



Noise At Work Regulations



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The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005

The latest noise regulations require employers to prevent or reduce risks to employees health and safety from exposure to noise at work. Employees have duties under the regulations too.

The regulations require you as an employer to:

- Assess the risks to your employees from noise at work by identifying noise hazards
- Take action to reduce the noise exposure that reduces those risks
- Provide your employees with hearing protection if you cannot reduce the noise exposure enough by using other methods (your employees have a duty to wear them)
- Make sure the legal limits on noise exposure are not exceeded
- Provide your employees with information, instruction and training
- Carry out health surveillance where there is a risk to health from noise hazards

The regulations do not apply to:

Members of the public exposed to noise from their non-work activities, or making an informed choice to go to noisy places
Low-level noise which is a nuisance but causes no risk of hearing damage.

Source - Health and Safety Executive
Noise at Work Guidance for employers on the Control of Noise at Work Regulations

Do you have a noise problem at work?

This will depend on how loud the noise is and how long people are exposed to it. As a simple guide, you will probably need to do something about the noise if you cannot hear your Oi clearly and/or any of the following apply:

- Is the noise intrusive - like a busy street, a vacuum cleaner or a crowded restaurant - for most of the working day?
- Do your employees have to raise their voices to carry out a normal conversation when about 2m apart for at least part of the day?
- Do your employees use noisy powered tools or machinery for more than half an hour each day?
- Do you work in a noisy industry? eg, construction, demolition or road repair; woodworking; plastics; processing; engineering; textile manufacture; general fabrication; forging; pressing or stamping; paper or board making; canning or bottling; foundries.
- Are there noises due to impacts? (such as hammering, drop forging, pneumatic impact tools etc), explosive sources such as cartridge operated tools or detonators, or guns.
- Noise can also cause other safety hazards at work by interfering with communication and making warnings harder to hear.

How is noise measured?

You might just notice a 3dB change in noise level, because of the way your ears work. Yet every 3 dB doubles the noise, so what might seem like small differences in the numbers can be quite significant.



Oi Noise is a simple affordable way of testing noise at work?

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