



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association
Association des malentendants canadiens



Get in the Hearing Loop
Bienvenue à la boucle auditive

Best Practices for Hearing Loop Installation

Hire a Knowledgeable and Committed Hearing Loop Installer

It is recommended you choose an installer who has been trained and certified in International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standard verification, has technical support from the supplier and is legally allowed to carry out the installation in your geographic area. Committed hearing loop installers have information on their websites about hearing loops and the IEC standard.

Qualifications

- hire a trained and certified hearing loop installer
- ask for references
- verify experience installing hearing loop system in similar types of buildings
- require on-site measurement for an accurate estimate of installation costs
- require hearing loop systems to meet the IEC 60118-4 hearing loop standard
- require a certificate of conformity to the IEC 60118-4 hearing loop standard
- ensure headphone and receivers are provided according to standards
- verify loop performance with a hearing aid user familiar with hearing loops
- ensure proper integration with existing or new audio and video equipment
- provide signage
- arrange staff training
- perform periodic maintenance

Two companies offer hearing loop training and certification: Contacta, Inc., and Williams Sound.

Hearing Loop On-Site Testing

Hearing loop systems are venue-specific and usually require an on-site visit to provide an accurate estimate of your installation cost. Although some designs can be modeled on a computer, computer simulation cannot determine if magnetic background noise is present. While a computer design can be a starting point, the loop should never be installed purely based on the simulation. Your installer should be able to explain the on-site test results and what type of loop (e.g., perimeter, figure 8, or phased array) will be needed in your facility to meet the IEC standard and what is involved to aesthetically hide the loop wire. Buildings present many variables with regard to design and installation due to metal in floors and ceilings. Occasionally a building might have electrical interference. Magnetic background noise should always be investigated by a licensed electrician. This background noise will affect all assistive listening systems including FM and infrared systems because they are required to have neckloops which will pick up the interference.

Commissioning the Hearing Loop

The IEC standard requires, as the final test, that a hearing aid user familiar with hearing loops verifies, while the hearing loop installer is still on the premises, that the loop signal is even, sounds clear, experiences minimal magnetic background noise, and that the subjective results are consistent with the IEC standard.

Note: While you or someone from your staff can verify that a hearing loop is actively working, you will not have the same listening experience as a person with a cochlear implant or telecoil enabled hearing aid.

Microphone Usage Influences Hearing Loop Performance

- If possible, use earset microphones, which optimize sound transmission.
- Handheld microphones need to be held close to the mouth to properly activate the system, including when a person turns their head.

Announce the Availability of a Hearing Loop Prior to Every Event

Make an announcement at the beginning of every presentation, service, or meeting that there is a hearing loop installed and that additional receivers with headphones are available if needed. If your venue has only specific areas that are looped, be sure to let people in the audience know.

Hearing Loop Dedication

Develop a marketing/PR strategy to announce the inauguration of a hearing loop. This can include news releases, bulletin inserts and social media. Broaden your reach by coordinating with local audiologists, hearing care providers, and members of the hearing loss community.

Additional resources available at www.getinthehearingloop.ca

- [A Guide to Understanding Hearing Loops](#)
- [Are You Hearing Everything You Could?](#)
- [Why Meet the IEC Standard for Hearing Loop System](#)
- [Assistive Listening System Checklist](#)



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