

Degrees of Hearing Loss

Degree of Hearing Loss	What it Means	Without Amplification and Early Intervention	With Amplification and Early Intervention
Mild	The softest sounds a child hears are at levels of 25 dB-40 dB. Softer sounds than these are not detected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Soft sounds such as a faucet dripping, birds chirping, and some speech sounds may not be heard. *Sounds that are moderately loud to a normal hearing person, such as speech, will be soft. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A child will have trouble hearing faint or distant speech, and may have trouble hearing in a noisy environment. *Most children can recognize and understand soft sounds of speech and the world around them.
Moderate	The softest sounds a child hears are at levels of 40 dB - 65 dB. Softer sounds than these are not detected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Most speech sounds, and louder sounds such as a clock ticking, or a vacuum cleaner may not be heard. *A child may have limitations in vocabulary, language comprehension and language usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A child may have errors in his speech. *Most children can recognize and understand soft sounds of speech and the world around them. * Most children develop age-appropriate vocabulary, language comprehension and language usage.
Severe	The softest sounds a child hears are at levels of 65 dB – 90 dB. Softer sounds than these are not detected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Most speech sounds will not be understood, and other loud sounds such as a phone ringing or a dog barking may be missed. *Speech will only be heard if it is shouted in the ear. *Spoken language comprehension and speech will not develop spontaneously. *A child with severe hearing loss will have mostly unintelligible speech. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *The majority of children can detect and understand most sounds. * Most children can learn to understand and use spoken conversation, even though they will not hear speech the way normally hearing people do. *Most children will need special accommodations, especially in school, to compensate for the challenges that distance and background noise present.
Profound	The softest sounds a child hears are at levels of 90 dB or more. Softer sounds than these are not detected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Very loud sounds such as an airplane flying overhead or a lawnmower will not be detected. *A child will rely on vision rather than hearing for primary communication. *A child will have unintelligible speech. 	<p><i>With Visual Language Only:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Most children will need special accommodations to communicate visually. <p><i>With Hearing Aids Only:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Many children still need visual communication to assist them in understanding spoken conversation. * Many children can detect moderately loud sounds and spoken conversation under ideal listening conditions (no background noise and facing the speaker). <p><i>With Cochlear Implants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Most children can detect sounds within the “mild hearing loss” range (see <i>Mild</i> in this table).