

Understanding your audiogram

The next time you have a hearing test, you don't have to be bewildered by the audiogram you are given. Here is an easy-to-understand explanation of how to read your audiogram.

The audiogram is a graphical display of the hearing test. The two main components that are graphed are frequency and intensity. These results are displayed for each ear. When you had your hearing tested, the audiologist was determining the softest sound you could hear at each specific frequency.

Frequency

Frequency or pitch is measured in Hertz (Hz). Frequencies range from low-pitch to high-pitch and read from left to right on the audiogram.

Intensity

The intensity is measured in decibels (dB). The intensity relates to how loud or soft a sound is. Each horizontal line represents a different intensity level. The softest sounds are at the top of the chart and the loudest sounds at the bottom.

An audiogram is set up as a chart with the horizontal X axis representing frequencies, or Hertz (Hz). The X axis is divided into two parts: On the left side of the "divide" are the low frequencies. On the right side of the "divide" are the high frequencies.

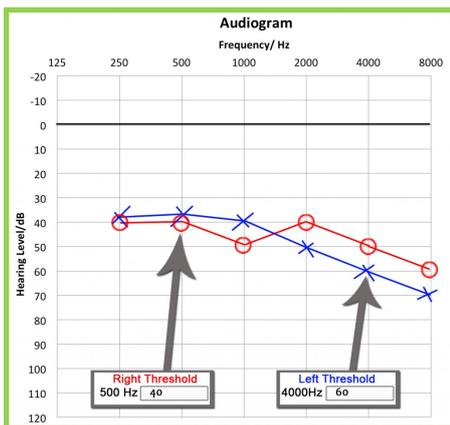
The vertical Y axis represents decibels. Decibels represent the hearing level, or how loud it is. The number of decibels are lower at the top of the chart, and get higher as you go downward. It is divided into three parts: The top part of the chart is the softer sounds,

the middle part is the moderate sounds, and the bottom part is the louder sounds.

The audiologist tests your hearing at a range of frequencies. The audiologist is checking to see what the softest

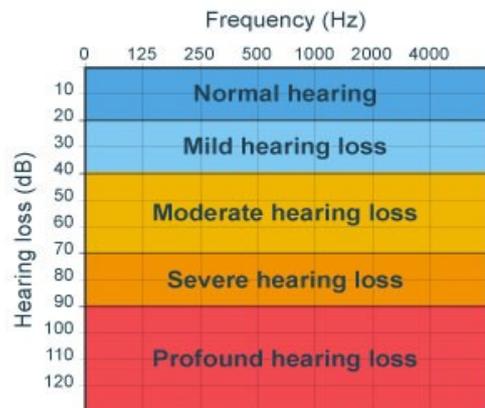
sound you can hear at each frequency is. For example, at 125 Hz you may be able to only hear the sound at 50 decibels.

A completed audiogram will have X's and O's on it.



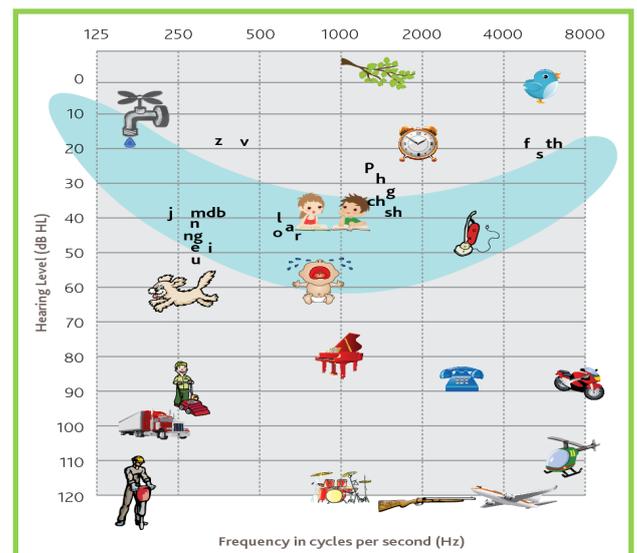
Degrees of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss is classified in degrees of hearing from normal to profound. This classification is determined by the hearing threshold (or the softest a sound was heard at a specific frequency).



What is the speech banana?

A useful way to look at the audiogram is to superimpose a 'speech banana' on it. The speech banana is so called because of its shape. It represents the intensity and frequency of sounds of speech or 'phonemes' in language, which when placed on the audiogram, form a banana like shape.



For advice on any aspect of hearing loss or demonstrations of products, drop us an email

info@positivehearing.org.uk or come in and visit us at one of our hearing Centres
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Solutions to transform your quality of life helping you regain your hearing and independence

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