in small groups.
- ✓ Hear the phone ringing and hear better on the phone.
- ✓ Hear the door bell or a knock on the door
- ✓ Have a better relationship with your family
- ✓ Feel better about yourself
- ✓ Improve your mental health
- ✓ Improve your ability to concentrate and remember
- ✓ Feel more independent and secure
- ✓ Feel less tired or exhausted
- ✓ Be more able to participate in social gatherings
- ✓ Be able to increase your social contacts

“You don’t know what you don’t hear.”

Hearing aids and cochlear implants
are simply that,
an AID.



Unlike eyeglasses, they
cannot restore hearing to
“normal” or even almost
“normal”.

Hearing aids are most effective in 1 on 1 settings



Good directional mics have an effective hearing range of six feet or less

(Etymotic Research, 2000a)

Beyond hearing aids – laugh at yourself



or "Not Very Far"


Communication Strategies

Hearing loss impacts not just the person who is hard of hearing, it's a problem for those who interact with them.

Both should try to use these strategies whenever possible.

First and Foremost

Get my attention before your talk to me and don't try to talk to me from another room



Face me and maintain eye contact

Face the person with hearing loss. Make eye contact. Your facial expressions and body language add vital information to the communication. For example, you can “see” a person’s anger, frustration, and excitement by watching the expression on his or her face.

Keep hands away from face

- When talking, try to keep your hands away from your face.
- If you are a smoker, hold the cigarette in your hand while talking. You will produce clearer speech and allow the listener to make use of those visual cues.

Avoid covering or changing the shape of your lips and mouth

- Many HoH (sometimes without realizing it) “read speech.”
- Avoid overdoing or creating odd lip shapes
- Do not talk with food in your mouth or chew gum.
- Heavy beards and moustaches can also hide your mouth.

Speak naturally

- Speak distinctly, but without exaggeration.
- You do not need to shout. Shouting actually distorts the words.
- Try not to mumble - this is very hard even for those with normal hearing to understand.
- Speak at a normal rate, not too fast or too slow.
- Use pauses rather than slow speech to give the person time to process speech (more on speech processing later).

Rephrase rather than repeat

If the listener has difficulty understanding something you said, find a different way of saying it. If he or she did not understand the words the first time, it's likely he or she will not understand them a second time. So, try to rephrase it.

Avoid/eliminate background noise

- Turn off the radio or television.
- Move to a quiet space away from the noise source.
- When going to a restaurant or making dinner reservations, ask for a table away from the kitchen, server stations, or large parties.
- Look for and sit away from muzak speakers.
- Ask that the music be turned down.

Talk away from background noise

Ask that background music be turned down.

If the conversation is critical, move to a quieter setting/room to talk.

Talking from another room

If I can't see you,
I probably can't hear you.

Remember the 6 foot rule for hearing aids

Look for good lighting

When in a restaurant or other social gathering, sit where there is good lighting so that your face can be more easily seen. Also, avoid strong lighting coming from behind you, such as through a window.

Writing, texting, using visual media (such as pictures, diagrams and charts) and assistive devices can be effective when hearing is just too difficult.

Speech processing

- Recognize that hard of hearing people hear and understand less when they are tired or ill.
- As we age, the brain's ability to process sounds into speech, called temporal processing, slows down so avoid talking too fast.

Coping Strategies–Behavior

Used both by the hard of hearing and those who interact with them

- Get my attention before your talk to me.
- Face me when talking to me.
- If you cover your lips I can't see them.
- Make certain the lighting is good with no glare facing me so I can see your face.
- Please don't shout.

Coping Strategies–Behavior

- Keep so called “background” music in the background or, better yet, turned off.
- To talk to me, please turn of the TV.
- Avoid cross talk - the cocktail party effect.
- Talk to me in the same room.
- If we're going out to lunch and you're picking the place – pick a quiet one.

Use Assistive Technology

Amplified telephones

Captioned telephones

Personal amplifiers

Personal FM

Hearing loops

Neck Loops

Bluetooth

More.....

Amplified telephones

Must have good quality ear piece

Must have volume and tone control

Should have speaker (headset) jack.



Must be hearing aid compatible - HAC
(T and M ratings or 3 or more)

Captioned telephones



CapTel text telephone

Free for qualified Californians

www.hamiltonrelay.com

FREE

CaptionCall phone

Free from CaptionCall

www.captioncall.com



Personal Amplifiers

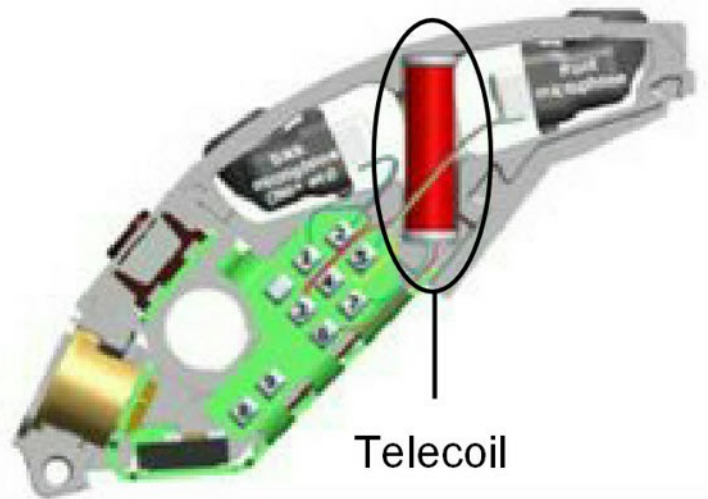
Often referred to as a
“Pocket Talker.”

Eliminates background sounds
while amplifying the speaker’s
voice and sends it through a
headset or electromagnetic
transmission to the
telecoils in hearing
Aids and cochlear
implant processors.

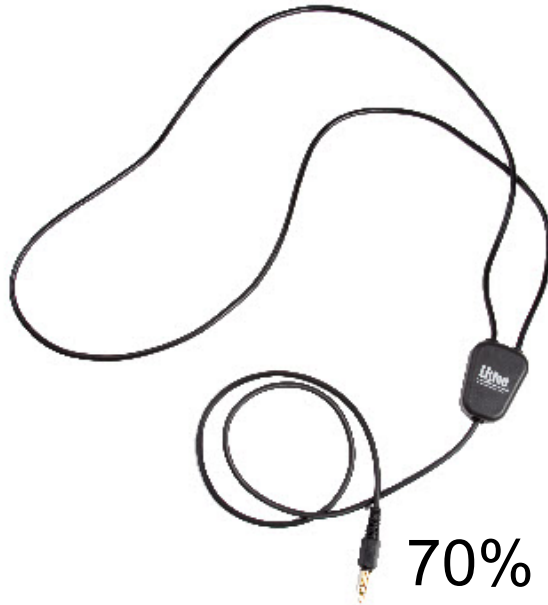


What's a Telecoil ?

Think of it as an antenna that receives an electromagnetic signal that the hearing aid turns into sound.



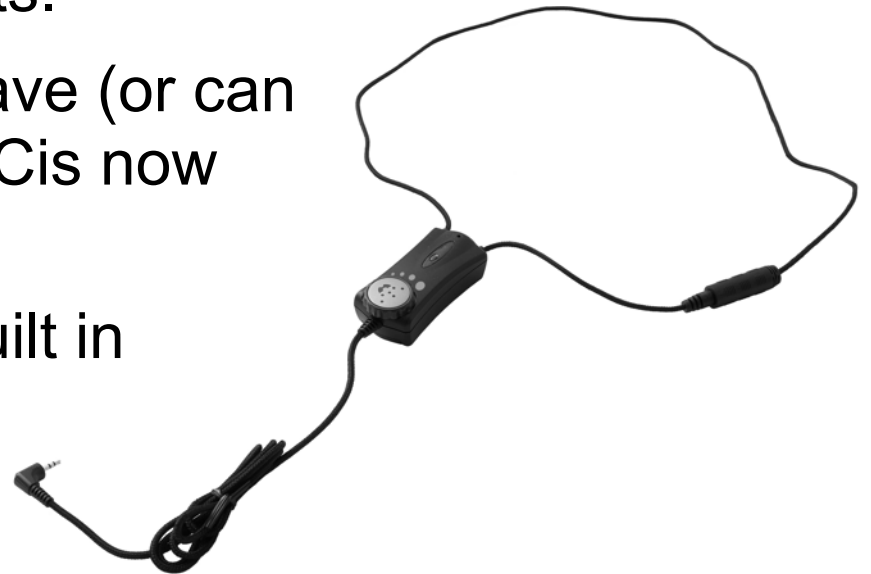
Neck Loops



Transmit sound from any device with a speaker/headset jack via a magnetic signal to telecoil equipped hearing aids or cochlear implants.

70% of hearing aids have (or can have) telecoils and all Cis now have them.

Some have mic and built in amplifier.



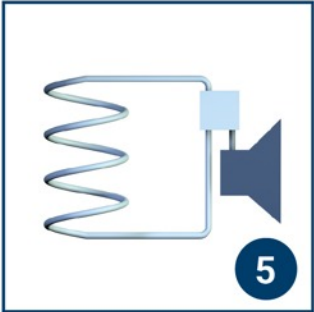
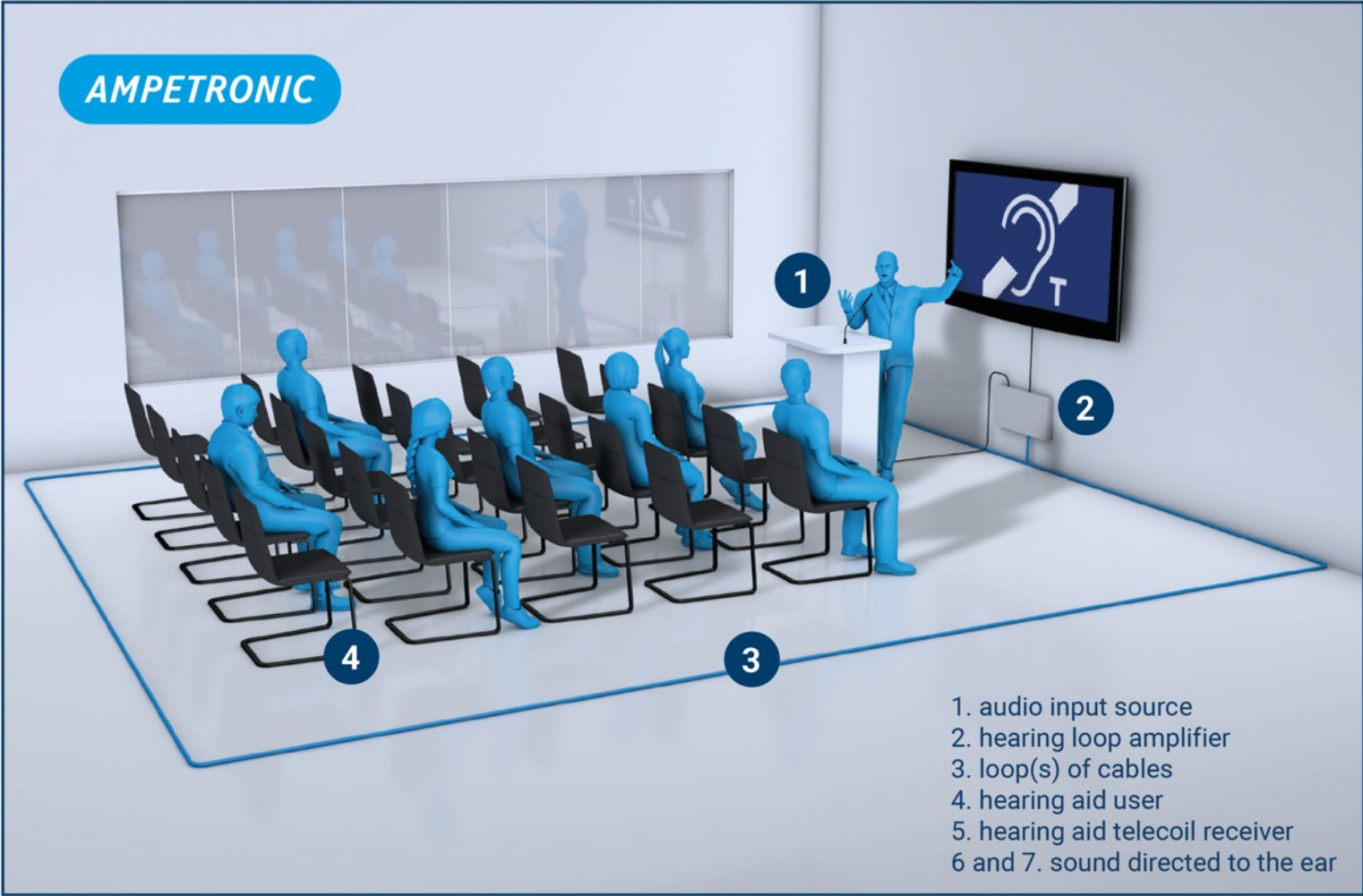
Personal FM



Miniature radio transmitter and receiver used with headset, ear buds or neck loop.

Check out Ebay for any of this type of equipment.

Hearing loops



A sampling of other devices

HearAll™ Cell Phone Amplifier – Amplifies the caller’s voice up to 40 decibels louder. Can be used as a handset or speakerphone.*

TV Ears - transmits sound to headset or neck loop via an infra red signal

TV SoundBox® Wireless Speaker – Brings the sound right to you!*

CentralAlert™ Wearable Notification System – Be alerted 24/7 to activities occurring around you in your home.*

Cell Phone Ringer/Flasher – Alerts you to incoming calls/texts from your land line or cell phone.

Shake Awake bed shaking alarm clock.

Where do you get this equipment?

The Hearing and VisionCenter
www.hearingandvisioncenter.com

Online Retailers

www.diglo.com (Formerly Harris Communications)

www.weitbrecht.com

www.teltex.com

Bluetooth®

Stream sound wirelessly from a variety of sources directly to your hearing aids



Cell Phone



Home TV



Computer



Laptop

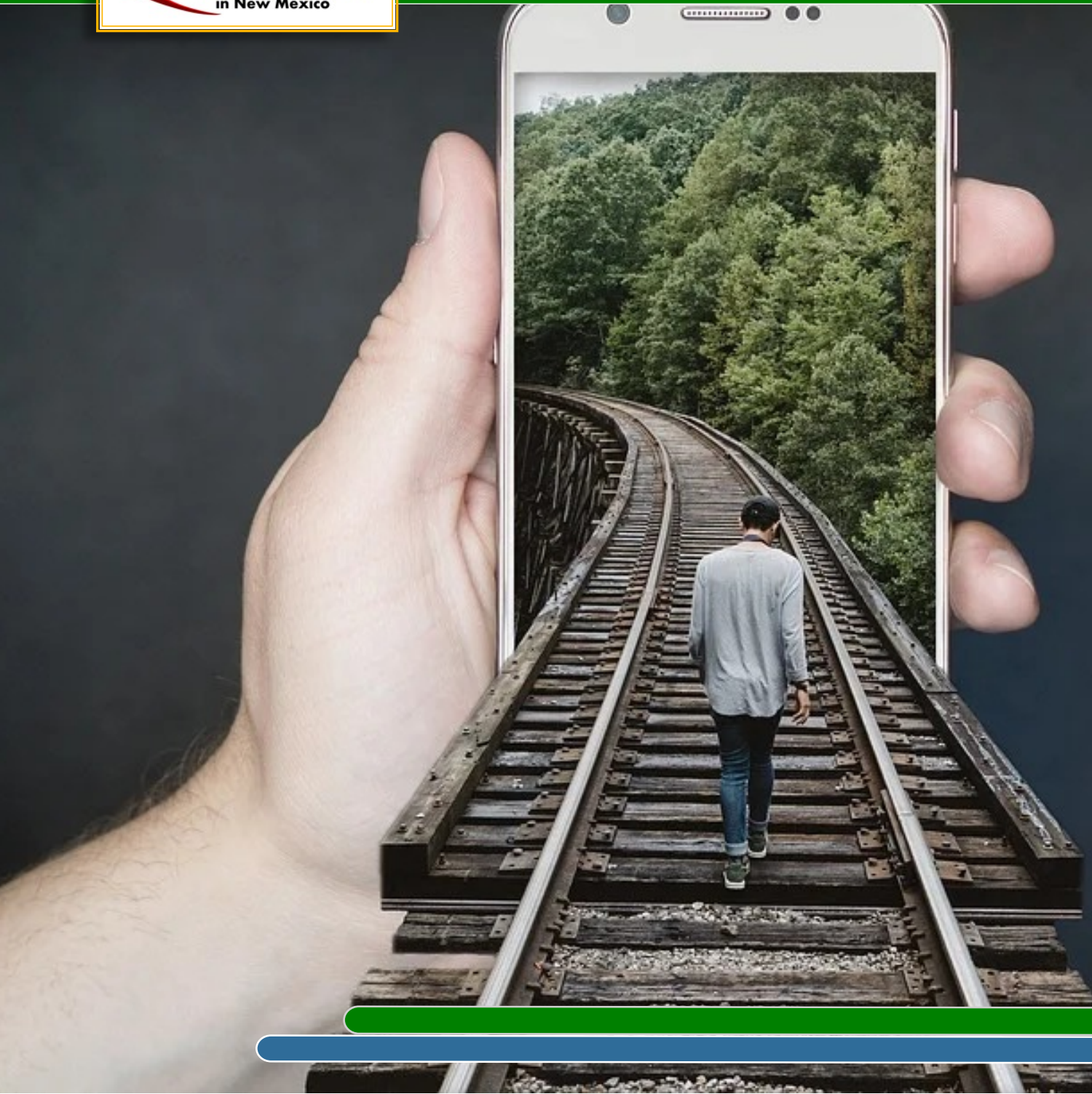


Tablet



Dining Out

**Roger Pen - \$900 tp \$1,200 dealer
\$100 on Ebay**




Get smart
and
get
a
**SMART
PHONE**

Smart Phone Apps



- Streaming
- Alerting
- TV Watching
- Personal Sound Amplifier
- Background Noise Eraser
- Speech to Text

Speech to Text



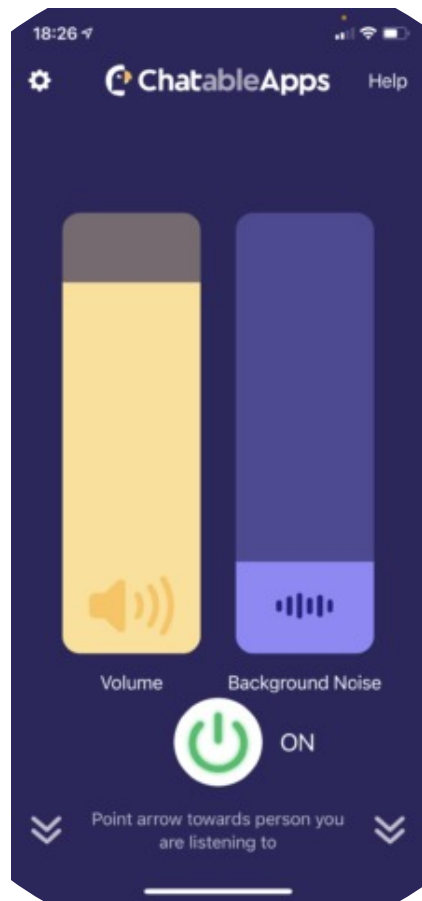
With Live Transcribe, you can see words appear on your Android phone as they're spoken.

Live Transcribe - transcribes spoken audio into text and also reports many of the background sounds you hear and how loud they are in relation to the speech it is transcribing.

Speechy - that converts speech to text and also translates that text into a different language.

Rev - this voice recorder transcribes your voice mails so you can save and read them and organize the recordings .

YouMail - best known as an option for blocking robocalls, it also offers a voicemail to text feature that is cloud-based.



BACKGROUND NOISE ERASER

Using earbuds or a neckloop and the telecoil (T-coil) setting on hearing aids, **Chatable** can erase most of the background sound. It identifies the voice of the person speaking and creates a new audio signal that sounds almost identical to the original while it removes the background sounds.

APPS FOR SAFETY ALERTS

Sound Alert hears the smoke alarm going off in another room when you don't. It will alert you via notifications, vibrations, and flashing lights on your smartphone or tablet when any pre-programmed sound goes off in the house such as a smoke alarm, the doorbell, etc.



My SoS Family connects to a “first responder” family and friends list that keeps them informed in an emergency. Contacts are alerted instantly via the app, not your phone. It calls and texts your emergency contacts using Apple’s Find My Device feature.

PERSONAL SOUND AMPLIFICATION DEVICE

Keep a neckloop or earbuds handy and you can turn your smartphone into a “pocket talker” to amplify sounds you want to hear with **EarMachine**. In addition to volume control, it has a fine-tuning feature that lets the user control which frequencies get boosted, a little or a lot.



Similarly, **ExSilent** has individual controls for each ear for both volume and tone. Many volume boosters exist, including **Max Volume Booster** and **Sound Amplifier**—just be careful about overdoing it and damaging your hearing!

APP FOR TV VIEWING



Tunity allows users to hear live audio from muted TVs. It identifies a live video stream and its exact timing, syncing the audio with the user's smart phone. Use it at bars, gyms, restaurants, waiting rooms, airports, and even at home.

Hear with your smartphone connected to hearing aids via Bluetooth or a neckloop/t-coil option. Point your smartphone's camera at the TV screen and Tunity will do the rest.

WiFi based streaming audio

Here's another free app that may interest the hearing as well as the hard of hearing. Streaming audio via WiFi is the latest entrant in the battle for assistive listening systems in public places.

MYE Fitness Entertainment is integrated into leading health club mobile apps. It may also be the app used in sports bars to hear the TV. To hear the audio, you can use Bluetooth or a neckloop connected to your smartphone.





Foreign language translation apps

iTranslate enables travelers, students, business professionals, employers and medical staff to read, write and speak in over 100 languages, anywhere in the world.

Just start speaking and iTranslate recognizes your voice and translates to your desired language.

Free for iPhone or Android

Where do you get these apps?

Android Phone: www.play.google.com

iPhone: www.apple.com/app-store/

Now, Traveling With Hearing Loss

Preparing for travel

- Book hotel and other travel reservations and tickets online. You won't have to struggle to hear and understand a fast talking, accented agent and you'll receive email confirmations that give you a written record or just what arrangements you've made.
- If you have a smart phone, download a speech to text app to help communicating with ticket agents and others during travel when hearing them is difficult.
- If you have telecoil equipped hearing aids, take a neckloop along (buy one if you don't already have one) and download the Sound Amplifier app at Google Play or a similar Apple app. It will turn your smart phone into a pocket talker for added flexibility in talking with others.

- Sign up to have flight delays or gate changes sent to you as text messages instead of phone calls or emails.
- Download a captioned phone app such as the one from www.HamiltonCapTel.com so you will have captioned phone access during your trip for both placing and receiving calls.
- Batteries may be hard to find after you arrive at your destination and your many devices need power to work so be sure to take along fresh batteries for each of them. Check also that all your chargers are working well and bring an extra if available.
- Should you have one, pack an extra set of hearing aids for the trip.

- If your hearing aids are rechargeable, be sure to take the charger and put it in your carry-on in case your checked luggage doesn't arrive with you. If the batteries are not "built in", take a pair of extra batteries in case a battery fails during your trip. There are small, almost credit card sized portable chargers available for most rechargeable hearing aid batteries from: www.Powerone-batteries.com
- Take a pen and notepad with you to communicate with ticket/gate agents if needed.
- Download the SoundPrint app(www.soundprint.co/) for its Quiet List that identifies restaurants and bars in U.S. And foreign cities that are less noisy and more conducive to conversation.



- Print your ticket and boarding pass at home. Also send it to your smart phone in case your paper copies get lost.
- Apply for a Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Notification Card about your hearing condition - get one at:

www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures

- Also consider signing up for TSA PreCheck[®]. It allows you to go to a special PreCheck line for a quick and easy security screening. Apply at:

www.tsa.gov/precheck

At the airport

- Show your TSA Notification Card to the agent at the security check-in to facilitate communication. It might even get you moved over to an express type line.
- Take a seat near the agent's counter at the gate and alert the attendant to your hearing loss. Request that you be personally notified of any emergency or other announcements. Often the agent will add you to the group allowed to preboard.
- Have your smart phone handy to use as a pocket-talker via a neckloop or Bluetooth®.
- As you board the aircraft, alert the flight attendant(s) to your hearing loss so they will know to pay attention to your communication needs.

On the aircraft

- Read the safety instructions in the pocket in front of you—you will probably have difficulty hearing the verbal instructions from the flight crew.
- In the event you're on a long flight where music or other entertainment is offered, keep your neckloop accessible – it will plug into the sound on most aircraft and provide you with better quality sound than the ear buds handed out by the airline.
- You do not need to turn off your hearing aids or CI on the aircraft (but you can - to reduce the roar if you find it

Train or bus travel

If traveling by train or bus, most transportation companies offer smartphone apps to give you access to timetables, provide alerts for gate changes or delays. Familiarize yourself with these and any other apps in advance so you don't have to learn their operation under pressure.



At your hotel

- Once you reach your destination, if staying in a hotel, alert the desk clerk to your hearing difficulty.
- Have the documents and identification you will need ready to show at the desk either in printed form or on your smartphone to help speed up check in.
- Keep voice communication limited to avoid some things being repeated or any misunderstanding.
- Use the speech to text or personal amplifier app in your smart phone to communicate with the desk clerk.

At your hotel

When checking in, if needed, request an ADA Hard of Hearing Kit. It will include such items as:

- An alarm clock with extra loud signaler,
- A bed shaker and built-in flashing strobe light to alert you if the alarm clock goes off, the phone rings, someone knocks on the hotel door, or if a smoke/carbon monoxide alarm goes off in the room.



- It could also have a Telephone In-Line Handset Amplifier that plugs into the hotel room's existing room telephone line amplify all callers,

Out and about

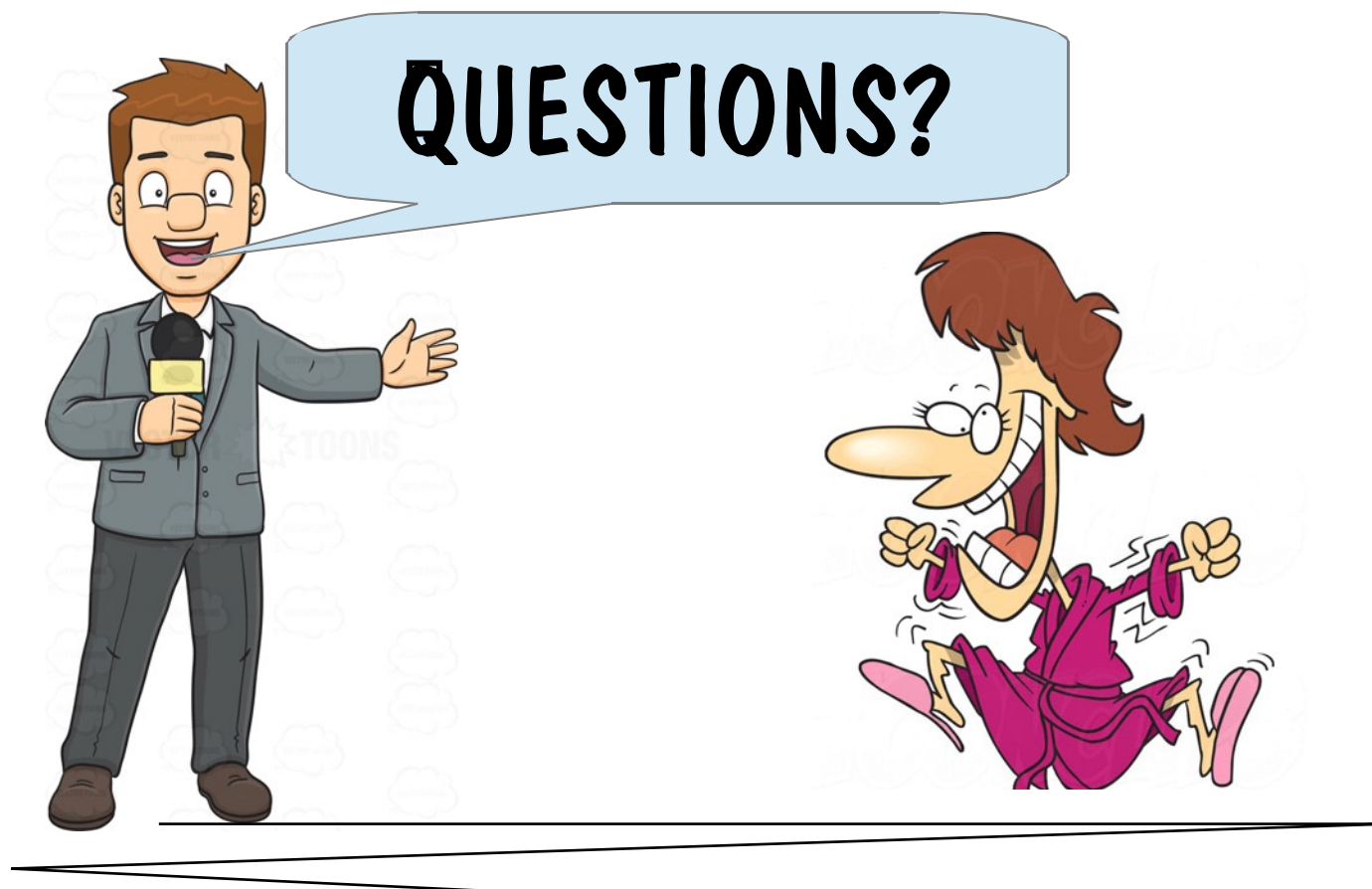
- Advocate for yourself. Let your tour guides and fellow travelers know about your hearing loss and provide specific suggestions on how they can help you hear your best.
- If requested, many tours offer assistive listening devices so you can hear the docent or tour guide even when you're not right close by, so make such a request. If the device offered comes with earbuds or earphones, check to see if you can connect your neckloop into it instead.
- Again, keep your smart phone or other assistive listening device handy to hear others using a neckloop or Bluetooth[®] in the event these devices are not offered on loan.



Look for this symbol

In major US cities (and especially in Europe and Australasia) look for the international ear symbol for telecoil accessible transportation and tourist and other sites and services.

In case you thought I was never going to stop...



MORE RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION

Especially for hearing loop info:

www.hearingloss.org

www.hearingloop.org

www.sofnabq.com

www.loopnm.com

www.ampetronic.com

www.contactainc.com

Time's up...

Thanks for attending this presentation on

Living With Hearing Loss

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