



YOUR EARS ARE FRAGILE



You could be losing your hearing.
Once it's gone, it's gone.



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR
Deaf & Hard of Hearing

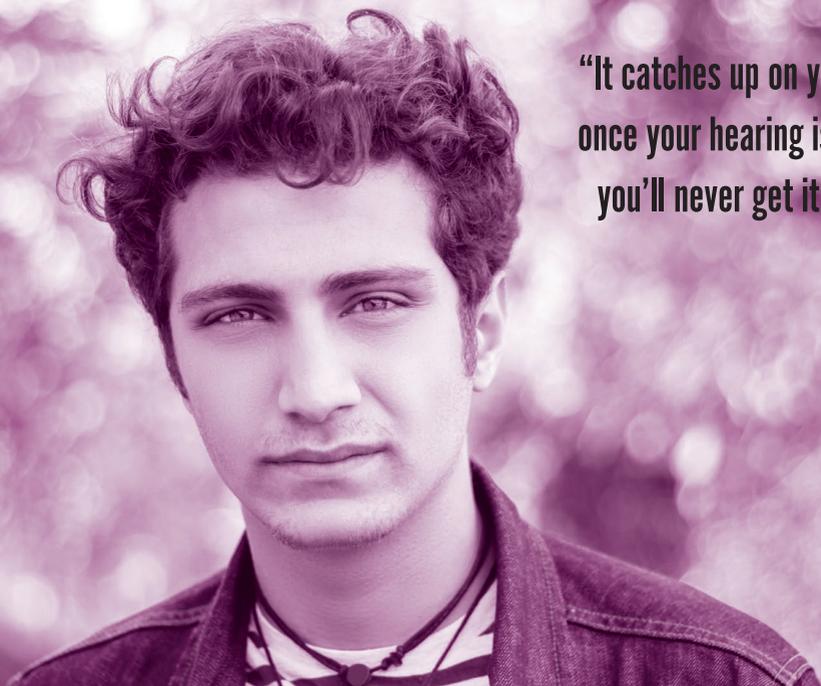
YOUR EARS ARE MORE FRAGILE THAN YOU THINK.

Often you won't realise you've damaged your hearing until it's gone.

Noise induced hearing loss can occur at any age depending on how loud, how long and how often you are exposed.

All ears are different, and some ears are more fragile than others. It's impossible to know how rapidly or to what degree your hearing might be affected by noise.

It's never too early to look after your ears. Read on to learn about noise induced hearing loss and to discover some simple steps you can take to help make listening safe.



**“It catches up on you. But
once your hearing is gone,
you’ll never get it back.”**

WHAT HAPPENS TO MY EARS WHEN I LISTEN TO LOUD MUSIC?

It can help to think of the hair cells in your ears being like a fresh patch of grass and loud music being like a group of people trampling on the grass.

Before anyone walks on the grass, the blades **stand up right** and **tall**. But, as people continue to walk on the grass the blades become flattened.



If people stop walking on the grass, after a few days, **some blades of grass might pop back up and stand straight again.**



But, if people continue to trample over the same patch of grass, the grass begins to die, and the **damage becomes permanent.**



How loudly are you listening? When you listen to music at max volume on your headphones, (110dB approx.), you can only do so safely for a maximum of 6 minutes per week before your ears start to become damaged.

If you want to listen to music for life, it's a good idea to keep the volume under the halfway mark on your device, (around 75 dB or lower).

WHAT ARE THE FIRST SIGNS OF HEARING LOSS?

Some of the first signs that you have damaged your hearing after listening to loud sounds are:

- Ringing in the ears
- Sore or sensitive ears
- Everything sounding muted or dull

**Love listening to music? No problem!
But, let's make listening safe.**

If you want to keep enjoying music, then it's important to be aware of how loud and for how long you can safely listen.

Did you know that your ears have a weekly sound allowance?

Think of your weekly sound allowance like a 20-litre bucket of water.



You can fill it up **slowly** over the week with just a couple of litres each day.



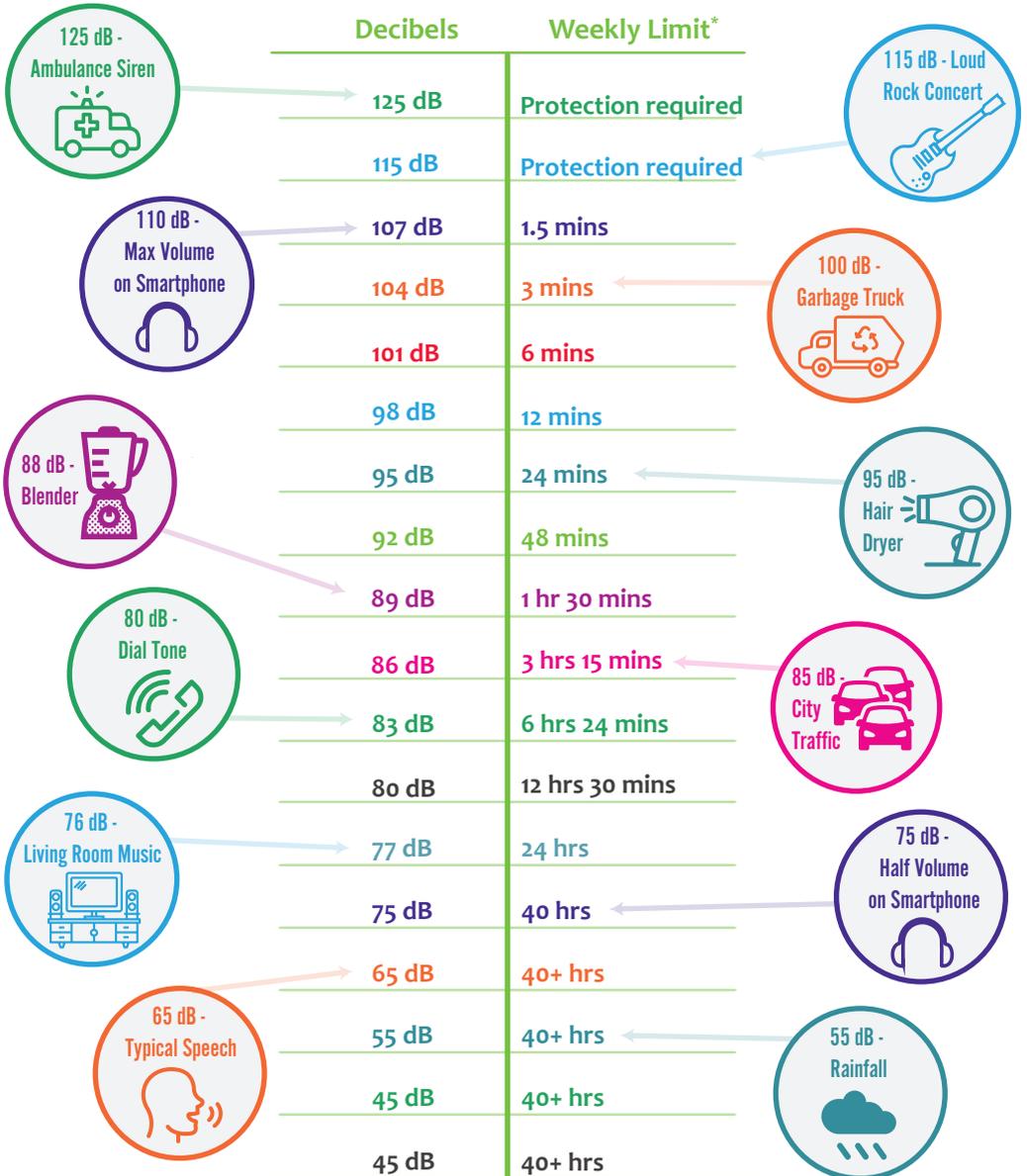
Or you can fill it up with 20 litres **all in one go**.



Filling the bucket up all in one go is like listening to music on max volume. This means you'll use up all your weekly sound allowance very quickly.

SAFE LISTENING WEEKLY ALLOWANCES

Are you wondering how much noise is too much? Stay in the safe zone by following the World Health Organisation's guide.



*Source: World Health Organisation

WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP MY EARS SAFE?

It's pretty easy to look after your hearing once you know how to make listening safe. Here are 10 tips that can help you keep your hearing for life.

1. Keep volumes as low as possible while listening to music – below the halfway mark

2. Ask a friend if they can hear your headphone music. If they can, turn the volume down

3. Never use music to drown out other noises

4. Use headphones instead of ear buds

5. Don't stand near speakers

6. Wear earplugs. They help to reduce noise levels, which makes for safer listening

7. Give your ears a break from music for at least five minutes every hour

8. If it's uncomfortably loud or painful, leave

9. Pay attention to the warning signs of hearing loss, such as ringing in the ears

10. If you think it's too loud – it probably is

GET A HEARING HEALTH CHECK UP

If you're worried about your hearing, don't wait. **Get it checked out.**

We're here to help.

If you'd like more advice on how to protect your hearing or if you have a hearing loss and are seeking support, please get in touch.

Contact our helpline via phone: 09 307 2922 or 0800 867 446

Or email: enquiries@nfd.org.nz

Visit our website: nfd.org.nz



DID YOU KNOW?

20%

Globally, 1 in 5 teenagers have a hearing loss

Since the 1990s, the rate of youth hearing loss has increased globally by

30%

Up to
34%

of NZ secondary students recently screened may have hearing loss

100%

WHO predicts the rate of hearing loss will double over the next three decades

**Source: World Health Organisation, Listen Up, New Zealand Pilot Study Oct 2019*



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