THE NEW SCHOOL

Protect Your Hearing!

Safety Tips

As a student, you may be exposed to working with loud noises that can harm your hearing. The effect may not be apparent at first, but cumulative exposure to certain sounds can cause loss of hearing.

How Loud is too Loud?[1] Know which noises can cause damage.

If a noise hurts your ears, if you have to scream to be heard by someone within arm's length, or if you experience a ringing noise after being exposed to loud sounds, you are compromising your hearing.

- **110 Decibels:** Regular exposure of more than 1 minute risks permanent hearing loss.
- **100 Decibels:** No more than 15 minutes of unprotected exposure recommended.
- **85 Decibels:** Prolonged exposure to any noise at or above 85 decibels can cause gradual hearing loss.

Decibels	Sound Source
150	Firecracker
120	Ambulance siren
110	Chain saw, Rock concert
105	Personal stereo system at maximum level
100	Wood shop, Snowmobile
95	Motorcycle
90	Power mower
85	Heavy city traffic
60	Normal conversation
40	Refrigerator humming
30	Whispered voice
0	Threshold of normal hearing

To protect your hearing, follow these simple rules:

- Avoid hazardous noise levels when possible. Take breaks if exposure is excessive.
- Wear earplugs or earmuffs in extreme sound environments (e.g., music concerts, construction, operating machines like saws and drills).
- Increase distance from noise source to reduce its loudness. Try to stay away from amplifiers, speakers and other sources of loud noise.
- Buy earphones that fit your ear canal so that outside noise does not interfere with the volume of your music.
- Turn down the volume of your personal music devices (e.g. MP3 players). Most produce 105 decibels at the maximum volume setting.
- Don't smoke - studies have shown it is linked to hearing loss.

[1] National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/ruler.asp

Please contact your shop technician or Katherine Perkins (perkinsk@newschool.edu), Environmental Health & Safety Office of Facilities Management, if you have any questions about the information on this sheet.

For more information on any health issue, contact Wellness and Health Promotion, Student Health Services, wellness@newschool.edu or 212.229.1671, option 4.

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