

# Noise in the Workplace



Noise is unwanted sound. It can have different effects on everyone!

Psychological effects mean that noise can startle you, annoy you, and disrupt your concentration. Noise can interfere with your communication when you are talking to someone. Consequently, it interferes with your job performance and your safety.

Physiological effects mean that you can lose your hearing. Noise can cause pain and even nausea when the exposure is severe.

Ear protectors, in effect, reduce noise levels in the inner ear. Ear protection is particularly important when noise exposures cannot be controlled adequately by environmental changes.

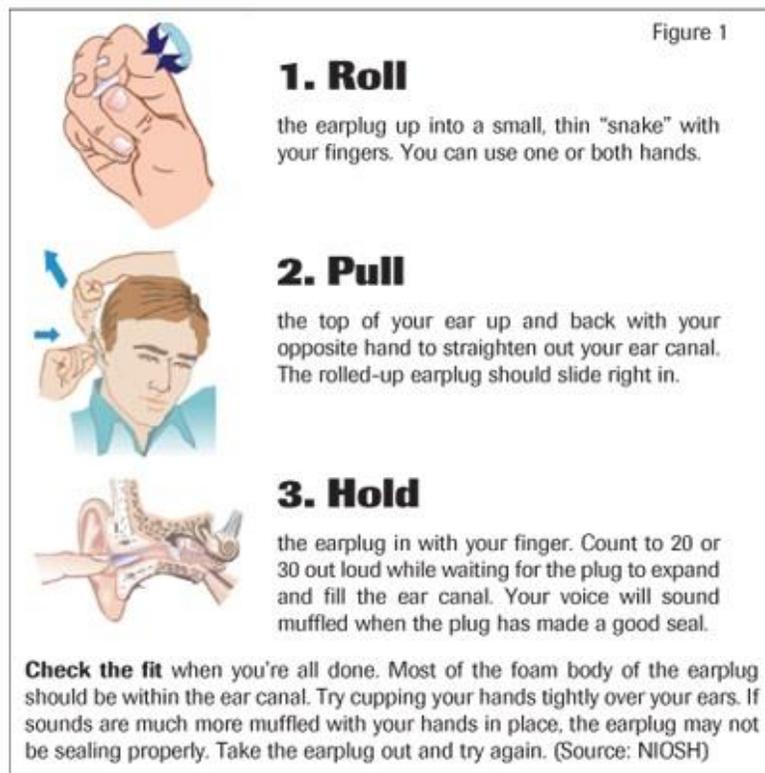
**Ear protectors may be either ear plugs or ear muffs.**

Many times, workers resist wearing hearing protection more than any other type of personal protective equipment. One of the most common reasons that they give is that they feel they really do not need it. But hearing loss is so gradual, even in

intense exposures, that by the time you realize you can't hear as well as you used to, it is too late; the damage has been done.

The use of hearing protection will not make it more difficult to understand speech or to hear warning signals when worn in a noisy environment.

The best hearing protection is one that is worn properly!!



Three factors may be used to determine the level of noise:

- 1) If it is necessary for you to speak in a very loud voice or shout directly into the ear of a person to be understood, it is likely the exposure limit for noise has been exceeded.
- 2) If you have heard noises and ringing noises in your ears at the end of your work day, you are being exposed to too much noise.
- 3) If speech or music sounds muffled to you after leaving work but sounds clear in the morning when you return to work, there is no doubt you are being exposed to noise levels that can eventually cause a partial loss of hearing that can be permanent.