



# HEARING MATTERS AUSTRALIA

Support from real life experience

Ground Floor, Suite 600  
The Australian Hearing Hub  
16 University Ave  
Macquarie University NSW 2109  
(02) 9878 089  
[admin@hearingmattersaustralia.org](mailto:admin@hearingmattersaustralia.org)  
[www.hearingmattersaustralia.org](http://www.hearingmattersaustralia.org)

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR BETTER COMMUNICATION

Hearing devices used by those with hearing loss combined with effective communication strategies adopted by their communication partners prevent breakdowns in communication. Communication partners can modify their communication – thereby easing frustration, reducing listening effort and enhancing interpersonal relationships. Even the most sophisticated hearing device cannot transform poor signals into clear messages – so the first step is to ensure clear, audible speech along with all supplementary cues to aid communication.

## ATTENTION AND VISUAL CUES

- If it is dark, turn on the light so that it shines on the speaker's face – not the person with the hearing loss
- Always face the person you are communicating with
- Put yourself on the same level as the person you are communicating with – i.e. if they are standing, make sure you are also standing, if they are sitting, make sure you are also sitting
- Don't speak to a person with hearing loss from behind
- Don't turn your face away when speaking
- Don't speak from another room
- If appropriate, gently touch the person you are speaking with to draw their attention to you before you speak
- Ask the person with hearing loss, with whom you are wanting to communicate with, what is the best way to get their attention

## SPEAK CLEARLY BUT NORMALLY

- Don't shout
- Possibly speak a little slower but don't exaggerate
- Let the person you are communicating with see your lips
- Don't chew food/gum or smoke while speaking
- Don't put your hand or anything else over your mouth while speaking.
- If you wear a moustache or beard, keep it trimmed around your lips.

---

Information sheets 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.



## **SPOTLIGHT YOUR FACE**

- Face a window or lamp to let the best light shine on your face to help the person you are communicating with see your mouth and expression as you speak
- Remember that in the dark, a person with hearing loss finds it almost impossible to understand what is said - e.g. in a car at night or in the bedroom in the dark.

## **AVOID NOISY BACKGROUNDS**

- Turn down the TV or Radio
- Turn off the vacuum cleaner or other noisy equipment
- Move away from a noisy fan or air-conditioner
- Move away from any noisy machinery
- Move away from loud music in a shopping centre
- Don't try to talk above loud traffic noise
- Remember, if there is too much going on at once, the person with hearing loss will find it very difficult to hear or understand what you say.
- Always remember it is harder for a person with hearing loss to hear when there is other noise

## **POINTS TO REMEMBER**

- People with hearing loss do not hear as well when they are tired or sick or have been involved in long conversational sessions.
- Check that what you said to the person with hearing loss was heard correctly
- Use facial expressions or gestures when talking to a person with hearing loss
- Try to remain patient and relaxed yourself
- If a person with hearing loss doesn't understand you, find another way to say the same thing. E.g. "What will the weather be tomorrow?" could be rephrased to "Will it be sunny tomorrow?"