

## How loud is it? — Schools

As a worker in an elementary, intermediate, or secondary school, you may be exposed to hazardous levels of noise on the job. Regular exposure to sounds louder than **85 decibels (dBA)** can cause permanent hearing loss. Typical noise exposures for workers in schools are shown below.

Occupation	Typical noise exposure (in dBA)
<b>Teachers by subject area</b>	
Automotive	84
Band (secondary)	90
Band (elementary)	86
Metalworking	84
Physical education (P.E.)	87
Woodworking	85
<b>Maintenance workers</b>	
Foreman	93
Equipment operator	88
Groundskeeper	87
Utility worker	87
<b>Other workers</b>	
Bus driver	75
Food service worker	78

Your shifts might be shorter or longer than eight hours a day, but the typical noise exposures listed above still apply. They have been adjusted to take into account shifts of various lengths.

However, your noise exposure may be different from these typical exposures. If testing shows that your noise exposure is greater than 85 dBA (averaged over an eight-hour day), your employer must take steps to protect your hearing. These steps include reducing workplace noise and providing you with hearing protection.



Your hearing protection must be comfortable and provide adequate protection from noise.

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) rates hearing protection as Class A, B, or C, depending on how much noise reduction the protection provides. The recommended protection for eight hours of exposure is as follows:

Exposure: $L_{ex,8}$ (dBA)	Recommended class
< 90	C
> 90 up to and including 95	B
> 95 up to and including 105	A
> 105	Dual*

\* Dual hearing protection shall be used. A minimum of a Class B earmuff and a Class A earplug is required.

### For more information

WorkSafeBC hearing loss prevention resources  
[www2.worksafefbc.com/Topics/HearingLossPrevention/Resources.asp](http://www2.worksafefbc.com/Topics/HearingLossPrevention/Resources.asp)

Hear for Good: Preventing noise exposure at work  
[worksafefbc.com/publications/health\\_and\\_safety/by\\_topic/assets/pdf/hear\\_for\\_good.pdf](http://worksafefbc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/hear_for_good.pdf)