

Hearing Aid Styles

The purpose of this paper is to assist you in becoming an educated consumer. It should not be construed that this is a definitive paper. Rather, it is merely a starting point, an overview. Its goal is to enhance your communication and understanding with your Audiologist or **H**earing **I**nstrument **S**pecialist (**HIS**). Your Audiologist or Instrument Specialist should be your primary resource. Your long-term aural care depends on him/her and your comprehension of the information and instructions. Having a basic understanding of hearing instruments will hopefully impact your successful aural rehabilitation.

Understand, Audiologists and Instrument Specialists have spent years learning their art, their trade. This short paper cannot replace their experience and training. It will merely give you a short exercise in vocabulary and pictures to associate with words so that you will become an effective participant in your aural rehabilitation. At the same time, there may be so much material that it can be confusing, daunting. Relax, view the material and allow your professional to assist you with the rest.

Let's Start:

Siemens **Phonak**
Widex
Starkey Sonic
Oticon
Unitron **Resound**

The inclusion of a brand is not an endorsement. The exclusion of a brand is merely an oversight.

Most brands will have similar models and some similar features. At the same time, they will all attempt to have something different, something better to entice you to select their brand model.

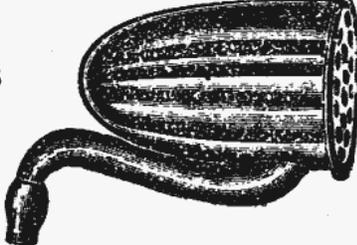
The task is to match the brand, model and features with your hearing loss and life style while keeping in mind the knowledge and skill of the professional with that brand and model. If an Audiologist or H.I.S. is not very familiar with a brand or model, the effectiveness of programming the aid might not be as efficient. The professional's working relationship with the manufacturer is also very important. Listen to the professional.

All hearing aids have a microphone/s that picks up sounds and converts them to electrical signals. Those electrical signals go to an amplifier and then to a receiver that converts the signals to sound waves and sends them to the ear (Cathie Gandel).

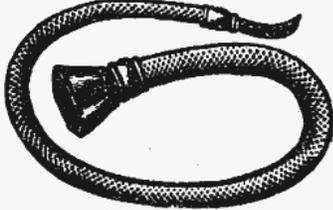
EAR TRUMPETS, TUBES, ETC.



No. 69673. **Ear Trumpet**, bugle shape, made of japanned metal in three sizes, small, medium or large. Each..... **\$1.90**



No. 69674. **London Hearing Horn**, nickel plated, size 2½ to 4 inches in length. They are for the use of those who are moderately deaf and are easily concealed in the hand when in use. Each...., **\$2.25**



No. 69675. **Conversation Tube** of flexible mohair, 3 feet in length with rubber ends. This tube is suited to the most obstinate cases of deafness. Each..... **\$2.75**

We've come a long way from your great-grandparent's Ear Trumpet!

Today, we have:



and more...



It is easy for professionals and experienced hearing aid users to fall into the habit of utilizing acronyms. They can be confusing and overwhelming. When you don't understand what is being said, stop and ask.

BTE Behind the Ear

MINI Mini behind the ear

RIC Receiver in the Canal

ITE In the ear

ITC In the Canal

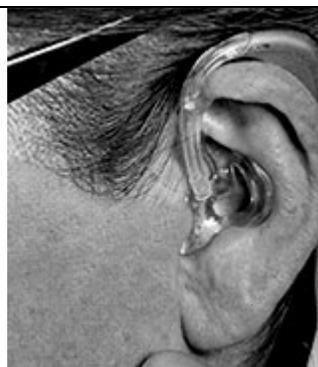
CIC Completely in the Canal

We will discuss these styles below:

Behind-The-Ear (BTE)

Behind-The-Ear hearing aids tend to be one of the more flexible hearing aids available. The signal is transferred via a plastic tube to an ear mold which is made for your ear canal. This mold fits into your ear, while the hearing aid wraps around the back of your ear. The larger size allows ease of handling and the availability of multiple features.

(Phonak, AARP, ASCHA)



Open Fit Miniature (BTE Mini)

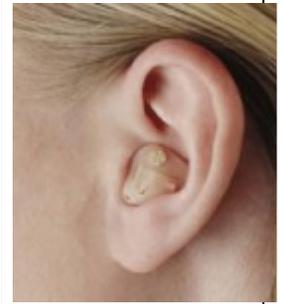
Smaller BTE hearing aids have become very popular. Natural sound as well as the amplified sound can be heard. The open fit leaves the ear canal open allowing air to enter the ear. This prevents moisture build-up and fungal issues.

(Phonak)



In-The-Ear (ITE)

“Full Shell In-the-Ear hearing aids are made to fill the outer part of your ear. They have no external wires or tubes, and are very light in weight. An impression is made of your ear, and the entire hearing aid is encased in this shell.” (Phonak) Some fittings will require an air hole to eliminate the feeling of talking in a barrel. Other times the air hole is blocked to avoid whistling sounds. In-The-Ear hearing aids are more visible and the easiest to handle of the custom made aids. They have a longer battery life than completely-in-the-canal aids. (ASCHA) (AARP)



In-The-Canal (ITC)

“In-The-Canal hearing aids are less visible than In-The-Ear Hearing Aids. ITC’s take advantage of the ear’s natural shape and are very small and lightweight. The hearing aid is molded to the inner canal so that the sound is naturally funneled through the hearing aid.” (Phonak) They require good finger dexterity to control the volume wheels and other controls on the faceplate and for battery changes.



Completely-In-The-Canal (CIC)

“Completely-In-The-Canal hearing aids fit deeply into the ear canal, and are therefore the least visible. They are custom designed and fit the deepest into the ear canal. There is typically a small handle or cord on the device to assist with removing it from the ear.” (Phonak)



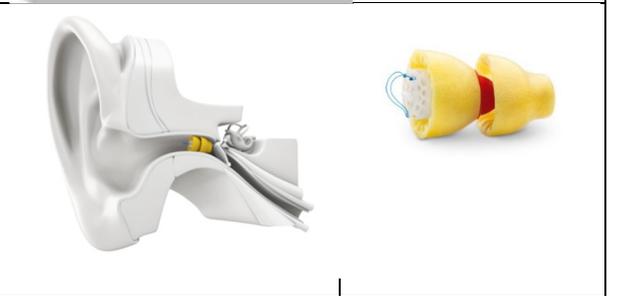
Bone Attached Hearing Aids/Bone Conduction Auditory Processors (BAHA)

Some versions are anchored on the head via a headband while others are surgically implanted. “The sound processor vibrates the skull to directly stimulate the inner (auditory) nerve.” (Lewin)



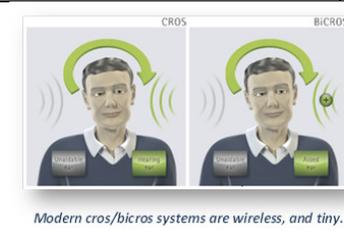
Implantable, Invisible, Extended Wear Hearing Device.

These aids are non-surgically placed in the ear by an audiologist and are worn continuously through daily activities for multiple months. They are convenient, moisture resistant, virtually invisible and seem natural. (ASCHA)



Cros

Modern Cros type hearing aids are tiny and wireless. They transmit sound coming to non-hearing side of the head to the better hearing side.



Each hearing aid requires some type of battery/ies.



Note: the color of the tag represents the battery size and makes it easier to purchase. The package color will be the same for that size battery.

The smaller battery may be a little more difficult to handle and require good finger dexterity.

The above information was borrowed from:

John Hopkins Medicine: www.hopkinsmedicine.org/hearing/hearing-aids/size_style.html

Portland Audiology: portlandaudiology.com/type_of_hearing_aids

FDA Report:

www.fda.gov/medicalDevices/ProductsMedicalProcedures/HomeHealthConsumer/ConsumerProducts/HearingAids/ucm181470

American Speech and Language Hearing Association:

<http://www.asha.org/public/hearing/Different-Styles-of-Hearing-Aids/>

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders:

<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/staticresources/health/hearing/NIDCD-Hearing-Aids.pdf>

Aesthetic Ear Reconstruction, Sheryl Lewin, M.D.

<http://microtiaearsurgery.com/hearing-loss/treatment-options>

Images of Hearing Aids Google search

https://www.google.com/search?q=types+of+hearing+aids&rlz=1T4TSNF_enUS426US426&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=dvy-VNamHomuggScrIO4CA&ved=0CFYQsAQ&biw=1600&bih=700

AARP Bulletin: Guide to Hearing Aids, Hearing Aid Styles—Pro and Con; Cathie Gandel, [AARP Bulletin](#), Updated October 2014

ADDENDUM

1. The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) provides a number of papers on hearing aids, hearing loss and better hearing information. This link provides access to more in-depth information regarding hearing aids.

<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/pages/hearingaid.aspx>

2. Many hearing aids require Earmolds but few audiologists tell us how to care for them. Brenton Curley does that.

<https://www.truhearing.com/understanding-earmolds-for-hearing-aids/>

3. The FDA also provides us with an abundance of information on hearing aids and hearing aid styles.

<http://www.fda.gov/medicaldevices/productsandmedicalprocedures/homehealthandconsumer/consumerproducts/hearingaids/ucm181470.htm>

Compiled by Ed Schickel January 20 2015

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