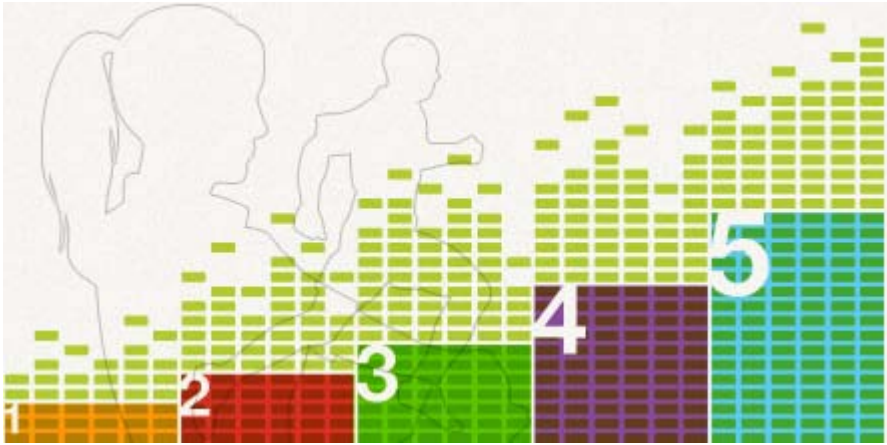


Adapting to Hearing Aids



Getting hearing aids to treat hearing loss is an important step, but it's not the finish line. Adapting to a hearing aid is more like learning how to drive than it is learning how to read with new glasses. It's a process that takes time, commitment, education and patience.

Guide To Hearing Success

The following principles have been used by thousands of hearing aid wearers to successfully transition to better hearing health.

1. Acceptance

Surprisingly, the first step begins before the purchase of hearing aids. Admitting you have permanent hearing loss and accepting the fact of hearing loss, prepares you to get the help you need, to stop hiding or denying a hearing problem and to end the pretense that you understand speech when in reality you need amplification to understand speech.

2. Positive attitude

Step two is about making a personal choice to achieve better hearing with a positive attitude. Simply purchasing hearing aids does not signal success. To overcome hearing loss, you must have a desire to learn and determination to increase your ability to hear. Those who approach hearing aid use with a positive attitude are far more likely to achieve success.

3. Education

The most effective remedy for hearing loss is personal education. The more you know about your hearing loss and treatment, the more actively you can participate in the adjustment to hearing aid use in various listening environments. Hearing requires more than the ears. It is a complex function that requires the cooperation of the brain and your other senses.

4. Realistic expectations

The fourth principle of success is to set realistic expectations. Hearing aids will help you hear better—but not perfectly. Focus on your improvement and remember the learning curve can take anywhere from six weeks to six months—success comes from practice and commitment.

[Read about managing auditory confusion.](#)

5. Practice and patience

Finally, the fifth principle of success is a combination of practice, time and patience. Once you have logged sufficient hours for your brain to re-acclimate you will be able to hear without thinking

so much about hearing. It's a good idea to begin with a schedule in which you wear your hearing aids part time and gradually work up to wearing them from the time you rise until the time you go to bed. Many hearing professionals recommend listening to books on tape as a way to practice hearing and understanding. In the first few weeks, if it is too tiring, rest. Then try again. Reach out for support and stick with it. The payoff is immense.