

Equipment to help deaf and hard of hearing people.

Are you aware that there is a wide range of equipment to help deaf and hard of hearing people? Do you find it hard to hear every day sounds like doorbells, telephones and smoke alarms? Do you have trouble listening to the television, or find it difficult to communicate with other people? Perhaps you have a baby and you need to know if the baby is crying?

Many people struggle with everyday situations, but the great news is that there is help available and you can benefit from many different types of equipment and technology.

Where can I get this equipment?

Equipment is available from many different suppliers, they can be purchased online or through catalogue ordering. However, the first step is to find out if you are able to obtain help with either the full purchase cost or part of the cost.

- Social Services may help to pay for the full cost or part of the cost of equipment or they may be able supply you with the equipment you need.
- The government Access to Work scheme (ATW) may help to pay for equipment you need in your workplace, or for job interviews.

- The Equality Act 2010 may require service providers like GP surgeries, hospitals, schools and universities to provide equipment to help deaf and hard of hearing people who need to use their services. If you are a student, you may be able to get help with paying for equipment through the Disabled Students Allowance.

You may also get VAT exemption on some purchases if you are eligible.

For further information and help please contact us, you will find our details at the end of this FACTsheet.

How do I know what equipment is right for me?

Many suppliers will offer a money back guarantee, check their terms and conditions or contact them to find out. This will give you the opportunity to try out

equipment to make sure they are suitable for you.

If Social Services are providing the equipment for you, they will be able to assess your needs and provide the right product you need.

If you need any advice or help with communication please contact us we may be able to help you.

What kind of equipment is available?

The three main areas are listening, alerting and telecommunications equipment.

Listening Equipment

These are equipment to help people who have mild to moderate hearing loss. Listening equipment amplifies sound, this means it makes sounds louder. Some listening equipment such as portable personal listeners, can be used with headphones,

stetoclips or earphones for people who do not wear hearing aids.

Other equipment come with neckloops or earloops suitable for people with hearing aids fitted with a “T” program or switch; enabling them to hear sounds fed directly through their hearing aids using a magnetic signal produced by the loop creating an even clearer sound.

There are loop systems that can be fitted into your lounge area, this means if you wear a hearing aid fitted with a “T” program or switch you will be able to pick up the sound from the loop system anywhere you sit in the room.

Both personal listeners and loop systems need to pick up sounds either from connecting direct into the audio equipment like the TV or other devices like audio systems where there is an output socket, or by simply using a microphone placed near the sound source i.e the speakers or the person who is talking.

Listening devices work either by mains power, battery power, or rechargeable batteries, depending on what type would be most suitable for your situation.

Alerting Equipment

If you have difficulty hearing the doorbell, telephone, baby crying or smoke alarm there are many different alerting devices to alert you.

Smoke alarms

There are especially designed products to help with alerting you to the smoke alarm. Some are mains powered devices that have battery back-up, giving you all three types of alerts, very loud sound, vibrating pad alert and flashing light.

There are also paging systems that can be purchased with a special smoke alarm transmitter that transmits a signal to the vibrating pager with small alerting lights.

Paging systems can be used with other transmitters to pick up sounds like a baby crying, doorbell or telephone ringing.

Contact your local fire service to see if they can help offer a free home safety check, they will be able tell you where you should install your smoke alarm in your home.

Doorbell and telephones alerts

There are many different types of doorbells and telephone alerts available, some with extra loud sounds, other use a flashing light or you can use a paging system with a doorbell or telephone transmitter.

Baby alerting systems

A range of baby alerting systems are available. You can use a baby monitor with a screen so you can see your baby, or you can use a paging system with a baby transmitter. There are flashing light alerts with loud sounds as another option.

Telecommunication Equipment

If you have trouble hearing people on the telephone, there are different telephones and mobiles phones available that have built-in amplifiers and some have an inductive coupler which can be used with the hearing aid "T" program or switch, this helps to bring clear sounds directly through the hearing aid.

If you are unable to use a phone with an amplifier you can use a textphone. Textphones have a small display screen and a keyboard, you can type a message on the textphone which will send a signal via the telephone to another textphone at the other end. If you want to use a textphone to contact someone who does not have a textphone, you can use a telephone relay service and the operator will relay what you type to the other caller and the reply will be typed back to you by the operator.

In more recent years there has been further developments, now you can use an app on your mobile phone called NGT (Next Generation Text service) or Relay UK this will work in a similar way as a textphone enabling you to communicate with people via an operator service.

Video phones are now available to use to communicate by letting you see the other person speaking, or by signing live. There are also different software available that can be downloaded onto your mobile phone, laptop or computer.

For further help or advice our contact details are at the end of this FACTsheet, or you can contact us through our website:

www.ideaflife.weebly.com

iDeaf - London Deaf Information Service bringing a change to the lives of deaf and hard of hearing people.

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