



Strategies for Communicating with People Who Struggle to Hear

- Speak slowly, clearly and a little louder.
- Do not shout or over articulate. This distorts the words and makes them harder to understand.
- Take pauses; pauses allow for the listener to catch up.
- If you must repeat yourself, try rewording what you have said. Often, it is just a word or two that someone cannot understand.
- Face the person you are speaking with. Make sure nothing is covering your face. Never walk away from someone with a hearing impairment while talking. Seeing the face is very important.
- Always get the listener's attention before speaking by saying their name or touching them on the shoulder.
- Turn down background noises. Mute the television or radio. Avoid restaurants at peak hours; ask the host if there are quieter places within the restaurant to be seated with good lighting.
- Listen and be patient; communicating is an even greater challenge for a person with hearing loss.
- Hearing aids are not a **cure**, they are an **aid** and have limitations. If a person is having trouble hearing well with hearing aids or has stopped wearing their hearing aids, ask questions and return to the audiologist. There may simply need to be an adjustment.
- Move closer to the listener; this allows better access to sound and visual cues.
- If needed, write things down so the listener can read what you are trying to tell them.

For additional communication strategies and examples, please come to our Living with Hearing Loss seminar.

To register, call:
Katharine Williams at 615-875-1485



Communication Strategies for People Who Struggle to Hear

- Do not be afraid to let others know you have a hard time hearing. Your communication partner is more likely to speak clearly and directly if they know about your hearing difficulties.
- Be confident and ask people to speak more slowly, clearly, and if needed, to rephrase or write down what they have said.
- If you heard part of what someone said, try repeating what you have heard to the person, so they only repeat or rephrase what you have missed.
- Look at the person speaking to you. Seeing facial expressions and reading lips can help with how well you can understand someone.
- Turn down background noises, like the television and radio when someone is speaking. Avoid restaurants at peak hours; ask the host if there are quieter places within the restaurant with good lighting.
- Move closer to the speaker; this allows better access to sound and visual cues.
- If you have hearing aids, wear them. Ask your audiologist about additional devices for listening to the television, or in noise, if you are still having difficulty.
- Hearing aids are not a **cure**; they are an **aid** and have limitations. If you feel you are having increased difficulty understanding or stop wearing your hearing aids, speak with your audiologist; the hearing aids may need to be adjusted.

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