



## Buyer's Guide

Important information to consider prior to purchasing a hearing aid.

- Hearing Loss - Time to take action
- What to watch out for when buying a hearing instrument
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## Hearing Loss – Time to Take Action

An estimated 3.5 million Australians suffer from hearing loss, and that number grows considerably every year. There is not an exact statistic since many people either do not realise or refuse to admit that they are not hearing as well as they were once able to.

More than two thirds of people aged over 65 years have some degree of hearing loss. Half of all hearing impaired people are below the age of 65 years.

Although hearing is essential to fully enjoying and participating in life, on average people wait seven (7) years after the onset of hearing loss before taking the first step and having a hearing test.

### Will my hearing become worse if I wait to purchase hearing aids?

For years we have known that aging and noise exposure take their toll on our ability to hear. This is true whether or not we use hearing aids. However, research shows that the ability to make sense of what we hear deteriorates more rapidly if the hearing pathway is not stimulated. Therefore, a decision to delay being fitted with hearing aids will not cause hearing to become worse, but it may make it more difficult to adapt and benefit from hearing aids later on.

This is a very good reason for not waiting until hearing aids are absolutely needed. Unfortunately, we see too many people make the mistake of waiting to buy hearing aids because they feel their hearing “isn’t bad enough”.

### How do you know whether you or someone you love might benefit from hearing aids?

- Family or friends often have to repeat what they say
- Frustration from not clearly understanding others
- Trouble understanding speech on television at normal volume levels
- Trouble understanding speech when background noise is present
- Embarrassment from being unable to hear when meeting new people

If you suspect that you or someone you love is experiencing hearing difficulty, AudioActive’s Buyer’s Guide is the right place to start. Its purpose is to answer your questions and provide the information necessary to make an informed decision about improving your hearing and, in turn, your quality of life.



## What to watch out for when buying a hearing instrument

When deciding who you want to purchase your hearing instrument from and who you want to provide you with ongoing service, it is important to ask the following questions.

### Do they perform a comprehensive hearing evaluation?

A comprehensive hearing assessment on a wide range of frequencies including inter-octave frequencies is essential in order to maximise the accuracy of the hearing aid fitting. Many losses can be corrected surgically and permanently, negating the need for use of a hearing instrument.

### Do they offer a FULL unconditional refund or just a PARTIAL refund if you are not satisfied?

Should you wish to return an instrument many businesses will charge you a significant fee for their professional services. At AudioActive we believe that if we cannot make you hear better then we do not deserve to be paid.

### Do they offer a back up service?

When you purchase a hearing instrument you are also purchasing the invaluable services of your hearing professional. An incorrectly or inadequately programmed hearing aid can result in diminished hearing benefits. As you adapt to increased sensation levels, or should your hearing deteriorate, your hearing instrument will need to be reprogrammed. Make sure ongoing support is available, because you will need it.

### Do they charge for ongoing clinical services, adjustments and reprogramming of your hearing instruments?

Some businesses charge a fee every time you walk through their door. Others charge for adjustments after the first year. Others charge a fee once the aid is out of warranty. Once you've purchased a hearing instrument from AudioActive, we will reassess your hearing, reprogram and adjust your hearing instrument free of charge for the life of the device. Other than for batteries and any repairs once the device is out of warranty, you will have no further out of pocket expenses with AudioActive.

### How long is their warranty period?

Hearing aids do malfunction. AudioActive provide a minimum 3 year warranty on all instruments fitted and up to 5 years on some models.

### Are they accredited to provide hearing services to pensioners and veterans?

In order to fit pensioners and veterans with hearing aids, hearing aid businesses and their professional practitioners need to be accredited by the Office of Hearing Services (OHS). Hearing professionals are provided with practitioner numbers and businesses provided with provider numbers.

### Do they charge above the standard fee for batteries and maintenance?

Under the OHS program, pensioners are charged an annual fee of approximately \$35 to \$40 for batteries and maintenance. Many businesses charge an additional amount when a pensioner purchases a top-up instrument. At AudioActive we charge the standard fixed government fee on all fittings.



### **Are they a member of an approved professional body?**

Hearing professionals need to meet minimum education and experience standards in order to be admitted as a member of a professional body. The relevant professional bodies in Australia are Australian Society of Audiologists (ASA) and Australian College of Audiology (ACAud). In order to maintain their membership, members need to obtain an annual quota of ongoing education points to ensure they are kept abreast of all the latest developments within our profession.

### **Do they offer a range of different brands or do they offer one brand only?**

A growing number of businesses are owned by manufacturers, who obviously have a vested financial interest in fitting their brand of instrument, thus limiting the choice of product available to you. At AudioActive we are independent and fit whatever brand of product we believe is the best at the time. At any given time we will be fitting a number of different brands depending on the needs of our patients, thus providing an opportunity to achieve a better outcome.

### **Is it a one man business or part of a larger network?**

You will need back up with your hearing instruments. What will happen if a sole-proprietor becomes ill, goes on holiday or moves away? At AudioActive we have clinics throughout Queensland and affiliates in other states, as well as Audiologists on hand to fill in at local clinics when needed.

### **Finally, a word of caution – insure your hearing instruments.**

Hearing instruments do get lost, stolen or damaged beyond repair. It is a wise investment to insure your devices by having them listed on your household contents insurance.



## Frequently Asked Questions about AudioActive

### What can you tell me about AudioActive's Hearing Clinics?

Our network of hearing clinics employ hearing healthcare professionals, Audiologists and Audiometrists, who are highly qualified in evaluating hearing loss, fitting and programming hearing aids, and providing rehabilitative services. All our clinicians are accredited with the Australian Office of Hearing Services to provide hearing services to Australian government patients.

AudioActive has an extensive network of clinics and our Customer Support Consultants can quickly put the patient in touch with a provider convenient to wherever the patient happens to be.

### How do I arrange an appointment at a Hearing Clinic near me?

Arranging an appointment at one of AudioActive's Clinics is easy and takes only a few minutes. After a Customer Support Consultant asks a few simple questions to learn more about your hearing needs, the Consultant will assist in arranging an appointment at the location closest to you.

The process can begin just by calling **1300 TO HEAR** (1300 86 4327)

### Can you work with me if I'm calling on behalf of a family member needing hearing aids?

Every day AudioActive helps sons and daughters calling for parents or grandparents, or nieces and nephews calling for aunts and uncles. Our Customer Support Consultants are trained to work with family members in making all the necessary arrangements for a successful hearing aid experience. Some of our most successful patient stories are the result of family members helping each other toward better hearing and better living.

### Can I talk with an Audiologist if I have questions or a problem?

Yes. AudioActive has Audiologists available by phone 5 days a week: We are open Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., at **1300 TO HEAR** (1300 86 4327). If you call outside those times, leave a message and we will return your call the next business day.

### Do I have a choice of hearing aid brands with AudioActive?

Absolutely. Unlike franchise retailers, AudioActive offers more than a dozen brands of hearing aids. The advantage to this is that we are better able to suit a patient's hearing loss and lifestyle needs. Some of the brands we carry include Bernafon, GN ReSound, Oticon, Phonak, Siemens, Sonic Innovations, Starkey, Unitron and Widex.

### What should I expect from the hearing test when scheduled through AudioActive?

Many of our patient testimonials specifically address the thoroughness of the hearing test. This thoroughness and the consultation afterward are crucial to determining the best hearing aid. In many instances, an AudioActive hearing test will be completed with no out of pocket expense to the patient. This can be discussed in detail when arranging an appointment for a hearing test.

### How much do hearing instruments cost?

As with a watch or a car or a pair of glasses, hearing aid costs vary with brand, style, power, performance and sophistication. Hearing instruments range from \$1,500 to \$6,000 for one device. Although virtually all hearing instruments these days are digital, they vary significantly in their level of performance. Automatic models with sophisticated noise reduction systems typically cost more. Once your hearing has been assessed the Audiologist will assist you in selecting a device suitable for your specific needs.



## What payment options do I have?

One of our goals is to make hearing care more affordable and paying for it easier. We accept payment by cash, cheque, EFTPOS, credit card and offer payment plans. On certain models, options include up to 12 months interest-free with a low minimum payment. Financing is also available.

Just call **1300 TO HEAR** (1300 86 4327) to see which option best suits your situation.

## Is financial assistance available?

AudioActive, the Federal Government and Private Health Funds provide various means of financial assistance.

**20% personal income tax rebate:** This applies for total medical expenses over a threshold of \$1,500 (for the 2008 tax year). For some hearing aid wearers this rebate can amount to a saving of around \$2,000. Full details can be obtained from the Australian Tax Office on 13 28 61.

**Private Health Fund Rebates:** If you have a comprehensive level of cover including “extras” you may be eligible for a rebate of between several hundred dollars to several thousand dollars. Each insurer and policy is different, so you will need to contact your fund to learn what your entitlements are.

**Seniors Card Concession:** Australian Seniors Card holders are eligible for a concession of \$200 off the full retail price of any hearing aid fitted by AudioActive.

**Payment Plans:** AudioActive is able to arrange short term payment plans of 3 to 12 months interest free to eligible applicants.

**The Australian Government Hearing Services Program:** Fully subsidised hearing services are available to eligible pensioners and veterans. These services include a hearing test and basic digital hearing aids free of charge. The program allows you to contribute towards the cost of more advanced devices that may be more suitable for your requirements. An application form for an Office of Hearing Services Voucher is available on our website or click the link below.



Download OHS Voucher application form for free and subsidised hearing aids and services

## Frequently Asked Questions about Hearing Instruments

### With my degree of loss, will I benefit from a hearing instrument?

There are very few losses these days that cannot be assisted to some degree with a hearing instrument. Don't be put off if you've been told in the past that a hearing aid would be of no benefit to you. In many cases new technological advances are providing solutions for difficult losses for which there was previously no known remedy.

Hearing loss is described in terms of the degree of the impact on a person's everyday life. The degree of a person's hearing loss is measured in decibels (dB)

#### **Mild: 21-45 dB**

You would have some difficulty hearing soft speech and conversations but would manage in quiet situations with clear voices. A hearing instrument will assist most hearing problems in this range. Open-fit hearing aids are generally ideal for this degree of loss.

#### **Moderate: 46-65 dB**

You would have difficulty understanding conversational speech and more so in the presence of background noise. TV and radio would be turned up. A hearing instrument will assist most hearing difficulties if speech discrimination is good and background noise low.

#### **Severe: 66-90 dB**

Normal conversational speech is inaudible. A hearing instrument will amplify many speech sounds. The clarity of speech heard is likely to be affected and visual cues will assist in understanding speech. It would be important to use hearing instruments with good noise suppression features.

#### **Profound: 91 dB +**

There is great inconsistency in the benefit derived from a hearing device. Some can understand clear speech face to face in places with good auditory conditions when wearing a hearing device. Others find it impossible. New technology in hearing instruments such as Phonak's Naida which compresses and shifts inaudible high frequencies into an adjacent area with audible hearing have been found to have very encouraging benefits.

### What is a digital hearing aid?

In recent years digital technology has very quickly replaced older analogue technology to the point where digital hearing aids account for more than 95% of all hearing instruments fitted. Digital instruments contain miniature computer chips which can be accurately programmed to match a particular patient's hearing loss with the precise amplification needed. The incoming sound is separated into discreet bands or channels, each of which can be processed independently. Comprehensive flexibility and fine-tuning capability are among the many benefits.

### What is the best hearing aid to purchase?

This is one of the most frequent questions we're asked. There are several very good major brands, but there is no single "best hearing aid." The best hearing aid is the one that suits an individual's unique lifestyle and hearing loss. An audiologist is the most appropriate person to educate you about various options, and help select the right model.



## One Hearing Aid or Two?

The benefit of wearing one hearing aid, as opposed to wearing two, can usually be determined by asking two questions:

1. Can hearing in both ears be improved by amplification?
2. Does the wearer want to understand others, as well as possible, in a variety of environments?

If the answer to both questions is yes, there can be a tremendous benefit to wearing two hearing aids instead of one. This is known as a “binaural fitting.”

Binaural fittings offer the following advantages:

- Greater speech understanding in noisy environments
- Reduced need for volume
- Improved ability to locate a sound source
- Consistent stimulation of the entire auditory system, leading to improved understanding of speech.

Research shows that binaural hearing aid fittings give greater speech understanding in difficult listening conditions. Our brains are designed to receive sensory information from two ears. Sounds need to arrive at different times and intensities before we can make sense of the multitude of sounds and voices in a crowded room. This can only be achieved with balanced hearing. Binaural hearing also helps determine where a voice originates. As it interprets the world, the brain adds together the perception of loudness from both ears. So with a single hearing aid, if the sound coming into the ears is unbalanced, the wearer may not be able to determine immediately the location of the speaker. But with hearing aids in both ears, this loudness summing capability means the volume in each hearing aid does not have to be turned up as high. Less amplification means less unwanted, amplified background noise. Research and patient experience tell us overwhelmingly that wearing two hearing aids is better than wearing one. Of course, there are occasional exceptions, but these can be determined during the hearing test.

## What are the differences between various hearing aid manufacturers?

The build quality of all major brands is typically of a very high standard these days, with a few exceptions. There are however vast differences in performance levels between different brands and even between different models from the one manufacturer. While there are more than a dozen different hearing aid manufacturers in the Australian market, only about seven companies research and design their own digital circuits.

We recommend those brands of hearing aids based on proven quality, digital processing, innovation and reliability. For top-end features, superlative design, wireless features and automatic program switching we recommend Swiss company Phonak. For value for money we recommend Canadian company Unitron. For power custom in-the-canal products we recommend American company Starkey. As technology changes our recommendations also change. In every case, our Audiologists help you in selecting the best hearing aid for your unique hearing loss and personal needs.

## Benefits and disadvantages of the various styles of instruments

### Behind-The-Ear (BTE)

The Behind-The-Ear hearing instrument is housed in a durable case that rests on the back of the outer ear. BTE models offer wearers and audiologists a lot of flexibility. This style can address more types of hearing loss than any other. Over half our patients choose BTEs for this reason. It is also the only style that will work for severe and profound hearing losses.



Open-fit hearing aids, discussed previously in this guide, fall under this style as well. Dramatically different from previous designs, open-fit hearing instruments set a new standard for aesthetics. Designed for both looks and comfort, these devices integrate some of the most sophisticated sound processing technology available today. An ultra thin sound tube connects the hearing aid amplifier to a tiny soft dome placed inside the ear canal which keeps the ear feeling ventilated and comfortable. The amplifier unit is available in a myriad of stylish shapes, many of which are very discreet and have a great choice of colours.

A further advancement on the open-fit instruments are the Canal Receiver Technology (CRT) models, which although fundamentally similar to an open-fit, differ in that the speaker has been removed from the casing and placed at the end of tube, with a wire running through the centre of the tube. These instruments are typically even smaller, yet provide more clarity, as the sound is produced close to the ear drum, rather than having to acoustically travel along the thin tube. Should it be required, the speaker can be easily removed and replaced with a more powerful one, thus providing maximum flexibility and extending the viable life of the aid.

### In-The-Ear (ITE)



The full-size In-The-Ear style became available in the early 1980s. These aids are currently the least popular among wearers even though an ITE hearing instrument can fit the majority of hearing losses. Its larger size accommodates a larger battery, which translates to longer battery life. Its size also allows for more features, such as directional microphones and memory programs. This hearing instrument is housed in a custom-made acrylic shell.

## In-The-Canal (ITC)



You can think of an In-The-Canal hearing instrument as a smaller version of the In-The-Ear instrument. Like the ITE, it is made of a custom acrylic shell that holds all the electronics. ITC is a good choice for those with mild or moderate hearing losses and with certain models even severe losses. It is smaller and less noticeable than a standard In-The-Ear. Users normally get better sound localisation because the microphone placement takes advantage of the external ear's sound reflecting properties. Some people also find it easier to handle than the In-The-Ear style. Some of today's manufacturers are now able to place directional microphones, memory buttons and even wireless connectivity in ITC hearing instruments.

## Completely-In-The-Canal (CIC)



The Completely-In-The-Canal hearing instrument is designed to fit just as its name implies – completely inside the ear canal. The cosmetic appeal of this style depends largely on the size and shape of the wearer's ear canal. Manufacturing limitations, the shape of the ear canal, and patient comfort all factor into the size of the device. Recent improvements in shell manufacture using 3 dimensional laser imaging, has greatly improved the fit and comfort of these instruments. Feedback management systems now allow much greater ventilation, eliminating occlusion (the feeling of your ears being plugged). With the advent of automatic program switching on more advanced models there is no longer any need for a program button. These improvements have resulted in their popularity soaring over the past year. Other major advantages other than the cosmetic appeal with CICs are improved telephone use, less wind noise when outdoors, and better sound localisation.

## Technical features available in a hearing aid

### • **Tone Controls (Multiple Frequency Bands)**

The most basic function of a hearing aid is to amplify those sounds that you do not hear correctly in proportion to the degree of loss sustained. Hearing-impaired people usually have more hearing loss at some frequencies (pitches) than at others. Hearing aids therefore have to amplify more at some frequencies than at others, in a way that is tailored for each person according to the hearing aid prescription. Today's instruments work just like a graphic equaliser on a hi-fi system, by providing different levels of amplification on different frequency bands. The narrower the band the more accurately the amplification can be matched to your hearing loss. Typically the greater the number of frequency bands the better the clarity. Instruments vary from as little as 2 frequency bands to as many as 20.

### • **Slow-Acting Automatic Volume Control**

The loudest sounds around us every day may be 100 decibels stronger than the weakest sounds that people with normal hearing notice. Unfortunately, people with hearing loss are not able to hear such a big range of sounds. One way to increase the range of sounds that can be heard is by turning up the volume control for weak sounds and turning it down for strong sounds. Having to frequently change the volume control can be annoying, however, and it is more convenient if the hearing aid has an internal automatic volume control.

### • **Very-Fast Acting Automatic Volume Control**

The slow-acting automatic volume controls mentioned in the previous section are designed to do much the same things that a person would: They turn up the volume in quiet environments and turn it down in loud environments. An alternative is to have an automatic volume control so fast that it turns the volume up for every weak sound, no matter how brief, and turns it down for every strong sound, no matter how brief. These fast-acting automatic controls can enable even more sounds to be heard without being too loud. They may, however, decrease the distinctiveness of some sounds by removing some of the loudness differences that let us tell one sound from another. Either the slow-acting, or the very fast-acting automatic volume controls are very beneficial, but neither has a marked advantage over the other. The technical name for both types of controls is wide-dynamic range compression.

### • **Multi-Channel Compression**

It is common for hearing-impaired people to have much more hearing loss for some frequencies than for others. Such people can benefit from wide-dynamic range compression for those frequencies at which they have a lot of hearing loss. For the other frequencies where their hearing is more normal, the disadvantages of compression may outweigh the advantages. The solution to this is for the hearing aid to use multi-channel compression, in which the sound is split into multiple parts – one for each of several frequency regions. The correct amount of compression (i.e. automatic volume control operation) can then be applied to each channel, after which the signals in each channel are recombined. Multi-channel compression is most beneficial for those people whose audiogram shows a marked variation of hearing loss across frequency.

### • **Noise Reduction By Directional Microphones**

Directional microphones enable a hearing aid to provide more amplification to sounds arriving from the front than to sounds arriving from other directions. Provided the hearing aid wearer is facing the person talking, and the noise is coming from other directions, directional microphones can make speech clearer in background noise. The advantage is marked if there is little reverberation (such as outdoors) or if the hearing aid wearer is very close (with a metre or so) of the person talking.



Many hearing aids enable the hearing aid wearer to switch the microphone from directional to normal (technically called omni-directional). This switchable directional microphone enables the most appropriate microphone response to be selected for every situation.

For each directional microphone there is one direction (somewhere to the rear) for which the microphone is particularly insensitive. The electronics within advanced hearing aids can control the direction at which this reduction occurs. These hearing aids automatically select the direction so as to minimise the amount of noise picked up by the hearing aid. This steerable microphone pattern is beneficial when there is one dominant source of background noise, such as one other person talking, or a noisy machine. Furthermore, for the steerable microphone to be fully effective, the noise has to either be very close, or the aid wearer has to be outdoors, so that echoes and reverberation do not affect the operation of the microphone. Under these circumstances the steerable microphone greatly improves clarity.

#### • **Adaptive Noise Suppression**

Some noises have acoustic characteristics very different from speech. Traffic noise, for example has strong low-frequency sound, whereas cutlery and crockery noise has strong high-frequency sound. The best tone control settings for a person depend on the type of background noise present. Hearing aids with adaptive noise suppression sense the characteristics of the background noise, and automatically change the tone controls to suit. In traffic noise, for example, the amplification for low-frequency sounds is decreased. The amplification given to the strongest parts of the noise is therefore decreased. Unfortunately, the amplification given to the same frequencies in the speech signal is also decreased by the same amount. Consequently, adaptive noise suppression usually does not make speech easier to understand, but it does make listening more comfortable and less fatiguing. For some noises and some hearing aids with many channels of noise reduction, there may be a greater improvement in speech clarity as well. Some hearing aids take this approach to its logical conclusion: amplification at all frequencies is decreased whenever the hearing aid detects that no one is talking.

It is important to understand that having noise reduction in hearing aids does not mean background noise is eliminated. The goal is to make speech dominant in the presence of noise.

#### • **Multiple Programs**

As mentioned earlier, different internal settings of the hearing aid are best for different listening situations. Multi-memory hearing aids (also called multi-program hearing aids) give the aid wearer some control over the type of amplification provided. The clinician adjusts each of two or more programs within the hearing aid to be best for different situations. In daily use, the hearing aid wearer then selects, possibly using a remote control, the program that best suits each listening situation. The hearing aid wearer may switch between programs on the basis of the type of background noise, or depending on whether the person wishes to maximise speech clarity or overall comfort.

#### • **Automatic Program Switching**

As an alternative to the aid wearer switching between programs, some hearing aids can automatically switch between programs. They decide which program to select by analysing the acoustics of the sound being picked up by the hearing aid. For example, auto program switching hearing aids may switch between one program that is best for quiet environments and one that is best for use in noisy places. The program for noisy places may have been set up with a directional microphone and decreased amplification of low-frequency sounds. Automatic instruments are very popular with wearers who don't want to, or are not able to, control their instruments manually.



#### • **Feedback Management**

A commonly encountered problem with hearing aids is that they whistle. This effect, technically called feedback oscillation, occurs when enough amplified sound leaks back from the ear canal to the hearing aid microphone. This can arise when the earmould or hearing aid is old or improperly positioned, when there is too much wax in the ear, or simply when the hearing aid is turned up too much. One solution is to ensure that the hearing aid is never turned up too much, either by the clinician, the aid wearer, or automatically by the hearing aid itself. Feedback management systems in hearing aids measure (during hearing aid fitting) the amount of amplification that can be provided at each frequency without whistling, and then ensure that the amplification can never be increased enough to cause whistling. The advantage is that little or no whistling occurs; the disadvantage is that the amount of amplification provided to high frequency sounds may be inadequate.

#### • **Feedback Cancellation**

A more sophisticated solution to the whistling problem is for the hearing aid to measure the amount of signal leaking back to the microphone, and automatically cancel this sound by adding some equal but opposite sound. This software process is known as phase inversion. As a result, hearing aids with feedback cancellation can provide about 10 to 20 decibels more amplification without whistling than hearing aids without this feature as well as providing much larger venting.

#### • **Wireless Transmission**

All of the features described so far work on the signal once it reaches the hearing aid. There are two ways by which a much, much cleaner signal can be delivered to the hearing aid. The first of these sends a magnetic signal from a loop to a telecoil inside the hearing aid. The loop can be inside a telephone, or can surround many seats within a room, such as in a movie theatre or church.

The second technique sends a radio signal from a transmitter worn by a talker or positioned near a TV speaker across the room to a radio receiver built into, or connected to, a hearing aid. Either of these solutions makes speech much clearer than can any of the other features described in this article. Wireless systems and telecoils achieve such stunning results by not allowing noise or reverberation to mix with the signal they carry.

The latest technology now enables certain hearing aids to communicate with each other, as well as using Bluetooth to wirelessly connect to audio devices such as mobile phones, iPods and televisions.

#### • **Frequency Transposition**

Sometimes, a person can have so much hearing loss at some frequencies that no useful amplification can be achieved. The person then loses all the information that is present in speech at these frequencies. Typically, it is the high-frequency (consonant) information that is lost. Some (few) hearing aids use frequency transposition to shift the information at these frequencies down to lower frequencies where it can be better heard.

#### • **Spectral Enhancement**

Although all frequencies that we can hear are useful, for each sound of speech there are just a few frequencies that convey the essence of that sound. Some hearing aids automatically detect these frequencies within each sound of speech and provide extra amplification to these key frequencies while that sound is present. This process is called spectral enhancement.

As you can now no doubt appreciate, the modern hearing instrument is a highly complex device, hence the need for professional assistance in selection and fitting.



## Taking the Next Step – A Hearing Test

The first step to take when considering hearing aids is scheduling a professional hearing test. Call us at **1300 TO HEAR** (1300 86 4327) and a Customer Support Consultant will assist in scheduling an appointment with at a Local Clinic.

Here's what to expect during the hearing evaluation and consultation:

1. The Audiologist will discuss lifestyle to determine needs and expectations. The rhythms of a wearer's life, the environment, and the style of interaction all figure into any hearing aid recommendation.
2. There will be a thorough examination of the ears. This may reveal excessive earwax, eardrum damage, or other hearing-related conditions. Some hearing problems, like earwax build-up, usually can be resolved quickly and easily. At AudioActive, our Audiologists always look for the simplest solution first.
3. There will be a comprehensive hearing evaluation, including pure tone testing, bone conduction testing, speech understanding, and other specialised tests such as tympanometry (middle ear function) if needed.
4. Our Audiologist will then discuss the test results, explaining the degree and nature of hearing loss. If hearing loss is diagnosed, hearing aid options will be discussed and all questions will be answered.

## Why AudioActive?

AudioActive's commitment to our clients, coupled with the highest quality, personalised customer service, sound advice in assisting you select from a wide range of devices, and years of experience in fitting discreet, hidden devices, make us a wise choice when shopping for hearing care needs. Most importantly, we listen to your needs and desires, to obtain the optimal outcome for you. And of course don't forget, AudioActive offers a 30 day full 100% money back guarantee on all instruments fitted.

We hope this guide has answered most of your questions about choosing hearing aids. If you'd like more information, want to share your experiences or opinions, or are ready to schedule a comprehensive hearing evaluation at one of our Local Clinics, simply call us at **1300 TO HEAR** (1300 86 4327).

Ask to speak with a Customer Support Consultant and you will receive immediate, courteous assistance. Email us at [info@audioactive.com.au](mailto:info@audioactive.com.au).

