

A close-up photograph of a middle-aged man with grey hair and a beard, wearing glasses and a blue shirt. He is smiling and has his hand resting on his chin.

Living better with sight and hearing loss

If you have problems with sight and hearing then you're not alone. In fact, this affects around 400,000 people in the UK. This leaflet suggests some simple adjustments that you can make to your home and lifestyle, to make things a bit easier for you.

Contact us to find out more:



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info@deafblind.org.uk



07950 008870



www.deafblind.org.uk

Communication

Do you often misunderstand what people are trying to say to you, or frequently have to ask people to repeat themselves?

- Face each other and use good lighting. 93% of communication is non-verbal, so being able to see people's facial expressions and their lip patterns is really important. Make sure the person you are talking to is not covering their mouth and don't be afraid to ask them to move to somewhere better lit (eg by a window) if you need to.
- Turn off background noise. Do you find yourself trying to have conversations over the TV, the radio, the washing machine or the neighbour's lawnmower? Any background noise will make it more difficult to pick up the sounds that you

really need to. Where possible, try to reduce background noise.

- If you can't hear, then read. Don't be embarrassed to ask someone to write things down if you can't hear what they are saying to you. This might be particularly useful in busy cafes or shops. You might find it useful to carry a notepad and pen around with you, just in case. Don't forget about subtitles on TV. Even if you can hear 90% of what's being said, having the subtitles on might just give you a better experience.



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Accessing information

Magnify it!

Magnifiers can be really useful for lots of different things. From reading food packaging to understanding letters

Smart speakers

Voice activated smart speakers, such as Amazon Echo (Alexa) and Google Home, give you access to information on the internet via audio control. If you struggle to hear, you can also get smart speakers which display information on screens.

Go large!

Most organisations will send your post (letters, bills etc) in large print, if you ask for it. You can also change the settings on your phone, tablet and computer to make the text larger, or even read it aloud.

Out and about

Quiet hours

Many supermarkets and shopping centres now have 'quiet hours' where background music is turned off, lighting is more gentle and there are more staff on hand to help.

Get it delivered

It is now easier than ever to get what you need without leaving your house. Many shops will take telephone orders, if you can't get online.

Take a break

Deafblind UK's self-catering holiday accommodation is available for people with sight and hearing loss, at discounted prices. There are many other holiday companies that are well equipped to support people with sight and hearing loss.

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Around the home

Get tactile

Use rubber bands to distinguish household products or tins and cans. For example, put one band around the baked beans tins and two bands around the dog food tins, to prevent you getting mixed up. You could also use bump-on stickers (or even blobs of glue or nail varnish) to help you identify the settings on your oven and washing machine.

Use good lighting

You might find it useful to invest in some additional lamps to light up darker parts of your room. Daylight bulbs give a brighter light which you might find easier for doing things like reading and cooking.

Colour contrast

Use bright and contrasting colours around your home to help you distinguish things. For example, a blue soap dispenser on a white sink, or a white plate on a red tablecloth. You could also use hazard tape to mark doorways or steps that are hard to see.

Remove hazards

Don't leave things on the floor or anywhere where you might trip over it. Try to put things away so you know where to find them next time.



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Where to go for more information

Subscribe to our e-newsletter for regular information about sight and hearing loss, advice and tips.

Visit: www.deafblind.org.uk/live-better

If you would like further help, support or advice about sight and hearing loss, contact Deafblind UK:

Tel: 0800 132320

Text: 07950 008870

Text relay: 18001 then 0800 132320

Facetime: helpline.dbuk@deafblind.org.uk (Not BSL)

BSL video relay: deafblind.org.uk/bsl



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