



Know the Power of Sound

Sound is measured in decibels (dB). Each decibel is one tenth of a bel, which is a unit that measures the intensity of sound. For every six decibels, the intensity of the sound doubles. At 90 dB of uninterrupted sound, the limit of safe noise exposure is eight hours. For each six dB increase of uninterrupted sound thereafter, the limit of safe exposure is reduced by half.

It is important to know the approximate intensity of sound around you to protect your hearing. [Click here to use the Interactive Loudness Scale.](#)

30 dB: Whispering a secret to your best friend can register at 30 decibels.

50 dB: A steady summer rain measures 50 decibels.

70 dB: Rush hour traffic can reach 70 decibels in intensity.

85 dB: Prolonged exposure to noises above 85 decibels can damage hearing. Protect your ears and hearing by wearing ear plugs.

90 dB: Subway trains emit noise in the range of 90 decibels.

110 dB: Power saws and many other power tools operate at a noise level of 110 decibels.

130 dB: Wear your ear plugs at the track! Race car noise can exceed 130 decibels.

150 dB: Celebratory fireworks can reach decibel levels up to 150.

170 dB: At 170 decibels, a shot gun blast can damage unprotected ears.