



Starting out with a music program

Quickstart clinic guide

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Please note: This is a quick start guide to fitting hearing aids for music listening, not a problem-solver for those with complex needs. Suggestions in this document should support not invalidate any recommended procedures or protocols. This is a draft document prepared by the 'Hearing Aids for Music' project team, and we value any feedback you wish to share with us.

General hearing aid settings

These are settings to apply to the hearing aid generally, or they can be added to the music program. They are not problematic to everyday listening. You may not have all options available.

- Mould selection – keep open if possible.
- Give a volume control.
- Keep volume control separate for left and right aids.
- Offer a mute button for control of loudness in live settings/performing.
- Verify fitting with REM as accurately as possible to target.
- Try manufacturers music program with the tips below.

Settings in a music program

- Disable feedback manager and frequency transposition/compression.
- Disable noise management and wind-noise management.
- Disable microphone adaptive directionality.
- Base gain on everyday listening program.
- Increase MPO if possible – check loudness comfort if you do this.
- Look at compression ratios – keep compression ratios as low as possible within your fit to target.
- Select slow-acting compression.
- Consider selecting fixed microphone directionality.

Audibility check

- Check all sounds are audible when wearing the aid, for a moderate to loud sweep (65-80 dB), or use a free-field stimuli.
- Note any problematic frequencies.
 - If inaudible – increase volume control first, increase gain if needed.
 - If distorted – reduce volume control first, reduce gain if needed.
 - If problem persists – apply frequency transposition/compression.
- Remember to ask about music listening experiences at review appointment.

Occlusion check for singers/players

- Occlusion is more likely to be problematic when hearing aids are worn binaurally.
- Remove REM tube before testing.
- Test with hearing aids in ears. If two aids are worn, test with both aids in place.
- Ask client/patient to say [a] as in father, and [i] as in beet.
- If occlusion is significant, the [i] will appear louder to them.
- To resolve occlusion, try
 - Vent or increase vent size.
 - Reduce low frequency gain.
 - Try longer ear mould depth into the bony portion of the canal.
 - If binaural, venting one side can help, while retaining low frequency gain.

Troubleshooting and further resources

Further resources are available on our website at **www.musicandhearingaids.org** including

- A leaflet for hearing aid users to support music listening.
- A leaflet for clinicians to support clients/patients with music listening.
- Specific advice for musicians.
- Further research summaries and related reading material.
- Explanations of hearing aids, assistive listening devices and hearing protection.
- Links to further organisations (international, national and local).

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Designed by Alex Santos
(PCB, University of Leeds)

musicandhearingaids@leeds.ac.uk

+44 (0) 113 343 4560

Twitter: @musicndeafness

www.musicandhearingaids.org

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