

Better hearing is your choice



Your guide to finding
the right hearing aids

oticon
life-changing technology

Hearing is living

Your sense of hearing is a vital link to your world. The better you hear, the easier it is to actively engage with your surroundings.

As we get older, many of us find that sounds begin to fade. You may still hear all sounds, but find it hard to follow conversations – especially in noisy environments like restaurants. As your hearing loss increases, you can become increasingly frustrated and cut off from family and friends.

Fortunately, today's hearing aids are amazingly powerful and can easily help you maintain your quality of life.

Choosing your ideal hearing aids

There are many different hearing systems on the market in all sorts of shapes, sizes, colours, prices and performance levels.

Your hearing care professional will explain the different systems and their benefits, guiding you towards the models that are best suited to your hearing needs, lifestyle and personal preferences.

This brochure will give you an overview of the different models and the most important technologies so that you can get a sense of the different options.



Myths and misconceptions

People who have no experience of hearing aids tend to have all sorts of misconceptions about them. Here are some of the most common.

Myth: It's unusual to have a hearing loss

Fact: It isn't. 10% of all people and around 40% of people over 50 have a hearing loss.

Myth: Hearing aids are for old people

Fact: Not true. 65% of people with hearing loss are younger than 65.

Myth: Hearing aids are big and ugly

Fact: Not anymore. Today's hearing aids are stylish, tiny and almost invisible.

Myth: Hearing aids beep and squeal

Fact: This may have been true years ago. Today's technologies ensure that these effects have been almost completely eliminated.

Myth: My hearing loss only affects my hearing

Fact: Not true. Having a hearing loss also affects your mental energy, ability to recall conversations and take part in social activities.



Taking care of your hearing is taking care of your overall health and wellbeing.



Move forward to better hearing

If you are experiencing hearing loss, the biggest step is choosing to do something about it. And the sooner you do, the better.

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I feel like I'm alive again.
I can participate in all the discussions that I previously wasn't a part of.”

Eugène Goetz, Oticon Opn user

The rapid advance of technology in recent years has transformed the performance and appearance of hearing aids. Microchips and miniaturisation mean they work better and are smaller than ever before. Today's hearing aids are tiny, stylish and incredibly powerful.

All hearing aids will let you hear better. The most advanced hearing aids will enable you to hear as naturally as possible.

What can modern hearing aids offer?

Helping your brain make sense of sound

Did you know you “hear” with your brain? Your ears pick up sounds and pass them to your brain. But it is your brain that processes those sounds and turns them into meaningful information. Good hearing requires a huge amount of sound detail. The more detail the brain receives, the easier it is for it to turn sound into meaning.

Modern hearing aids process sounds incredibly fast and accurately. They create a pleasant and balanced sound experience by making quiet sounds audible again and reducing noise without over-amplifying loud sounds.



Understanding speech

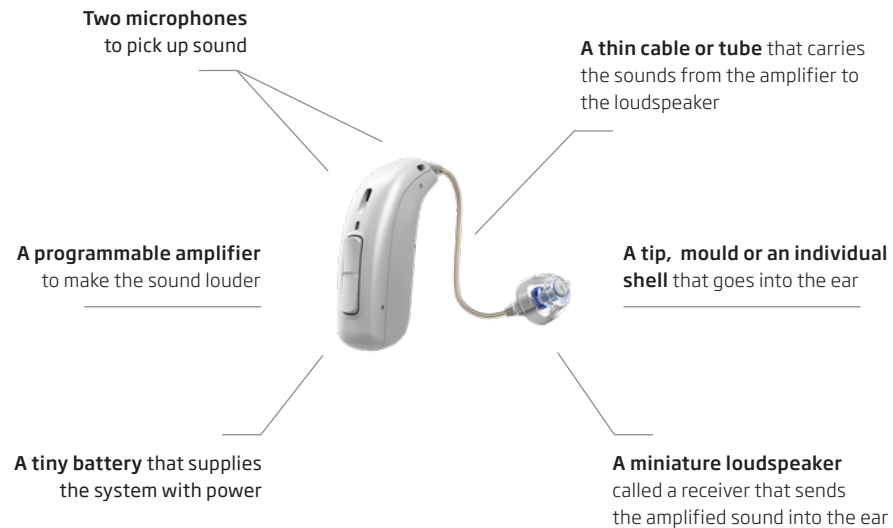
Of all the sounds we hear, speech is probably the most important to us. Speech rises and falls in volume and pitch. It conveys meaning and emotion. Small differences in sound patterns can make large differences in meaning. The brain relies on these subtle differences to avoid confusion. The latest hearing aids ensure that you are able to hear the important details of speech from all the people you are speaking with – especially in noisy situations.

Locating sounds

Your brain uses a variety of cues to identify and locate where sounds are coming from, such as someone calling your name or the sound of an approaching car. The latest hearing aids provide a 360° sound experience to support the natural ability of hearing to locate sounds around us.

How does a hearing aid work?

Not all hearing aids are created equal. However, they all share certain basic features and functions:



What better hearing can help you do:

- Hear what people are saying in meetings or in social gatherings
- Feel less confused and tired
- Participate much more easily in conversations
- Remember more of what is being said
- Feel more confident and relaxed in social situations
- Understand television, even when others are in the room
- Use your telephone and mobile devices more easily

How to know what's right for you

Success is based on three things: choosing the right hearing aids, the expertise and involvement of your hearing care professional, and your commitment to sticking with your hearing care programme.

Choosing your hearing aids is the first step to success.

There are 3 basic elements to this decision:

- Your hearing abilities and communication needs
- Your design and style preferences
- Other considerations, including what you can afford



Bring someone with you

Most people find it helpful to bring a spouse, family member or friend to their first visit. You will typically get more out of the consultation if someone close to you can share the experience.

Your hearing care professional will also benefit from learning about your hearing abilities from someone close to you.

Hearing abilities & communication needs

Your hearing care professional will determine the exact degree and type of your hearing loss and recommend the solution that's best for your individual needs.

Hearing loss: The most important task of your hearing aids is to be able to handle your specific degree of hearing loss. For example, there is no point choosing a cheaper model that is not powerful enough for the job. Your level of hearing loss will determine which systems and models are suitable.

Listening situations: Take some time to think about the situations where you would like to improve your hearing. When and where do you need extra help? What are your requirements at work and at home? What are your favourite leisure activities - including the ones you've stopped doing because of communication problems? If you clearly define these requirements, your hearing care professional will be able to help you find an appropriate solution.

One or two hearing aids: Imagine you are in a forest and you hear a bird twittering. If you cover one ear you can still hear the bird, but it is only with both ears that you can determine where the bird is sitting.

If you only have a hearing loss in one ear, one hearing aid is often sufficient.

If you have a hearing loss in both ears, two hearing aids will almost always be the best choice. This helps your brain receive the information it needs to interpret sound information in difficult listening situations. Compared to one aid, the overall sound quality and comfort from two is usually better.

An advanced technology called "binaural processing" lets two hearing aids actually communicate with each other by sharing information through a wireless sound stream. By subtly adjusting the volume differences on either side of your head, binaural processing helps you to locate where a sound is coming from. This creates a more natural listening experience.



“
**80% of hearing aid
users wear two devices.**”

Choosing your style – BTE

Behind-the-ear (BTE)

The majority of hearing aid users choose a behind-the-ear model. These are light, small and almost unnoticeable on the ear. There are two variations.

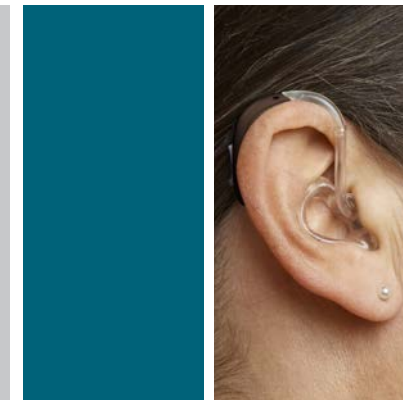
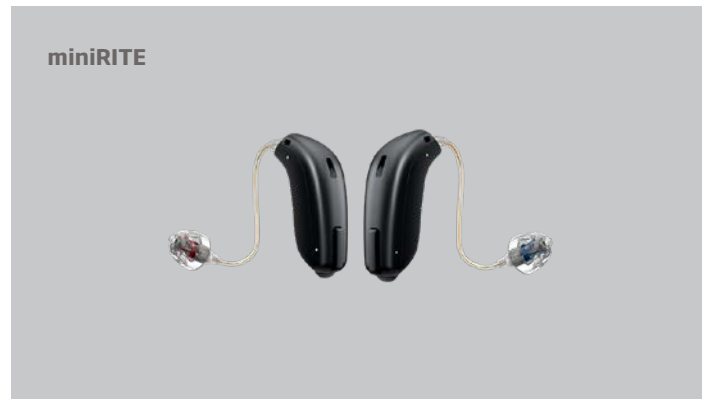
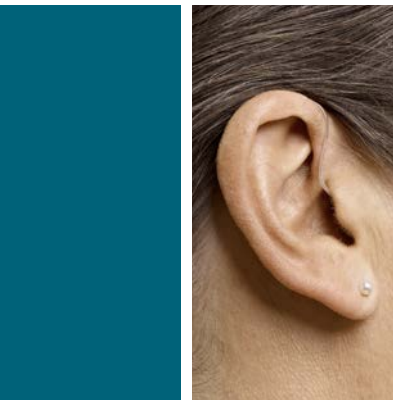
• Devices with the “receiver in the ear” (RITE)

RITE hearing aids have an ultra-thin, sculpted wire that carries the amplified sound from the hearing aid body to a speaker that fits in the ear canal. RITE advantages include better aesthetics, a more natural sound quality and a comfortable, open fitting. RITEs are available for mild, moderate and severe-to-profound hearing loss in both miniRITE and standard RITE designs.

• BTE with an earhook or thin tube

In these models, the receiver (loudspeaker) is not placed in the ear but located inside the body of the hearing aid. The sound passes through a tube to an ear mould that is custom-made from an ear impression to perfectly replicate the size and shape of your ear. Most BTE models with ear hooks can be fitted with a very discreet thin tube. These devices have a larger battery and can accommodate a larger amplifier, often suiting people who need a more powerful device. They also have enough space to accommodate a double push button for easy operation of volume and program options.

Both styles of BTE hearing aids are available in a range of natural colours to match different hair or skin tones, as well as in brighter colours to make a personal style statement.



Choosing your style – Custom

Custom hearing aids

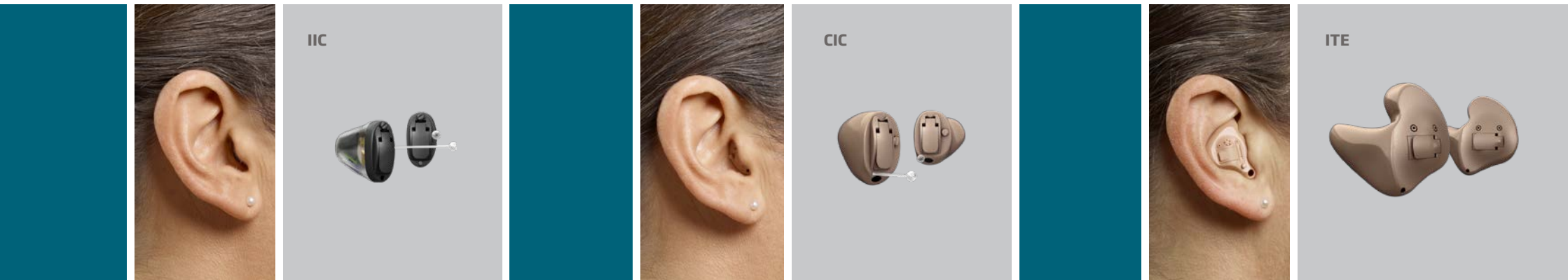
With custom hearing aids, all components are contained within a single unit that is custom-moulded to the ear.

Custom hearing aids range in size from the smallest IIC (Invisible In-The-Canal) to a slightly larger CIC (Completely In-The-Canal) to a full shell ITE (In-The-Ear). The size and style available to you depends on the size of your ear canal and the level of your hearing loss.

If you are able to use the smallest IIC style, it is extremely discreet. The larger custom products are usually more flexible for people with significant hearing loss and can be easier to insert. A choice of colours is available to match individual skin tones.

Whether you prefer an RITE style, a BTE with earhook or a custom version, there are a wide variety of choices available.

Your hearing care professional will help you to understand what your new hearing aids are capable of, teach you how to use them and work with you to get the best hearing possible. Don't worry if you find that it takes you a little while to get used to your new hearing aids. This is perfectly normal. They will bring big changes to your life and big changes take a bit of getting used to.



Other considerations

Various personal and practical factors may influence how well each hearing solution will work for you.

Four considerations often play a role:

1. Your Ear: Your ear is as unique as your fingerprint. Because of this, modern hearing aids are designed to take account of an enormous range of sizes and shapes. Considerations include the size and shape of your ear canal and outer ear, whether you have a tendency to accumulate earwax or if you have a history of ear-related medical concerns.

2. Controls and handling: You may prefer a certain model because you find it easier to handle. For example, RITE and thin tube technologies are both easy to handle and extremely discreet.

3. Hearing aids batteries Hearing aids are powered by either one of two types of batteries: Disposable batteries or rechargeable batteries.

Rechargeable hearing aids have built-in batteries, compared to hearing aids with traditional disposable batteries. Instead of replacing the batteries when they run out, you dock your hearing aids into a charging unit, similar to how smartphones recharge. So far, rechargeable batteries are generally only available for behind-the-ear styles of hearing aids.

Disposable batteries need to be changed regularly, and can last anywhere from 3 to 14 days. This is dependent upon the size of the battery and power needed by the hearing aid. Typically, smaller batteries have shorter battery life than larger ones.



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4. Connectivity: Connectivity lets you turn your hearing aids into wireless headphones. This means you can get the sound from your TV or mobile device streamed directly to your hearing aids. The latest hearing aids are also able to connect to the Internet and can be discreetly controlled from a hearing aid app. Many people feel that connectivity has improved their quality of life.

5. Budget: Better hearing means a better quality of life, so it is an investment in yourself, your health and personal wellbeing. Hearing aids come in different price ranges and some insurance policies cover some or all of the cost. Explore all the options with your hearing care professional before making your final decision and make sure you get the best possible hearing aids.

For more information on hearing and hearing loss please visit:
www.oticon.co.uk

Your hearing care professional

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