



Technology for people who are hearing impaired



This factsheet tells you how technology can help people who are deaf or are hearing impaired.

How to use this factsheet



We are **AbilityNet**.

We are a charity that helps disabled people use technology.



Like computers, tablets, and smartphones.



This is an **Easy Read** factsheet. You may still need help to read it. You can ask someone you know for help.



For more information you can phone or email us.



Phone **0800 048 7642**

Email enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk.



1. What this factsheet is about



If someone is **hearing impaired**, it means it is harder for them to hear.
Or they cannot hear at all.



There are about 11 million people in the UK who are **hearing impaired**.

That's about 1 person in every 6 people.



Deaf

Some people who are hearing impaired say they are deaf.



Different people who are hearing impaired need different things to help them communicate.



It is important for people who are hearing impaired to get help from a hearing expert.



You can ask your GP how to find a hearing expert.



A hearing expert knows a lot about hearing.

They can help you learn more about the ideas in this factsheet.



This factsheet tells you

- about things that you can use to hear better



- what organisations can do to support people who are hearing impaired.

2. Changes you can make to your computer, tablet or smartphone



There are lots of things you can do to make these easier to use if you are hearing impaired.



You can change alerts. You can make the screen flash or device vibrate instead of making a sound.



You can use **captions** so videos will show what is said in writing. These are sometimes called **subtitles**.



You can connect your hearing aid to your device.



You can use **phone noise cancellation** which makes background noise quieter.



For more information, visit our website

abilitynet.org.uk/hearing-loss-and-technology-resources.

3. How text services can help



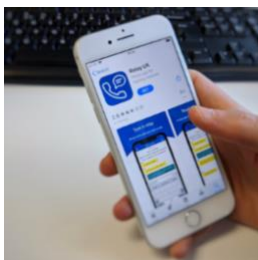
People who cannot hear well can use **textphones** which change text to speech and speech to text.



The other person speaks or types to you. You can read what they say on the screen.



Relay UK is a free service to help people who are hearing impaired to communicate by phone.



You can use it to make calls on your computer, tablet or smartphone.



A person changes text to speech and speech to text. For more information, visit www.relayuk.bt.com.

Speech to text reporters



Speech to text reporters listen and type what people say in meetings, events or classrooms. The text is shown on a screen.



They use a special keyboard to type very quickly.

Electronic notetakers



An electronic notetaker is someone who types notes on a laptop for someone who is hearing impaired.

For example, at college.



The person who is hearing impaired can see what is being typed on a screen as soon as the notetaker has typed it.

5. Assistive listening devices

Radio aids



A **radio aid** makes it easier for people who are hearing impaired to hear clearly with no background noise.



Radio aids need to be connected to a hearing aid. They work like induction loops.



There are lots of different types of radio aids.



Some are better for using with other equipment like phones, TVs and computers.



Some are easier to carry. You wear this one around your neck.

Personal listening devices



A **personal listening device** is a mobile phone or small device that helps you hear more clearly.



You point the device towards what you want to hear, and it makes it louder.

You can hear the sound in lots of ways.



For example,

- through headphones
- through a hearing aid
- out aloud from the device.



TV and radio listening devices



There are lots of listening devices that can help you hear your TV, radio and stereo better.



You connect the listening device to the TV, stereo or radio.



If you do **not** use a hearing aid, the device can send the sound to special headphones.



If you use a hearing aid, the device can send the sound to a **neckloop**.



A neckloop is a loop of wire that you wear around your neck.

It sends sound to your hearing aid.

6. Apps and software that can help people who are hearing impaired



- **Skype** lets you call, video-call and send messages. Skype has captions.

www.skype.com/en.



- The **Microsoft Translate** app types what people say.

www.microsoft.com/en-us/translator.



- **Sign Video** lets you use sign language to make a video call through an interpreter.

www.signvideo.co.uk.



There are lots of other apps that your hearing expert can tell you about.

7. Where you can get more help



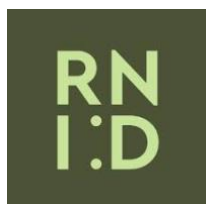
You can get more information about being hearing impaired from these organisations.



British Deaf Association
Website www.bda.org.uk.



Hearing Link
Website www.hearinglink.org.
It also sells hearing devices.



RNID
Website www.rnid.org.uk.
RNID sells hearing devices.

These organisations also sell accessible technology



Connevans
Website www.connevans.co.uk.



Gordon Morris
Website www.gordonmorris.co.uk.

8. How AbilityNet can help you

My Computer My Way



The **My Computer My Way** website tells you how you can make your computer, tablet or smartphone accessible.

Website mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk.

Advice and information



If you have any questions, you can contact us at **AbilityNet**.

We are here to help you.



Phone 0800 048 7642



Email enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk.

Support with technology at home



AbilityNet volunteers can help you with your computer, tablet or smartphone.



If you need support at home, you can book an AbilityNet volunteer to visit you.



You do **not** have to pay AbilityNet for support at home.

For more information, visit www.abilitynet.org.uk/at-home.