

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

Controlling noise in your environment starts with you. Noise can easily be reduced with a few simple lifestyle changes in your home and in your community.

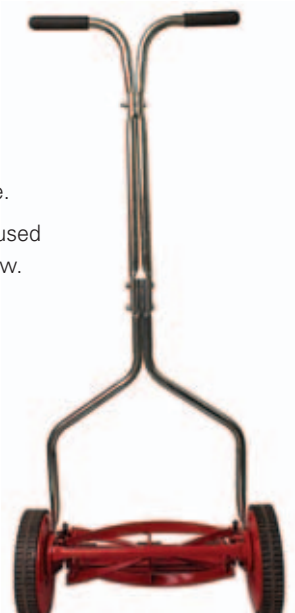
Tips to reduce noise in your home

- Wear slippers, soft-soled shoes or socks indoors, particularly if floors are hard-surfaced, as regular shoes can be extremely loud.
- Put felt pads on the bottoms of chair legs.
- Use noisy appliances such as vacuums, dishwashers, clothes washers/dryers and garburators only during the daytime or early evening.
- Avoid slamming doors, cupboards and drawers.
- When preparing foods requiring chopping or pounding, or when using blenders, mixers, electric can openers or other kitchen appliances, place a resilient mat on the work area.
- If you have young children or pets, be aware of your neighbours, particularly those directly below.



General ways to reduce the noise you make

- Carry out noisy activities during the daytime and try to avoid Sundays – the City's Noise Bylaw prohibits loud construction on Sundays and holidays.
- Ensure that stereo, video and computer game volumes and bass levels are low enough that they will not disturb neighbours.
- Let your neighbours know when you, or your kids, are planning to make more noise than usual such as from a house party or a renovation project. If the party is outdoors, keep music levels down, and be careful about how loud voices get.
- Consider your neighbours when locating potentially noisy outdoor devices such as air conditioners, fans, heat pumps, pool pumps or hot tubs.
- Keep your lawn and garden equipment in good running order.
- Use a hand mower and trimmer if your yard is not too big. They're quiet, good for the environment and great exercise.
- Devices such as weed eaters and leaf blowers should be used moderately and responsibly following the City's Noise Bylaw.



A high heel shoe can exert in excess of 200 pounds per square inch of pressure and create a lot of noise on a hard floor.



SOUND MYTH: Masking noise helps.

SOUND TRUTH: Masking noise is sound intentionally introduced into a setting to help cover up or "mask" more intrusive noises. While this approach results in increased noise exposure, it can be beneficial provided the noise being masked is not too loud. It is generally best to use masking noise that

contains a broad range of frequencies (from lows to highs) and has a pleasant character. It could simply be continuous background music played on a home stereo or CDs/tapes of natural sounds such as surf or wind in the trees. Masking noise may also be created naturally, for example, by the splashing water of an outdoor or indoor fountain.



Getting around

- Reduce your contribution to traffic noise and save gas by walking, cycling, or using public transit when possible.
- Consider getting a smaller and quieter car.
- Keep your vehicles in good shape, especially the exhaust system.
- Do not illegally modify your exhaust system to make it louder.
- Drive the speed limit and avoid sudden starts and stops.
- When possible, combine your trips, and do things locally.
- Minimize idling of your car. This will reduce noise and negative environmental impacts. A modern car only needs 30 seconds to warm up.
- Don't use your audible car alarm arm/disarm indicator.



Since 1948, Vancouver has been served by quiet, environmentally friendly trolley buses.

Unlikely noise sources



- Many small household items such as vacuum cleaners, hair dryers and toys etc. produce uncomfortably high noise levels. If your ears are ringing after you dry your hair you are probably doing damage.
- Many appliances are now being made quieter so there is less disruption when they are being used. When shopping, ask the sales person for noise ratings of different models or try the appliance out before you buy it.
- When a machine makes excessive noise, it is often a sign that it is not working efficiently and/or needs maintenance. If a machine operates smoothly, with less vibration and noise, chances are it will do a better job and last longer while consuming less energy.

PROTECTING YOURSELF AGAINST NOISE



Look after your hearing

Noisy situations can occur at work or play; be conscious of extreme noise levels and protect yourself whenever possible by wearing ear plugs or muffs and by turning down the volume. Excessive noise exposure can come from sources such as: stereos, computer games, personal music players, concerts, dance clubs, and movie theatres. Other noisy pursuits include:

motorcycling, jet skiing, snowmobiling, and auto racing. Tools such as gardening equipment, chain saws, power washers and hammers can also produce high noise levels.

Take the road less travelled

Traffic noise along busy roads and highways can reach uncomfortable levels. Instead, try walking or cycling on quieter and more scenic side streets or designated bike routes and Greenways that are not as busy.



There are some noises which are important to hear, such as emergency vehicles. A driver listening to music at high volumes or a cyclist wearing ear plug/muffs may not notice an emergency vehicle nearing.



Is this toy safe for your child's hearing? A child's toy held at an adult's arm length may be quite quiet, however if a child were to place the toy right next to their ear it could be loud enough to do permanent damage.