

Bluetooth Compatible Hearing Aids: Enhancing Connectivity in the Digital Age



Image: www.bluetooth.com

Bluetooth technology has revolutionised the way electronic devices communicate wirelessly. Originally developed for mobile phones, Bluetooth now allows devices such as tablets, computers, and smart TVs to connect without the need for cables, typically over a range of up to 10 metres. In the realm of hearing care, Bluetooth compatibility opens up a world of connectivity options, enabling seamless integration between hearing aids and various everyday devices.

How Bluetooth Hearing Aids Work

Bluetooth hearing aids are equipped with built-in wireless Bluetooth technology. Some models may require a small communication accessory, often worn around the neck on a neck loop, which acts as an interface between the hearing aid and other Bluetooth-enabled devices.

There are two main modes of communication:

- **One-way communication:** for activities like listening to music, the radio, or watching television.
- **Two-way communication:** for phone calls or online meetings. Two-way communication uses a built-in microphone, either in the hearing aid itself or in the neck loop accessory, depending on the model.

Using Bluetooth Hearing Aids

The process of "pairing" a Bluetooth compatible device with a hearing aid varies by manufacturer. Once paired successfully, the connection usually remains saved and does not need to be repeated.

When connected to a Bluetooth compatible phone, calls can be streamed directly through the hearing aids within Bluetooth range. If two hearing aids are worn, the phone call is typically heard in both ears.

For one-way audio devices such as televisions or iPods, an additional Bluetooth transmitter may be required to establish the connection with the hearing aid.

Bluetooth Applications

Bluetooth-compatible hearing aids can connect with a variety of modern devices as long as they have built-in Bluetooth technology, including:

- Mobile phones (smartphones and Bluetooth home phones)
- Televisions and radios
- Computers and tablets (including Android and iPad devices)
- MP3 players and iPods

Most Bluetooth hearing aids also include a **T-switch**, allowing use with loop systems or venues equipped for hearing aid users.

Suitability of Bluetooth Hearing Aids

An audiologist can assess individual's hearing and lifestyle needs to determine whether Bluetooth technology is right for you. While not everyone may find Bluetooth technology essential, many individuals appreciate the convenience and flexibility it offers, from streaming phone calls and music directly to their hearing aids, to connecting with assistive devices at home or in public venues.

Bluetooth compatible hearing aids allow users connect effortlessly to a wide range of devices, enhancing everyday listening experiences.

Embrace the convenience and connectivity that Bluetooth technology brings and enjoy clearer communication and richer sound in the digital age.

Support Guides are shared by HMA as a service to members and those in the community who have an interest in hearing loss. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided, however HMA accepts no responsibility for any adverse consequences arising from the contents of these sheets. HMA information sheets are for personal use only. Downloads and printing allowable for whole sheets. Contact HMA with queries or amendments.

Find out more and join HMA for additional member benefits at www.hearingmattersaustralia.org