

Stall Street Journal



How Loud is Too Loud?

Depends on the loudness of the sound and the length of time you are exposed to it.

Both the amount of noise and the length of time you are exposed to it determine its potential to damage your hearing. Noise levels are measured in decibels (dB). The higher the decibel level the louder the noise. Standards set by OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) indicate that continued exposure of unprotected ears to noise over 85 dB will cause a gradual hearing loss in a significant number of individuals. Louder noises will accelerate this damage. The allowed exposure time decreases by ONE - HALF for each 5 dB increase in the average noise level.

<i>Safe Exposure Times</i>	<i>dB</i>	<i>Sound Source</i>
Instantaneous, permanent damage	140	Shotgun, rifle, Jet plane take off
Less than 1 second	130	Jackhammer, heavy industry
Less than 10 seconds (threshold of pain)	120	Rock concert
1.5 minutes	110	iPod full vol, Power Tools, snowmobile
15 minutes	100	iPod 3/4 vol, Chain saw, motorcycle
2.5 hours	90	Lawn mower
Eight hours	85	iPod 1/2 vol, Beginning of Danger Zone
Prolonged exposure to noise levels	80	City Traffic
85dB and higher can result in permanent hearing loss	70	Vacuum, hair dryer
	60	Office, sewing machine
	50	Normal Conversation
	40	Refrigerator
	30	Whisper
	20	Rustling leaves
	10	Breathing
	0	Threshold of normal hearing

Information provided courtesy of Geneva Hearing Services 630-232-9153
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www.kanehealth.com/coalition.htm