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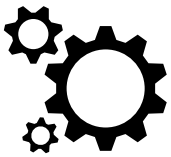
Hearing Protection Selection

When selecting Hearing Protective Equipment (HPE), you need to consider the task, environment, length of shift, storage facilities for reusable products, hygiene and compatibility with other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

You must also consider the protection level offered by the product you choose to protect your hearing, and there are three ways to check you've made the right selection. Listed below are the different methods you can choose from and the comparisons of each of these:

- SNR (Single Number Rating)
- HTML method
- Octave band method



	Rating	How it works	Benefit
SNR (Single Number Rating)	Simplest, but least accurate system.	Measures an average attenuation across a range of sound frequencies. However, taking an average can potentially disguise issues at higher or lower frequencies.	Works well for product comparisons and basic levels of product selection.
HML method	Takes more effort to use, but more accurate.	Measures the attenuation properties of the HPE across High, Medium and Low frequencies.	A good middle ground and accurate enough for many work situations.
Octave band method	Gives highly accurate tailored solutions, but requires extra input from users.	Takes into account the attenuation of the product across eight different frequency bands.	Highly accurate.
	Many companies have had formal noise surveys done in the past, so you might find octive band noise measurements already stored in your files.		

How to use HSE tools:

- Go to www.hse.gov.uk/noise/hearingcalc.xls
- Enter noise measurement data
- Enter attenuation data from the HPE packaging
- Wait for tool to show green for suitable and red for unsuitable

For more information visit: www.3M.co.uk/hearing

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