



Express Eddie's Toolbox



Hearing Protection: A Wide Variety Of Options To Fit A Wide Range Of Needs

To help protect workers' hearing, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires appropriate hearing protection be provided based on noise levels workers are exposed to in the workplace. The following information is provided by OSHA to help employers select hearing protection.

When choosing [hearing protection](#), consider the following: convenience, communication requirements, comfort, amount of noise reduction the hearing protection provides, hygiene, hearing ability, and the level of noise in the working environment. OSHA advises that music headphones and hearing aids should never be substituted for hearing protection.



A wide variety of [hearing protection](#) products exist. Each type is designed to offer unique features and benefits. Common types of hearing protection include:

- [Roll down foam ear plugs](#), or [disposable ear plugs](#), offer good protection and fit many different ear canal shapes
- [Reusable ear plugs](#) are a convenient choice because they often feature flanges and handles for easy insertion, come in different sizes, include cords to reduce loss, and are washable
- Custom [molded ear plugs](#) provide customized hearing protection that is molded to the specific shape of the workers ear canal
- Banded hearing protection, sometimes called canal caps, can be put on and taken off quickly, thanks to a band worn under the chin, around the neck, or over the head
- [Ear muffs](#) are simple to use and keep clean, fit most people, and are available with a slip-on headband or in a cap mount style for use with hardhats

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While choosing the proper protection is essential, it is also important to note it will not be effective unless worn properly. If workers frequently wear hearing protection, convenience and comfort are important for compliance. OSHA stresses, "The best hearing protective device is the one you'll actually wear."

Reduce the risk of temporary or permanent hearing loss in noisy work areas. Choose comfortable and convenient equipment that provides workers with excellent protection that they'll be happy to wear.

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