



# WHAT IS A **HEARING AID?**

A hearing aid is an electronic assistive device which is most often worn behind or in the ear. It basically consists of a microphone, a loudspeaker (called the receiver) and an amplifier microchip – most often powered by a tiny battery.

There are many types of hearing aids out there – and thanks to recent developments in digital technology and advanced electronic design, today's hearing aids can be very small and discreet.



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# HEARING AIDS HELP USERS **OVERCOME THE EFFECTS** OF HEARING LOSS

Hearing aids are very small, but they don't compromise on the quality of sound.

Although a hearing aid doesn't provide users with completely normal hearing, it profoundly improves hearing and overcomes many of the effects of hearing loss.

One of the biggest problems for hearing aid users is the disturbing background noise. The computer chips in today's most advanced digital hearing aids can efficiently reduce noise and enhance speech by adjusting the sound smoothly and automatically.



## **MYTHS** ABOUT HEARING AIDS

Despite the fact that hearing aids have been around for decades, there are still many misconceptions about using them:

- They are big and clumsy and whistle continuously
- They need a remote control as big as the one for your TV
- They are difficult to operate and maintain

Fortunately, none of this is correct. The smallest hearing aids on the market today are about the size of a coffee bean. Problems with feedback whistling have been considerably reduced. Most hearing aids have automatic functions and are individually programmed for the user's specific needs - so operating them is very easy.



## DIFFERENT TYPES OF HEARING AIDS

If you have a hearing loss, there are different types of hearing aids to choose from. Which one works for you depends, among other things, on your ear shape or size, energy source and connectivity features.

These are the types of hearing aids in the market:

- Receiver-in-the-canal (RIC)



- Behind-the-ear (BTE)



- Custom-made

- In-the-ear (ITE)
- Completely-in-canal (CIC)
- Invisible-in-canal (IIC)



## RECEIVER-IN-THE-CANAL AND BEHIND-THE-EAR

Receiver-in-the-canal and Behind-the-ear hearing aids are placed behind the ears. They are available in a wide range of types and performance levels.

High power hearing aids help people with severe hearing losses. Hearing aids with directional microphones make it easier for the user to hear speech in background noise – because they amplify sound coming from the front of the user more than unwanted sounds coming from behind.

**Receiver-in-the-canal (RIC)** hearing aids consist of a plastic casing. The hearing aid sits behind the ear and are connected to a small receiver contained inside an ear-tip by a wire.

Inside the RIC are the electronics and microphones that electronically send the amplified sound down a wire to a loudspeaker (called the receiver), which is placed in the ear canal. The receiver can have a plastic tip or even a customized shell made to the shape of the ear.



**Behind-the-ear (BTE)** hearing aids consist of a plastic casing that's placed behind the ear.

Inside, electronics send the amplified sound through a plastic tube to an earmould. The earhook on the hearing aid connects to this tube, which forms the connection to the custom-made earmould.

It's very important that the earmould has the right fit for the user to get the best performance. The hearing aid is adjusted automatically, but the user can control the settings via remote controls, smartphone apps or a button on the hearing aid.

## CUSTOM-MADE

Custom-made hearing aids come in different shapes and sizes and can be made as In-the-ear (ITE), which fills the contours of the outer ear, or as Completely-in-canal (CIC) which fits the ear canal.

Because these hearing aids are placed inside the ear, and not behind it, they have a small nylon extraction cord mounted at the battery drawer. That makes it easier to take the hearing aid out.

Different styles are suitable for different people, depending on hearing loss, the shape and size of ears and the desired hearing aid features.

Unlike Behind-the-ear hearing aids, **In-the-ear (ITE)** hearing aids are placed inside the ear and consist of only one part: the shell. The electronics are built into the shell, which is custom-made from an impression of the user's ear canal.

This type of hearing aid is often 100% automatically controlled, but on some models it's possible to adjust using a remote control or a smartphone app. Good eyesight and dexterity makes it easier to maintain and handle an ITE hearing aid.



**Completely-in-canal (CIC)** hearing aids are placed deep within the ear canal and are almost invisible.

Because they are placed so deep, there are some natural acoustical advantages. You get reduced wind noise, and it's easier to speak on the phone using a normal handset. It's also easier to determine from which direction sounds are coming.

The CIC is usually fully automatic and has no space for any additional manual controls. The battery is located in the lid, which also functions as its on/off switch.

## WHAT ARE HEARING **ACCESSORIES?**

It can be difficult for hearing-impaired people to hear well at public venues such as the movies, theatres, meetings and other events. It can also be difficult to hear the TV or when using a mobile phone.

To resolve these issues, there are many accessory devices available to stream the sound or connect directly to a personal device. It's also possible to use a remote microphone so that a speaker can be heard from a distance in a crowded room.



## GET A BETTER **HEARING ABILITY**

Although hearing aids cannot restore your original hearing ability, they can make the most of your remaining hearing ability. They can also be your way back to an active life, where you don't have to make a constant effort to hear.

The latest technology has brought us much closer to offering total compensation for each individual hearing loss - and the journey towards perfect hearing continues.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO  
**LEARN MORE** ABOUT YOUR  
HEARING AID OPTIONS?

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**WIDEX**<sup>®</sup>

At Widex we know that hearing loss is complicated. Every case is individual, every solution unique. That's why we continuously search for the most natural and personalized solution for each individual hearing loss.