

Common Sounds

This decibel (dBA) table compares some common sounds and shows how they rank in potential harm to hearing. In many industries, workers are exposed to dangerous noise levels. This is particularly true in the construction, lumber, mining, steel and textile industries.

| SOUND | NOISE LEVEL (dBA) | EFFECT |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Boom Cars | 140 | |
| Jet Engines (Near) | 140 | |
| Shotgun Firing | 130 | |
| JET TAKEOFF (100-200 Ft.) | 130 | |
| Rock Concerts (Varies) | 110-140 | Threshold of Pain (125 dB) |
| Oxygen Torch | 121 | |
| Discotheque/Boom Box | 120 | |
| Thunderclap (Near) | 120 | |
| Stereos (Over 100 Watts) | 110-125 | |
| Symphony Orchestra | 110 | Regular Exposure of more than 1 minute risks permanent hearing loss (over 100 dB) |
| Power Saw (Chain Saw) | 110 | |
| Jackhammer | 110 | |
| Snowmobile | 105 | |
| Wind turbine | 105 | |
| Jet Fly-over (1000 Ft.) | 103 | |
| Electric Furnace Area | 100 | |
| Garbage Truck / Cement Mixer | 100 | No more than 15 minutes of unprotected exposure recommended (90-100 dB) |
| Farm Tractor | 98 | |
| Newspaper Press | 97 | |
| Subway / Motorcycle (25 ft.) | 88 | Very annoying |
| Lawn Mower / Food Blender | 85-90 | Level at which hearing damage (8 hrs.) begins (85 dB) |
| Recreational Vehicles / TV | 70-90 | |
| Diesel Truck (40Mph, 50 Ft.) | 84 | |
| Average City Traffic Noise | 80 | |
| Garbage Disposal | 80 | Annoying; interferes with conversation; constant exposure may cause damage |
| Washing Machine | 78 | |
| Dishwasher | 75 | |
| Vacuum Cleaner | 70 | |
| Hair Dryer | 70 | Intrusive; interferes with telephone conversation |
| Normal Conversation | 50-65 | |
| Quiet Office | 50-60 | Comfortable (under 60 dB) |
| Refrigerator Humming | 40 | |
| Whisper | 30 | Very quiet |
| Broadcasting Studio | 30 | |
| Rustling Leaves | 20 | Just audible |
| Normal Breathing | 10 | |
| | 0 | Threshold of normal hearing (1000-4000 Hz) |

Source: <http://www.50hz.com/decibel.html>