



Hear today



Gone tomorrow

Just one loud noise can leave you permanently deaf.

Look out for tell-tale signs such as muffled hearing or ringing in your ears at the end of the day. Even if it gets better after a few hours, this is a warning that you are risking permanent damage.

Watch out for the signs of gradual hearing loss as well, such as having trouble hearing on the phone or turning the volume up on your TV.

Hearing loss isn't the only danger. You can also get tinnitus – a constant, high-pitched ringing in the ears which affects your everyday life and can even stop you sleeping.

Get switched on to the risks. Always protect yourself by wearing earplugs or earmuffs.

SAFETY 365

Is noise a potential risk for you?

Probably. If you can answer 'yes' to any of these questions, it may be a problem:

- 1 Do you have to cope with intrusive noise comparable to a busy motorway, roadworks or loud music for most of the working day?
- 2 Do you regularly have to shout to be clearly heard by someone 2 metres away?
- 3 Do you use noisy power tools or machinery for over 30 minutes a day?
- 4 Are you exposed to a lot of high-impact noise, such as hammering and pneumatic tools?

If the answer is 'yes' to one or more of the questions, this booklet explains what can be done to reduce the risks.



Using your hearing protection...

It's your last line of defence against damage, so make sure you check the following:

Earmuffs

- Make sure they totally cover your ears and fit tightly
- Try and keep the seals and the insides clean
- Make sure the headband keeps its tension

Earplugs and Semi-inserts/caps

- They can be difficult to fit properly, so practise and get help if you are having trouble
- Clean your hands before you fit them and don't share them with others
- Some types you can only use once, others can be re-used and even washed (make sure you know which type you have)
- For semi-inserts/caps make sure any headband keeps its tension



What can you do to help?

Co-operate

Make sure you use noise control devices properly, and help us help you by following any working methods that are put in place.

Wear hearing protection

Wear it properly and wear it all the time when you are doing noisy work. Even taking it off for a short time can put you at risk.

Look after your hearing protection

Report any problems

Let your supervisor or safety representative know straight away if you have problems with hearing protection, noise devices, or if you have any kind of ear trouble.



What are we doing about noise?

At Network Rail we keep track of the levels of noise you are exposed to every day, and then do all we can to reduce the risk of any kind of hearing damage.

We do this in all sorts of ways, such as:

- Putting in screens or barriers, or fitting silencers to equipment
- Providing the quietest equipment that will do the job
- Providing you with suitable hearing protection
- Sending you for regular hearing checks
- Providing you with training and information

Whether you work for us or for one of our contractors, be aware that it's your responsibility to ensure you have the right equipment, you wear it properly and you protect yourself.

For further information contact your line manager.