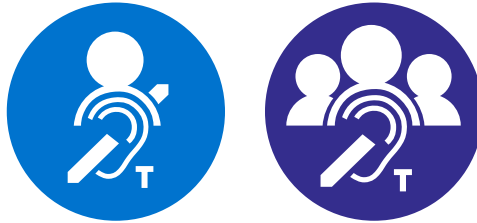


Hearing Loops for Hotels



There are 12 million people in the UK living with hearing loss, and an estimated 1.5 billion worldwide.

Assistive listening technology can help you extend a clear welcome to guests wherever they come from.



Welcoming guests with hearing loss

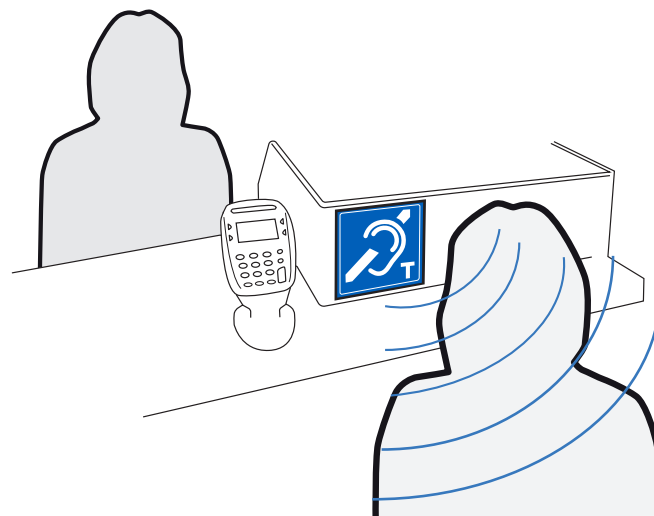
Assistive listening technology is one of the accessibility features venues should be providing for guests. The most recognised is a hearing loop.

How hearing loops work

Hearing loops amplify sound a person wants to hear.

Speech or music picked up by a microphone is transmitted through a 'loop' of copper wire to a hearing aid or cochlear implant fitted with a telecoil.

The telecoil feeds the sound directly into the hearing device, meaning people can clearly hear the staff member, presentation or entertainment, cutting out distracting background noise.



[Watch our video to learn more.](#)





The benefits of hearing loops in your hotel

Hearing loops are universal technology so no matter where a guest comes from, if their hearing aid or cochlear implant has a telecoil, they can use the loop.

Guests don't need to disclose their hearing loss. They simply press a button on their hearing device.

Loops provide sound in 'real time' with no delay, allowing for easy conversation. They can be used in 1-2-1 settings, large function rooms and even come in portable units.

[Read our users' guide to hearing loops.](#)

Standards and Legislation

Hotels are governed by the Equality Act so there is an obligation to provide accessible services to potential guests with hearing loss.

Operators also need to comply with Part M of building regulations, and British Standards BS 8300 sets out recommendations for where and how hearing loops should be used.

Uses in your hotel

Reception

A guest's experience as they enter your venue sets the tone for their visit. Hearing loops here are a must. With an 'under-the-counter' system, a discreet microphone on the desk picks up the staff member's voice while the loop and its transmitter are concealed neatly beneath the desk.

Automated self-check-in kiosks emitting audio can also be fitted with integrated hearing loops. Restaurant receptions, bar areas, guest services and concierge desks are other key customer interaction points where loops should be provided.

Function rooms

Hearing loss can be isolating and people can feel excluded from events others are enjoying.

Hearing loops in function suites create an inclusive experience at weddings or conferences. Loop cabling is generally laid around the perimeter of the room, beneath the carpet. This creates clarity of sound no matter where in the room a user is sitting.

Even guests who don't use a hearing aid can benefit from a hearing loop. A 'loop listener' allows anyone to receive clear sound from the loop via a pocket-sized receiver and a set of headphones.

A qualified hearing loop engineer is key to getting the correct signal strength across the whole space and giving hotels the flexibility to accommodate a range of events.

In-room solutions

Watching television needn't disturb guests in neighbouring rooms. Rooms can be looped with a discreet amplifier next to the TV and a loop pad beneath a cushion.

Portable loops

These compact, rechargeable units can be carried anywhere in the hotel, enabling clear conversation where it's needed - at the table in a restaurant, for example.



Service and safety

Hearing clearly is also about creating a safe environment for guests.

Loops are essential for communication in lift intercoms, and communication systems at refuge points and car park barriers.

Hearing aid users need to be able to hear emergency announcements so alert systems should have in-built hearing loops.

The flexibility of hearing loop technology means they can be integrated into existing systems, without the need for wholesale replacements.

The role of staff

Once hearing loops are installed, they can be left to work, but staff need to be aware that loops should stay switched on. Modern systems use very little energy and stay cool so there's no risk of fire.

Staff at reception areas need to keep microphones in the correct position to ensure they pick up their voices.

If you have a portable loop, keep it in a designated location so everyone knows where to find it, and keep it on charge so it's always ready to use.

Of course, staff with hearing loss can benefit from the loops too. They can also offer guests extras such as vibrating pillow alarms that alert them to emergencies when they've removed their hearing aids at night or are profoundly deaf.

Protecting your investment

Just as systems like fire alarms have regular checks, hearing loops need to be tested. Staff can do this using a small hand-held 'loop listener' or it can be carried out by an engineer.

Book in yearly maintenance visits from a specialist company to be confident the loops are meeting the industry-wide standard IEC 60118-4.

As well as making sure your venue is meeting the terms of the Equality Act, being hearing accessible is a selling point for your business.

Providing working hearing loops can make the difference when guests are deciding where to stay or hold their event.

Promote the service you offer

Make sure accessibility information can be easily found on your website. Use social media channels to promote the fact your venue is hearing accessible.

You can also list hearing loops as an accessibility feature on Google Maps and on the 'Let's Hear' website.





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