

# Communication tips

## If you're deaf or hard of hearing

- Have you thought about learning to lipread? Everyone lipreads to some extent, especially in noisy places.
- Be open. Tell the person you're speaking to that you lipread, before you start a conversation.
- Ask people to get your attention before they start talking to you.
- Don't stand too far away from the person who's speaking to you.
- Try to keep calm and don't panic. If you become anxious or flustered, it might be harder for you to follow what's being said.
- If your hearing isn't the same in both ears, try turning your better side towards the person speaking to you.
- If you don't catch what someone says first of all, don't be afraid to ask them to repeat it or say it in a different way.
- If necessary, ask people to slow down and speak more clearly.
- Don't be too hard on yourself. No one hears correctly all the time.
- Make sure you can see the speaker's face and lips. Their gestures and facial expressions will help you understand what they're saying.

For more information, contact  
the RNID Information Line  
Telephone 0808 808 0123  
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for deaf and hard of hearing people

# Communication tips

## If you're speaking to someone who's deaf

- Even if someone is wearing a hearing aid, it doesn't mean that they can hear you. Ask if they need to lipread you.
- Make sure you have the listener's attention before you start speaking.
- Speak clearly but not too slowly, and don't exaggerate your lip movements. Use natural facial expressions and gestures.
- If you're talking to a deaf person and a hearing person, don't just focus on the hearing person.
- Don't shout. It's uncomfortable for a hearing aid user and it looks aggressive.
- If someone doesn't understand what you've said, don't just keep repeating it. Try saying it in a different way.
- Find a suitable place to talk, with good lighting, away from noise and distractions.
- Remember not to turn your face away from a deaf person. Always turn back to your listener so they can see your face.
- Check that the person you're talking to can follow you. Be patient and take the time to communicate properly.
- Use plain language and don't waffle. Avoid jargon and unfamiliar abbreviations.

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