

Hearing Tactics for Eating Out

One of the most difficult situations that many people with a hearing loss experience is Eating Out. They often cannot cope with the clatter of the cutlery and crockery and the sound of other people's voices. However, there are things that you can do to make the experience a lot more pleasant. First of all, does everyone know that you are experiencing difficulties? Have you enlisted their support? You or they could make the following changes. The secret is to plan ahead whenever possible.

- Suggest the venue yourself. Research the quietest eateries; hotels for example often have carpeted floors, upholstered chairs and tablecloths, all of which help absorb background noise.
- Avoid eating at peak times when there will be more customers.
- Check the menu before you sit down to forestall lipreading the waiter while sitting down looking up at them.
- Arrive early to choose your seat.
- Choose a table away from the service entrance, a piano playing or a busy road to lessen background noise.
- Ask for a table where there is plenty of light to assist lipreading.
- Sit with your back to a wall to avoid sound from behind.
- To avoid any misunderstandings explain you may be unable to eat and lipread at the same time.
- If you are in a large party choose a circular table where you can see everybody and maximise visual clues.
- If the background music is intrusive request that it is lowered and explain why.