

Tips for Speaking with Someone with Hearing Loss

Address your listener to attract their attention.

Be in the same room and sit or stand close enough to the person with hearing loss to help them maintain eye contact and read lips.



Keep your mouth uncovered to assist with lip reading.



Wait your turn in group settings to prevent confusion.

Write down specific information like addresses, or ask the person to repeat it back to you for confirmation.

Watch for cues--if the listener seems lost or confused, tactfully ask them if they understood you.



Do not ignore someone with hearing loss as if they aren't there. Speak directly to that person and be mindful of their needs.



Limit distractions during conversation by eliminating extraneous noises like music or television.

Practice patience - conversations with hearing impaired individuals require more focus.

Comprehensive
EAR & HEARING
of Zeeland

300 S. State St., Suite 1 • Zeeland, MI 49464
(616) 772-1986

Tips for Conversation when you have Hearing Loss

If you are comfortable, be up front about your hearing loss. Do not be embarrassed or afraid to make your needs known.

Sit or stand close enough to face the speaker directly - to allow for eye contact and lip reading.

Hold your conversation in a location with good lighting so that you are able to read facial cues and observe body language.



Limit distractions during conversation by eliminating extraneous noises like TV and music.

If you are not sure what was said, repeat it back or ask the speaker to confirm. Do not pretend to understand. This can cause further confusion.



When in group settings, position yourself to have visual access to most of the group, ask for the topic to aid with contextual clues, and enlist an ally in the group to help confirm what was said.

Remember that physical symptoms can affect communication. If you are feeling anxious or tired, ask to continue the conversation later.

Keep a sense of humor

Keep a sense of humor and try not to be too hard on yourself. Communicating with hearing loss requires a great deal of concentration and patience. It's okay to take a break and regroup.