

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a person's ear and the side of their head. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the skin and the details of the ear. The background is a dark, blurred gradient of purple and blue.

Is your workplace
noisy?

If your workplace is noisy, you may need to know about the new Control of Noise at Work Regulations. They are in effect from 6 April 2006 and will help protect workers from permanent hearing damage.

You will probably need to take some action if any of the following apply to you or your workers:

- You're surrounded by intrusive noise for most of the working day. Examples of intrusive noise from everyday life are a busy street and a vacuum cleaner.
- You have to raise your voice to be heard by someone just two metres away for at least part of the day.
- You use noisy powered tools or machinery for more than half an hour a day.
- You work in a noisy industry such as construction, road repair, engineering or manufacturing.
- Your work causes impacts such as hammering, drop forging, pneumatic impact tools etc.
- You work with explosive sources such as cartridge-operated tools or detonators, or guns.

Examples where noise shouldn't be a problem:

- busy offices;
- shops;
- travelling in cars on motorways.



Key points

- Hearing loss caused by work is preventable but once your hearing has gone, it won't come back.
- Some 170 000 people in Britain suffer deafness, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), or other ear conditions from harmful levels of noise at work.
- The new Regulations introduce a reduction in the acceptable noise levels at work.
- There are many practical, cost-effective ways of protecting yourself and your workers.
- HSE continues to work in partnership with employers and other organisations to find practical solutions to noise risks at work.
- Business benefits include lower sickness absence, lower staff turnover, improved productivity and enhanced reputation. To find out about businesses which testify to the benefits of sensible health and safety, visit <http://www.hse.gov.uk/businessbenefits>.





More information

- A free leaflet: *Noise at work: Guidance for employers on the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005* INDG362(rev1) HSE Books 2005 (single copy free or priced packs of 10 ISBN 0 7176 6165 2)
- A free pocket card: *Protect your hearing or lose it!* INDG363(rev1) HSE Books 2005 (single copy free or priced packs of 25 ISBN 0 7176 6166 0)

Both are available from HSE Books on 01787 881165, or from www.hse.gov.uk/noise

For more information about health and safety phone HSE's Infoline:

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