



building deaf friendly communities

**Hearing Loops:
Basics for Business**



A guide to **Portable Loops**

Hearing Loops: Basics for Business

signal.org.uk

Guide to Portable Loops



Why do we need a Hearing Loop System?

The Equality Act 2010 states that organisations have a “duty to make reasonable adjustments” which, for people with hearing loss would mean the “provision of an auxiliary aid.”

The auxiliary aid here would be a hearing loop system. Think of it as the equivalent of ramp or lift access for somebody who uses a wheelchair.

Benefits of a Working Hearing Loop System

- Repeat Customers
- Attract a large group of people who often feel unable to shop outside of their comfort zone (don't forget, nearly a quarter of Shropshire's population have hearing loss).
- The person does not have to reveal they have hearing loss if they do not want to, giving them confidence and lessening anxiety of the shopper.

Portable Induction Loop Systems

How do they work?

These look like boxes and can be moved around and used one-on-one, much like a counter loop system.

They are often used at reception desks or till points.

Pros

- Simple to install
- Can be used with most hearing aids
- More reliable than infrared systems.

Cons

- Training is often required
- They may stay “in the back” unused due to lack of training or people not asking to use them.
- The person with hearing loss has to make themselves known and often wait for the loop.

Video

What is a Hearing Loop and how does it work?

youtube.com/watch?v=hlnx3ZImTw0



Top Hearing Loop Tips

- Assign a member of staff, for example a senior receptionist, to be responsible for the hearing loop system so that other staff members know where to report faults.
- When there is a fault that the assigned member of staff cannot find you can go to a local handyman, electrician or sound technician and ask them if they have any knowledge of hearing loop installation or maintenance. A list of known suppliers is also attached.
- Ensure a “Hearing Loop” sign is visible in the area the hearing loop can be used.
- Get your loop system checked by an electrician, sound technician or handyman annually.
- Be aware! Tell staff where the hearing loop works in the building, where it doesn't and why (e.g. lots of metal in the building structure) and how to check for damage or lose connection to the microphone.



General Communication Tips

Hearing Loops are best used alongside good communication tactics.

Placing this poster in a public area, where staff can see it, helps to remind people how best to communicate effectively with people with hearing loss, but are also good tips for positive customer services.

