

Don't miss out

How to get the most from television, film and the theatre if you have a hearing loss

ACTION ON
HEARING
LOSS

ACCESS

ALL

AREAS

In this leaflet we tell you how you can still enjoy TV, film and theatre if you have a hearing loss. But if you've got more questions, our friendly helpline team is waiting to answer your call or email.

Telephone 0808 808 0123

Textphone 0808 808 9000

Email information@hearingloss.org.uk

Having a hearing loss doesn't have to stop you from watching television or DVDs, going to the cinema, theatre or museums or listening to music.

This leaflet outlines how you can:

- get subtitles on television
- watch television over the internet
- find subtitled DVDs
- hear your television, radio, hi-fi or personal music player better
- find out where to watch subtitled films at the cinema
- use loop and infrared systems
- go to signed and captioned live performances
- go on interpreted tours at museums and historic buildings
- find out what to do if you have difficulties accessing entertainment
- get further information.

How do I get subtitles on television?

Teletext subtitles

You may be used to watching subtitles by using Teletext page 888. However, this is only available on 'analogue' TV channels. We all need to switch to digital TV in the next few years because the analogue signal is being switched off across the UK between now and 2013. To find out when this will happen in your area, contact your local TV retailer or visit www.digitaluk.co.uk

Digital subtitles

You can get digital television through Freeview, Freesat, Sky Digital and cable services like Virgin Media or BT Vision. You should be able to get at least two of these services in your area. Subtitles are available on all of these digital services.

Freeview

Set-top boxes

To find out if you can receive Freeview, visit www.freeview.co.uk or contact any TV retailer. You can get Freeview using a set-top box connected to your existing television. Most Freeview set-top boxes have a subtitle button on the remote control.

Built-in Freeview

Some newer televisions have a built-in Freeview tuner. This means that you don't need the set-top box unless you want one that can record Freeview programmes. Most TV remote controls for these televisions have a subtitle button.

Freesat

Freesat is a subscription-free satellite TV service. For more information visit www.freesat.co.uk or contact any TV retailer. You can get Freesat using a set-top box connected to your existing television. Most Freesat set-top boxes have a subtitle button on the remote control.

Built-in Freesat

Some newer televisions have a built-in Freesat tuner. This means that you don't need the set-top box unless you want one that can

record Freesat programmes. Most TV remote controls for these televisions have a subtitle button.

Recording subtitles

You can buy set-top boxes and DVD recorders with Freeview or Freesat built-in that can record digital subtitles.

Online

You can now watch many television programmes on the internet (normally after they are broadcast). The great thing about this is that you can then watch them at a time that suits you, on your computer or on a television connected to a broadband internet connection. Some of these 'on-demand' or 'catch-up' services have subtitles.

The BBC's 'catch-up' service, BBCiPlayer www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer, has some subtitled programmes, as does Channel 4 on-demand (4OD) www.channel4.com/4oD

At the moment, ITVPlayer - ITV's 'catch-up service - and Channel Five's catch-up service, Demand 5, do not have subtitles.

Background noise on television

If you find it hard to follow a television programme because of background noise or music, contact the channel, giving details of:

- the programme title
- the date and time the programme was broadcast.

See our factsheet about using TV and subtitles

Where can I find subtitled DVDs?

Many films and TV programmes released on DVD have subtitles. These are described as 'English subtitles'. Some DVDs also have subtitles for people with hearing loss. These are sometimes described as 'subtitled for hard of hearing viewers' and they describe a particular noise or the type of music playing – so it is easier for you to follow the film.

Check the back of the DVD box to see what subtitles are available. You may also find the website www.dvd-subtitles.com useful. It gives detailed subtitling information for many popular releases.

Complaining about subtitled DVDs

If you're unhappy that the DVD or pre-recorded video you have bought or rented doesn't have subtitles, it is worth complaining.

Contact: The British Video Association
167 Great Portland Street, London W1W 5PE
Telephone 020 7436 0041 Fax 020 7436 0043
general@bva.org.uk www.bva.org.uk

Equipment to help you hear television, radio, hi-fi or a personal music player better

You can get many products to help you, such as:

- various types of headphone which help to reduce background noise, so you can focus better on what you're listening to
- products that make sound louder and clearer. You can plug some equipment directly into your television, radio, or hi-fi for the best sound quality

- listening equipment that you can use with accessories such as headphones, a neckloop or ear hooks.

See our factsheet *Listening equipment*.

Buying equipment

Go to www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop or contact our Information Line (see back page) for a copy of our products catalogue, *Solutions*, to find equipment and accessories for people with hearing loss.

Where can I watch subtitled films at the cinema?

Every month, there are more than 1,000 subtitled screenings of newly released films at cinemas across the country. Many cinemas also provide loop or infrared systems (see page 8).

See www.yourlocalcinema.com for subtitled cinema listings. You can also register on the website to get the latest film release information and subtitled performance times.

Telephone 0845 056 9824 (24 hours, seven days a week, local rate) Textphone 08001 0845 08056 9824
subtitles@yourlocalcinema.com

Live performances

Many venues, such as theatres or museums, have loop or infrared systems which will help you to hear sound more clearly because they reduce background noise (see page 8).

How does a loop system work?

A loop system picks up sound from a microphone (or from a direct connection to other audio equipment) and converts it to a magnetic field that can be picked up by a hearing aid on the loop setting. Using your hearing aid to listen to the loop can help you hear more clearly in noisy places, such as a bank counter, or at the theatre. You can use a home loop system to pick up sound from your television, stereo or radio, and you can also fit one in your car.

If you don't wear hearing aids you can still listen to a loop system using a 'loop listener' or listening equipment that can pick up a loop.

See our factsheet *Induction loop and infrared systems – a guide for people with hearing loss*.

How does an infrared system work?

An infrared system picks up sound from a microphone (or from a direct connection to other audio equipment) and converts it to infrared light. A receiver converts the infrared back to sound through a headset or headphones. Some infrared receivers have a neckloop so you can listen to the infrared system through your hearing aid on the loop setting.

There are infrared systems in many venues, such as theatres, cinemas and lecture halls. To use an infrared system, you can collect listening units from the reception desk or ticket office.

See our factsheet *Induction loop and infrared systems – a guide for people with hearing loss*.

Many theatres also have captioned or signed performances.

Captioned performances

Stagetext provides captioning for theatres and other arts venues. This means you can read 'subtitles' to the performances on a screen on the stage. To find out about captioned performances in your area go to www.stagetext.org

Signed performances

Signed Performances In Theatre (SPIT) provides British Sign Language (BSL) interpretations at theatre performances. To find out about signed performances near you, go to www.spit.org.uk

If I'm not happy with a venue, how do I complain?

Tell the venue or attraction you're visiting that you are not satisfied with the access to their services and facilities. You may have to fill in a short comment or complaint form.

If lots of people regularly give feedback to venues and also to DVD producers (see Where can I find subtitled DVDs? on page 6), changes will happen.

Want to know more?

Are you affected by hearing loss or tinnitus? Joining Action on Hearing Loss is a great way to:

- keep updated on developments
- find out about the new products that can help
- hear about the latest information and advice
- share your experiences of hearing loss with other members.

As a member we'll update you six times a year, through our award-winning membership magazine. If you're retired, membership costs just £15 a year.



How to join

- visit www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/leafletjoin or
- call 0845 634 0679 (telephone) or 020 7296 8001 ext. 8256 (textphone)
- email membership@hearingloss.org.uk

Contact us for more information:

Action on Hearing Loss
19-23 Featherstone Street
London EC1Y 8SL

membership@hearingloss.org.uk
www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/leafletjoin

Where can I get further information?

You might find some of our other factsheets or leaflets useful:

- **How to get subtitles** (factsheet)
- **Background noise on television** (factsheet)
- **Listening equipment** (factsheet)
- **Induction loop and infrared systems – a guide for people with hearing loss** (factsheet)
- **Induction loop and infrared systems – for people managing public venues** (factsheet)

Please contact the Information Line (see back page) for free copies of these. And let us know if you would like any of them – or this leaflet – in Braille, large print or audio format.

We're the charity taking action on hearing loss since 1911. We can't do this without your help.

To find out more about what we do and how you can support us go to www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Telephone 0808 808 0123

Textphone 0808 808 9000

Email information@hearingloss.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss is the trading name of The Royal National Institute for Deaf People.
A registered charity in England and Wales (207720) and Scotland (SC038926) A0007/0511



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**