

Communication tips



Stay close



Try not to start or join a conversation if you are not in the same room. Make a point of going into the room your loved one is in if you need to ask something, even if it's just "do you want a cup of tea"



It works bothways

If the person with a hearing loss starts a conversation from another room, they probably won't hear your response anyway, so go into the room and listen, remember this is their habits that need to change too, so be kind.



Always face the person you are talking to



A large part of any verbal communication is facial expressions and visual clues that add to the message. Make it easy for your communication partner to see these by not talking with your back to them, or whilst you are rummaging in cupboards for example.

Rephrase do not just repeat

If the listener does not understand what you have just said to them rephrase the sentence rather than just repeating it. Rephrasing puts the emphasis on different words and sounds within the sentence naturally and may give the listener more auditory information to work with.



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In the car



In the car, turn off the radio and shut windows to cut down on background noise. Raise your voice a little over the noise of the car, but mainly concentrate on slowing your speech a little and enunciating the words accurately so the ends and the beginnings of each word are clear.



Eating out

When eating out together try to be flexible with your choice of restaurant or café, dining times and seating arrangements to reduce background noise that will be worse when places are busiest.



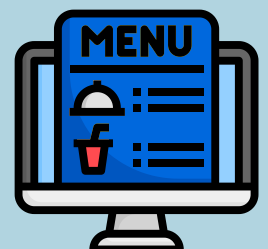
Choosing a table



Let the person with the hearing loss choose their seat if possible. They are aiming to be away from the kitchen and entrance doors where it might be noisy but also in quieter areas of the restaurant like corner tables away from speakers or booths that dampen background noise more.

Preparation

If you can view the menus online beforehand that can be helpful to give context to the type of questions the server might ask about dishes, such as "do you want chips or salad with that"?



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Context in a conversation helps



In difficult listening situations it can help your loved one if you cue them into a conversation to give them context, particularly if you have acquaintances that go off at tangents in conversation.

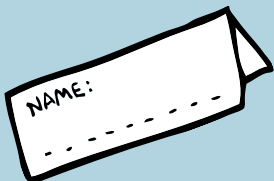


Giving cues

Using your communication partner's name before you speak gives them a moment to tune into your voice, and with practice becomes quite natural, for example "Oh David, Janice has just got back from Greece and was saying it was warm"



Gain attention



In all conversation, but especially where it's busy use your communication partner's name before you start the conversation. Our names are filtered by the brain as really important so are often picked out in even difficult listening situations. Gaining our attention before the conversation starts properly.

Practice with hearing aids

Wearing hearing aids doesn't mean someone can hear normally again. Getting used to them takes time and practice. Encourage your communication partner to wear their aids as often as possible, and don't let them be discouraged if it's initially harder than they thought to use them.



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