BRITISH COLUMBIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
POST-SECONDARY COMMUNICATION ACCESS SERVICES

Degrees of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss has been organised traditionally into categories which consider the range of sounds used in speech; it is helpful for you to know which category best describes a particular student.

Normal Hearing -10 to +15 db	Students can detect all speech sounds even at a soft conversation level. The student's hearing would be plotted in the –10 to +15 decibel range on the audiogram.
Minimal Loss Borderline Normal Hearing 16-25 db	Students may have difficulty hearing faint or distant speech. Peer conversation and teacher instructions presented too rapidly, particularly in noisy classrooms, are likely to result in missed information. Loss is between 16 to 25 decibels.
Mild Loss 26-40 db	Student may miss up to 50% of class discussions especially if voices are soft or the environment is noisy. Students will require the use of a hearing aid or personal FM system. Loss is between 26 to 40 decibels.
Moderate Loss 41-55 db	Classroom conversation from three to five feet away can be understood if the structure and vocabulary is controlled, hearing aids and/or FM systems are essential. Specific attention will need to be directed to language development, reading and written language. Loss is between 41 to 55 decibels.
Moderate to Severe Loss 56-70 db	Without amplification students with this degree of loss can miss up to 100% of speech information. Full time use of amplification is essential. They will probably require additional help in all language based academic subjects. Loss is between 56 to 70 decibels.
Severe Loss 71-90 db	Students can only hear loud noises at close distances. They require individual hearing aids, intensive auditory training and specialized instructional techniques in reading, language, and speech development. Loss is between 71 to 90 decibels.
Profound Loss 91+ db	For all practical purposes these students rely on vision rather than hearing for processing information. If you have a student in this category, he or she is usually a candidate for signing systems and specialized instructional techniques in reading, speech, and language development. A loss of 91 decibels or more is described as profound.

Post-Secondary Communication Access Services
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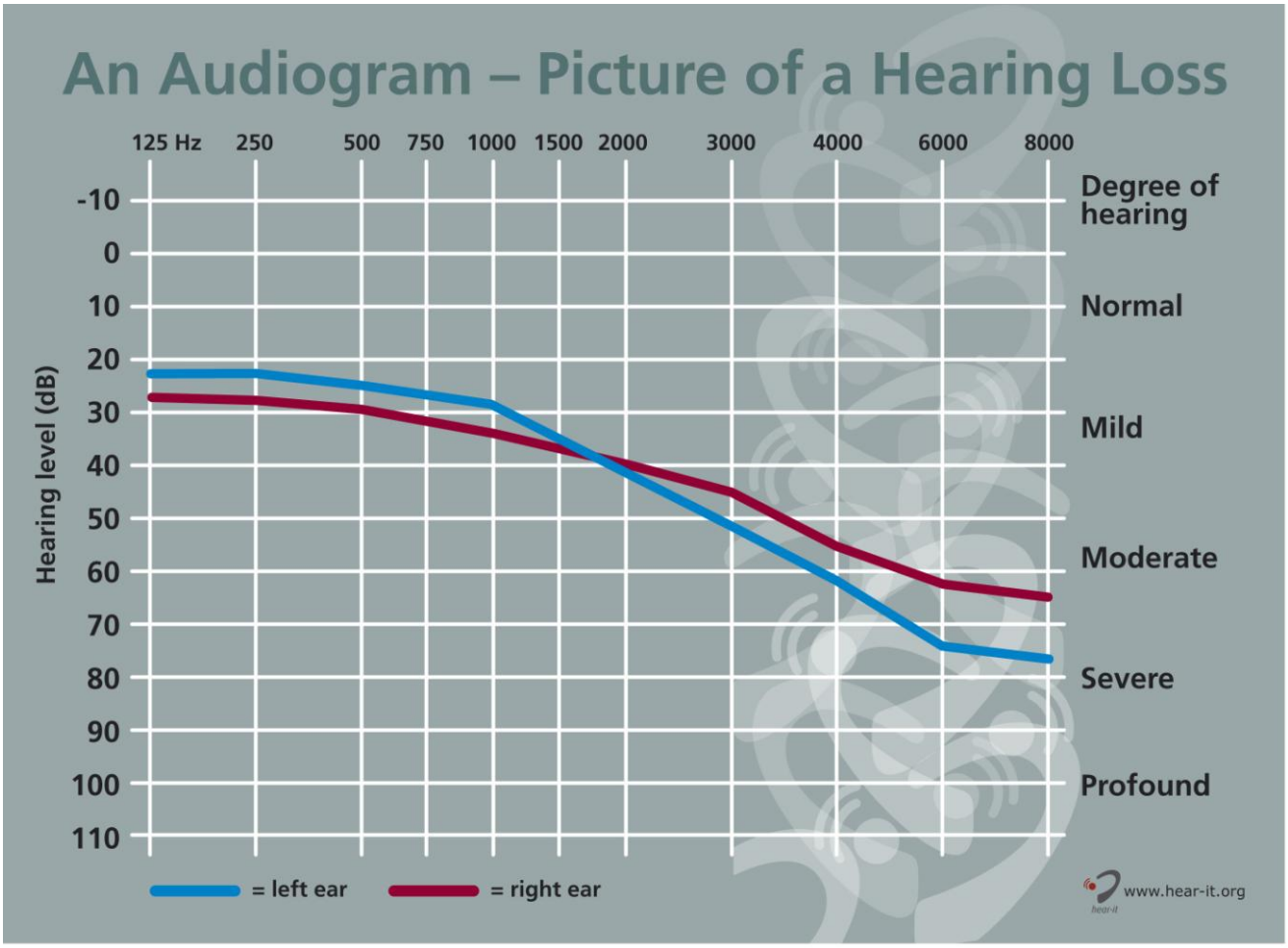
An Audiogram – Picture of a Hearing Loss
125 Hz
250
500
750
1000
1500
2000
3000
4000
6000
8000
-10
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100
110
Hearing level (dB)
Degree of hearing
Normal
Mild
Moderate
Severe
Profound
= left ear
= right ear
www.hear-it.org