

Communication tips when using face masks

Face masks are particularly challenging for people with hearing loss. Here are some tips for how you can improve communication when wearing a mask.



Be attentive

If the person you are talking to has a hard time understanding you, rephrase the sentence instead of just repeating it.



Be patient

Face masks make lip reading impossible and muffle the sound. Therefore, be patient with the person you are talking to.



Use other forms of communication

Communicate using pen and paper, use your mobile or tablet audio recorder, or use virtual assistant.



Be mindful of distance

As the distance between two people increases, the sound level drops, and visual signals are harder to decipher.



Be visible

Make sure you face the person you are talking to. Avoid talking as you walk away from the person or turning your face in a different direction.



Be clear and distinct

Speak loudly, but do not shout. Focus on speaking slowly and clearly, but do not exaggerate your words. Use plain language.



Ensure that you have been understood

Check understanding by asking the person to repeat information back.



Eliminate background noise

Reduce ambient noise or move the conversation to a quiet place if possible.



Join the conversation

Offer to accompany the person with hearing loss for an appointment where face masks are worn, to help them hear.



Use a speech-to-text interpreter

Speech-to-text interpretation is available via mobile phone apps and can be used in everyday interactions to provide live captioning of the conversation.

