

Telecommunications for the Hearing Impaired

Introduction

This booklet contains the questions that I have found that I am most frequently asked by students. The information is designed for hard of hearing and deafened people - it does not cover communications access for the Deaf.

Estimated prices were correct at the time of writing, but should always be checked.

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Heidi Walsh

6th February 2000

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Telephone Basics	6
General Questions.	6
<i>What features should I look for?</i>	6
<i>What does hearing aid compatible mean?.</i>	6
<i>How do I know if a phone is hearing aid compatible?</i>	6
<i>Is there anything that I could carry with me to help?.</i>	7
<i>Why can't I hear with my hearing aid in?</i>	7
BT Models	8
<i>Converse 220</i>	8
<i>Converse 320</i>	8
<i>Converse 420</i>	9
<i>Walker Clarity</i>	9
Models for people with eyesight problems and/or mobility problems.	10
<i>BT Big Button Phone</i>	10
<i>Mybelle Big Button Phone.</i>	10
Textphones.	11
<i>Voice Carry Over (VCO).</i>	11
<i>Printers.</i>	11
<i>Answering Machines.</i>	12
<i>Knowing when the textphone is ringing.</i>	12
TypeTalk	12
Models	13
<i>Traditional Minicomms</i>	13

<i>Minicom Pro 100 / 400</i>	13
<i>Uniphone</i>	14
<i>Compact</i>	14
Public Textphones	14
Mobile Phones	15
Using a Digital Mobile Phone with a Neckloop	15
<i>Nokia 5110 / 6110</i>	15
<i>Digital Hearing Aids</i>	16
Using a Mobile Phone with Text	17
<i>Short Message Service (SMS)</i>	17
<i>Ericsson Chatboard</i>	17
<i>Nokia Communicator 9000i</i>	18
The Future.	18
Hearing a Mobile Phone Ring.	18
Advanced	19
Fax	19
Email	19
Internet	20
<i>IRC</i>	21
<i>AOL Instant Messenger</i>	21
Videophone	21
Hearing the Phone Ring	23
<i>I am finding it hard to hear the phone ring, is there anything that can help me?.</i> 23	
<i>I still can't hear the phone ring, are there any other options?</i> 24	
<i>Phoneflash 2</i>	24

Teleflash 1. 24

What are Pager Systems (in brief)? 25

I can't hear my mobile phone ring, what can I do?. 25

Telephone Basics

General Questions

What features should I look for?

The main features to look for if you have a hearing loss are:

- ✓ Volume control
- ✓ Hearing aid compatible
- ✓ Adjustable volume for the ringer
- ✓ Adjustable tone for the ringer - a choice of different rings

Some phones have a small flashing light to tell you if the phone is ringing, but this is difficult to see unless you are very near to the phone.

What does hearing aid compatible mean?

If a telephone is marked 'hearing aid compatible' then it means that the handset is fitted with an inductive coupler. This means that if handset can be used with a hearing aid that has a telecoil fitted. This cuts out background noise for the hearing aid user, and can improve the quality of the sound. Most National Health Service (NHS) hearing aids are fitted with a telecoil - have a look at the on/off switch and see if there is a position marked 'T'.

To use a telephone handset with the telecoil in a hearing aid you should:

- ✓ switch your hearing aid to the 'T' position
- ✓ make sure that the top part of the handset is touching your hearing aid
- ✓ turn your hearing aid up - often as high as it will go

Try this out by phoning a friend, and asking them to keep talking while you practise using the telecoil facility on your hearing aid.

How do I know if a phone is hearing aid compatible?

Telephones are usually marked if they are hearing aid compatible, often with an ear symbol. All BT public phones are hearing aid compatible, as are all emergency phones on motorways.

Is there anything that I could carry with me to help?

A portable telephone amplifier can be used with any telephone handset, but not with mobile phones.

There are three main types:

- The first type has a volume control only, for use without a hearing aid.
- The second type has a volume control, but also has an inductive coupler for use with a hearing aid.
- The third type only has an inductive coupler.



Some models have an adaptor that can be connected to the portable amplifier to allow it to be used with two hearing aids at the same time. This is simply a short lead, and a small piece of plastic that is placed next to the second hearing aid (called an earloop).

Portable telephone amplifiers cost around about £25. They cannot normally be borrowed from Social Services, but must be purchased. Make sure you buy one from a reputable source that supplies equipment for the hard of hearing.

Why can't I hear with my hearing aid in?

If you use an NHS behind-the-ear hearing aid, you need to make sure that the sound is going into the microphone on your hearing aid. If you hold the handset to your ear as you would normally do when you are not wearing a hearing aid, then you will not get the best response. First, check where the microphone is on your hearing aid. On most NHS behind-the-ear hearing aids it is at the front, near where the tube joins the hearing aid. Next, you need to adjust the handset, so that it is pointing at the microphone.

Try this out by phoning a friend, and asking them to keep talking while you practise using the handset with your hearing aid.

Alternatively, switch your hearing aid to the 'T' position, then place the handset against the body of your hearing aid, and turn the volume up. For more info see section on [hearing aid compatible phones](#).

BT Models

BT have several models in the Converse range, that are suitable for hearing aid users. However, hearing impaired people who have tried the new range of Converse telephones, say that they do not appear to be as good as the previous range if you have a hearing loss.

Converse 220

This telephone includes the following features:

- ✓ volume control for incoming speech
- ✓ volume control for ringer
- ✓ choice of two different ringer tones
- ✓ flashing light when phone rings
- ✓ hearing aid compatible
- ✓ 10 number memory
- ✓ secrecy button
- ✓ last number redial
- ✓ can be mounted on a wall
- ✓ has a headset socket



The Converse 220, retails at about £40, or can be rented from BT if you have a BT phone line. There is no VAT relief available on this product.

This phone replaces the Converse 200, which is no longer available.

Converse 320

The Converse 320 has the same features as the 220 above, but with a 20 number memory, and in addition:

- ✓ displays time / number dialled
- ✓ can time calls
- ✓ built-in calculator
- ✓ built-in speaker for hands-free operation

The Converse 320 retails at about £55, or can be rented from BT if you have a BT phone line. There is no VAT relief available on this product.



This phone replaces the Converse 300, which is being phased out, but was still available at the time of writing (Dec 1999).

Converse 420

The Converse 420 has the same features as the Converse 320, but with a 75 number memory, and in addition:

- ✓ a revolving handset connector to prevent the cord from becoming tangled
- ✓ a rotating dial for fast access to numbers and features

The Converse 420 retails for about £70, or can be rented from BT if you have a BT phone line. There is no VAT relief available on this product.



Walker Clarity

The Walker Clarity is specially designed for people with a high frequency hearing loss - which is the vast majority of those who are hearing impaired. The Walker Clarity selectively increases high frequency sounds that people who have a high frequency loss find difficult to hear - for example in words like 'fat' 'that' and 'sat'. This phone is one of the best phones on the market for people with a hearing loss.

The Walker Clarity also has the following features:

- ✓ volume control
- ✓ ringer volume
- ✓ choice of ringer tones
- ✓ hearing aid compatible
- ✓ flashing light when the phone rings
- ✓ 13 button memory
- ✓ recall/redial
- ✓ large buttons - easy to see/read
- ✓ wall mountable

The Walker Clarity retails at about £43, not including VAT. However, VAT is not payable on this product, provided that a VAT exemption form is completed.

Walker Clarity also used to make a unit that could be plugged into any telephone, and gave the same effect as the Walker Clarity phone - it boosted the high frequency speech sounds, and had a volume control. However, I have been unable to discover if this is still available - and if it is, where from.

Models for people with eyesight problems and/or mobility problems.

If you find it difficult to see the numbers on the phone, or find the small buttons fiddly to press, then one of the following phones might be useful.

BT Big Button Phone

This telephone offers the following features:

- ✓ volume control for incoming speech
- ✓ volume control for ringer
- ✓ choice of three different ringer tones
- ✓ flashing light when phone rings
- ✓ hearing aid compatible
- ✓ large buttons
- ✓ 13 number memory
- ✓ secrecy button
- ✓ last number redial
- ✓ 1471 button to find out who called
- ✓ can be mounted on a wall
- ✓ easy-grip handset



People who have tried both the new Converse range and the BT Big Button, generally say that the BT Big Button phone gives a better quality of sound than the Converse range.

The BT Big Button retails at about £25, or can be rented from BT if you have a BT phone line. There is no VAT relief available on this product.

Mybelle Big Button Phone

This telephone offers the following features:

- ✓ volume control
- ✓ hearing aid compatible
- ✓ ringer volume control
- ✓ optional overlay with yellow numbers on black background for increased visibility

The Mybelle Big Button retails at about £27. There is no VAT relief available on this product.



Textphones

If you are deafened then you will probably find that an ordinary telephone - even with an amplifier is not suitable for you. In this case, you may want to consider using a textphone, often referred to as a minicom in the UK. Social Services will often provide a textphone on free long term loan if you are deafened.

Textphones have a keyboard and a small screen. The simplest way of using textphones to communicate is where you have two textphones - one at each end of the phoneline. When a message is typed on one textphone, it appears on the screen of the textphone and also on the screen of the other textphone, and *vice versa*. Generally speaking, only one person can type at any one time - you must take it in turns.

Protocol:

1. Type your sentence/comment, then type GA so that the other person knows that it is their turn to type
2. Read the reply from the other person. When they have finished they will type GA so that you know that it is your turn to type.
3. When you have finished typing and want to go, type BIBI - this means that you are ready to finish, but haven't hung up yet.
4. When you have finished altogether, type SKSK - this means that you are hanging up.

GA stands for Go Ahead

SKSK stands for Stop Keying

Voice Carry Over (VCO)

If you can speak, but cannot hear - which is usually the case if you are deafened, then you might want to use voice-carry-over (VCO). Several textphones allow you do to this, but it does take practise. Instead of typing your message, you speak as normal - but the reply is typed back to you. You usually have to switch from text mode to VCO mode to do this. On some textphones this is relatively easy - on others VCO is not really practical.

Printers

Some textphones have a built-in printer (or optional printer) so that you can print out your conversations. Others allow you to scroll back through the conversation.

Answering Machines

Ordinary answering machines cannot record textphone messages, but there are several textphones that have built-in answering machines. These will record textphone messages if you are not able to answer the phone. Please note that textphone answering machines are not able to record voice messages.

Knowing when the textphone is ringing

Most textphones have a small flashing indicator to let you know that there is a call coming in. However, you will usually need a flashing alert as well. See section '[Hearing the phone ring.](#)'

TypeTalk

In the UK if you use a textphone you can still contact people/businesses/services who don't have a textphone by going through a special operator service called TypeTalk. To use the TypeTalk service you must first sign up. It doesn't cost anything to sign up, or to use the service. Phone calls are charged as if you had dialled them directly from your own phone, and a rebate is available on the actual cost of the phone call (for textphone users) - because it takes longer to type than it does to speak, so calls using a textphone take longer.

There is a special emergency number that allows people with a textphone to contact the emergency services - fire, ambulance, police.

The TypeTalk operators are covered by the Official Secrets Act - they are not allowed to repeat anything that they hear during conversations, so the service is completely confidential.

To contact someone who doesn't have a textphone:

1. Dial the TypeTalk number. Give them your identification number and phone number. Tell them who you want to call.
2. Type your message to the operator.
3. The operator reads your message to the person you are calling.
4. The person replies.
5. The operator types their reply back to you

... and so on.

People who don't have a textphone themselves, can also use TypeTalk to contact people who use a textphone.

You can also use voice carry over with TypeTalk. To use VCO with TypeTalk:

1. Contact TypeTalk. Give them your identification number and phone number. Tell them who you want to call. Tell the operator that you want to use VCO.
2. Wait for the operator to type to you that you are connected, and that they are ready for you to speak.
3. Give your message. When you have finished speaking say 'go ahead'
4. The person you have contacted will reply.
5. The operator will type their reply back to you, and tell you when they are ready for you to speak again.

There is usually a delay while the operator switches from VCO mode to text mode, so you can't reply immediately.

Models

Traditional Minicoms

Traditional minicoms are used with an ordinary phone. The phone handset is placed on top of the minicom unit, on special couplers. The minicom can be battery operated, or connected to the mains. The advantage of this type of unit is that the telephone can also be used as an ordinary phone, and no additional phone socket is required. However, not all phone handsets fit snugly on the couplers, and if there is any background noise where the minicom is being used, then you often get spurious signals as the minicom picks up the noise and tries to interpret it as text messages.



Traditional minicoms also have a very clear display and larger buttons, which can make them easier to use for people with poor sight and dexterity. They are available with a built-in printer, and with a built-in answering machine.

Price range £250 - £350 (ex VAT).

Minicom Pro 100 / 400

The Minicom Pro connects directly to a phone socket. The Pro 400 also has a built-in speaker phone which can be used for voice carry over, or can be used as a hands-free phone for people who can hear.

The Minicom Pro provides a relatively cheap option for people who want to use a textphone. It is also small and compact. One disadvantage is that the keys are fairly small, and lack contrast, as does the display, which makes it difficult to use for people with poor eyesight.

The Minicom Pro 100 costs about £99 (ex VAT) and the Pro 400 about £179 (ex VAT).



Uniphone

The Uniphone is an ordinary telephone and a textphone. The handset is hearing aid compatible, and there is a volume control. There is a built-in answering machine for text calls only. One disadvantage is that the keys are fairly small, and lack contrast, as does the display, which makes it difficult to use for people with poor eyesight.

You can use voice carry over with this phone.

The Uniphone costs about £200 (ex VAT).



Compact

If you want to be able to carry a textphone with you, then the Compact is one option you could consider. The Compact is a portable textphone, with small couplers on which you can place any telephone handset (results vary).

The Compact costs about £240 (ex VAT).



Public Textphones

BT provide public textphones at major locations in the UK such as airports and transport terminals. Contact BT for an up-to-date list of locations.

Mobile Phones

There are two types of mobile telephone currently on the market - analogue and digital. Analogue is the older technology, and is gradually being phased out and replaced by digital technology. Analogue mobile phones were generally okay for people who were hard of hearing, although lack of a decent volume control and hearing aid compatibility meant that only those with a mild to moderate hearing loss could use them. Indeed, some of the analogue mobile phones produced a significant enough magnetic field around the handset, for them to be used with the telecoil in a hearing aid - the 'T' position.

There are still a few analogue mobile phones around, although these will have been phased out by about 2003. If you can still find one, it may be worth trying this option if you want a mobile phone that you can use with a hearing aid. Both Vodafone and Orange still have analogue networks at present.

The problem with the modern digital phones is that the technology interferes with analogue hearing aids. If you place a digital mobile phone near a normal hearing aid you the hearing aid will buzz. Sometimes this is quite a small buzzing noise, but other times it makes it completely impossible for someone wearing a hearing aid to use the mobile phone.

Using a Digital Mobile Phone with a Neckloop

Nokia 5110 / 6110

So what can be done? One option is to use a mobile phone that can be used with a neckloop. The only phone for which a neckloop is available (at the time of writing) is the Nokia 5110 / 6110. The Nokia LPS-1 Neckloop is a plastic covered loop of wire which is placed round the neck (it can be worn under clothing), and then plugged into the mobile phone. The mobile phone can be carried in the pocket - far enough away from the hearing aid so that there is no interference, and the hearing aid is switched to the 'T' position to use the phone. The neckloop has a built in microphone. The neckloop is powered by three hearing aid batteries, when these are starting to run out the neckloop may cease to work, or not work correctly. If you seem to be having problems with a Nokia neckloop, try replacing the batteries before calling for help.



The Nokia 5110 / 6110 is available on several different networks. Vodafone also have the Nokia 5110 on a pay-as-you-go basis.

For more information on the different networks and packages for mobile phones, contact any of the major high street retailers in mobile phones.

The Nokia LPS-1 Neckloop can be purchased direct from your mobile phone supplier, or from Connevens for about £59.95. VAT relief is not available on this product.

To make it easier to hear when the mobile phone is ringing, you can buy a vibrating battery. A vibrating battery for the Nokia 5510 / 6110 will cost about £70.

The other advantage of using a neckloop with a hearing aid is that the hearing aid user can cut out background noise, and control the volume of the incoming sound using the hearing aid. With mobile phones often being used in noisy conditions, this can be a great advantage.

Digital Hearing Aids

The new digital hearing aids claim to be compatible with digital mobile phones - that they shouldn't buzz when near a digital mobile phone. This means that with a digital hearing aid you should be able to use a digital mobile phone without a neckloop. However, you may still have problems because of background noise, lack of sufficient volume control, etc.

Using a Mobile Phone with Text

Short Message Service (SMS)

Another option is the Short Message Service. Some mobile phone networks allow you to send short text messages between mobile phones on the same network. This means that you can send a text message from say one Vodaphone mobile phone to another Vodaphone mobile phone, but not from a Vodaphone mobile phone to an Orange mobile phone. This service is available on digital mobile phones only. The messages are typed on the mobile phone keypad - a rather fiddly method. Text messages can be up to 160 characters long. Some network providers (eg Vodaphone) also offer a service where they can receive fax and convert the fax to a short message, and allow you to send a short message as a fax.

With short messages you pay per message, not by the length of the call.

Ericsson Chatboard

One digital mobile phone provider that makes it easier to use the SMS, is Ericsson. Ericsson have produced a small QWERTY keyboard that clips onto the bottom of certain digital mobile phones. You can use the keyboard to enter short messages, or email, or even (potentially) to browse the Internet. The mobile phones can also be used to receive short messages, and email.

One suitable Ericsson phone is the T10s. This also has a vibrating alert. Other features include:

- ✓ caller ID
- ✓ missed calls list
- ✓ choice of musical rings
- ✓ phone book
- ✓ range of services such as call waiting, etc.



Ericsson T10s



Ericsson Chatboard

The Ericsson T10s is available on different networks with a monthly contract; it may become available on a pay-as-you-go basis. There are several Ericsson models that can be used with the Chatboard - ask your mobile phone provider.

Nokia Communicator 9000i

The Nokia Communicator is a combined digital mobile phone and personal organiser. It also has email, fax and Internet capabilities. The phone is slightly thicker and heavier than a normal digital phone, but when opened reveals a keyboard and screen.

The Nokia Communicator cannot be used with the Nokia Neckloop LSP-1, but can be used as a textphone. To use the Communicator as a textphone you need additional software. You can buy a Communicator with the appropriate software from the RNID.



The Future

As mobile phones become used more for email and Internet, it is likely that it will become easier for mobile phones to be used as textphones.

Hearing a Mobile Phone Ring

There are several different options if you find it difficult to hear a mobile phone ring. Most mobile phone manufacturers also provide vibrating batteries, which simply replace the standard battery. Some mobile phones have a vibrating option, others have an optional vibrating module that clips onto the bottom of the phone. Unless the mobile phone has a built in vibrating alert, then there will be an extra charge for the vibrating battery or vibrating module.

Advanced

Fax

Fax is a handy way to send written/typed messages and images. Most businesses have faxes, which means that this can be a useful way of ordering goods, or contacting businesses with queries/complaints. The disadvantages of using fax are that most individuals do not have a fax machine at home, so using a fax to contact family and friends can be difficult; another disadvantage is that fax is not 'real-time', you can't use it to have a proper conversation - you must send your fax, then wait for the reply to arrive.

Most fax machines can also be used as a normal telephone. A brief survey of different fax machines, did not find any that also had a volume control, or that were hearing aid compatible, but there are a number of different makes and models available and it may be possible to find a fax that also offers these facilities.

Home computers can also be used to send and receive fax. There are several different software packages that allow you do to this, and if you already have a computer then this is a very cheap way of using fax. Some Internet Service Providers (for example, [F9](#) or [Contact Box](#)) give you a dedicated fax number as part of their service, and then forward any faxes sent to this number to your email box.

Many mobile phones are now able to receive and send short faxes. Check the information on each mobile phone model for more details.

Email

Email is becoming increasingly useful for hard of hearing and deafened people. To use email you need either a home computer, a PDA, an email phone, or an email enabled mobile phone.

Using email is rather like a having a postbox at a post office. You have an account, with an address. People can send you email to that address. To go and get it, you have to contact the post office - usually by phone line - and the email is then sent to your computer (or screen) where you can read it and reply. Email accounts can be set up with a variety of Internet Service Providers (ISPs), at no cost - except the cost of a local phone call to go and fetch your email, which only takes seconds.



Easicom 1000

Emails are limited in that you have to send an email, then wait for a reply - so it's not like having a conversation in 'real-time', but it is a very easy way of communicating with anyone (who has email), anywhere in the world, for the cost of a short local phone call. Most businesses and

services now use email, and the number of home users increases every day. Email also allows you to send pictures, and short video clips. Of course, if you have Internet access, whether it is through a computer or mobile phone, then you can also search for, view, and order goods - without having the hassle of trying to communicate in a shop!

BT have launched a telephone that also allows you to send, and receive, email (and fax) using a slide-out keyboard. The phone, called the Easicom 1000, is also hearing aid compatible, and has a volume control. You can print out the email/fax with an optional printer (at additional cost). The Easicom 1000 costs about £80 at present. Other companies are likely to produce e-phones very soon - look out for one from Philips.

A number of mobile phones can now send and receive short emails - see section on mobile phones. This is likely to be a big growth area over the next few years. Some PDA's (personal organisers such as Psion, PalmPilot, etc...) also allow you to send and receive email - with an attached modem and mobile phone.

Stop Press! Email through your TV

Sky has just announced a new email keyboard that works with Sky Satellite to allow you to send and receive email via your TV system. Each house can have up to 8 free email addresses. The keyboard costs £34.99. Check the national newspapers for more details.

Internet

The Internet offers several services that allow you to talk to other people without having any difficulties due to a hearing loss.

Chatrooms

Chatrooms are where groups of people meet and chat about anything really. Once in a chat room you have an area on screen where peoples' typed comments appear. To reply to a comment you simply type in the response box, and hit enter. Chatrooms are usually organised on the basis of hobbies, interests and professions. For example, there are chatrooms for teachers, and chatrooms on cooking. There are lots of sites that offer chatrooms - you just need to find one that suits you.

Some sites also offer you the option of setting up a private chatroom, as and when you want to. This means that you can arrange to 'meet' someone online, and go into a private chatroom with them for a chat. You can also do this with groups of people, so you could arrange to meet a group of friends online for a chat - but prevent the general public from dropping in.

IRC

IRC stands for Internet Relay Chat. IRC allows groups of people to meet and chat about a huge variety of subjects, or it can allow individuals to meet and have confidential chats.

To use IRC you need to have the correct software installed on your computer. There are several different versions of IRC: it doesn't matter which one you use. You then need to find a site offering IRC services, and choose a chatgroup to join. Chatgroups will be on a variety of topics, and you can always start your own topic. All users have nicknames, and you can arrange to have a private chat with another IRC user.

IRC has limited applications for communication on a daily basis for the hard of hearing and deafened. This is because:

- All those you wish to chat to must have the necessary IRC software on their computer
- You have to pre-arrange to meet and chat

However, IRC is very useful for meeting other people and helping you to feel that you are part of the 'real world' - albeit a virtual one!

AOL Instant Messenger

Instant Messenger is similar to IRC in that it allows individuals to chat over the Internet - but it is more like using a textphone. When you logon to AOL Instant Messenger you can see which of your family/friends are also online and send them messages which will pop up on their computer screen. They can then reply to your message, and their answer will appear on your computer screen. It has the same drawbacks as IRC - you must both be using AOL Instant Messenger, and you must both be online at the same time.

The software for AOL Instant Messenger is free (at the time of writing), and can be downloaded from the Netscape site, or you will get it with any distribution of Netscape Communicator - often found on magazine cover discs.

Videophone

A few years ago, BT launched a videophone. This allows you to see the person you are talking to - provided that they also have a videophone. Videophones are very handy for sign language - you can see the other person - but the picture is not really clear enough for lipreading. A BT videophone costs about £1,700.

Another possibility is that of using a webcam. A webcam is small camera that videos what it can see. The video can be sent as a video clip (by email), or used for video conferencing - where two or more people chat over a phone line/Internet using computers, and are able to see the person/people they are talking to. Problems with using a webcam for video conferencing are that the image is not very sharp, the number of frames per second (speed) is not really good enough for

lipreading, the picture is usually not quite in time with the sound, and that phone line modems are not fast enough. Some software is also rather fussy about the software that it communicates with at the other end - meaning that unless you are using the same program you might not be able to talk to each other. However, webcams, and Internet video offer exciting possibilities for the future for the hard of hearing and deafened.

Hearing the Phone Ring

I am finding it hard to hear the phone ring, is there anything that can help me?

If you are finding it difficult to hear the phone ring, especially if you are in a different room, then you can get an extension bell. An extension bell simply plugs into a modern plug socket, just like your phone does. When your phone rings, the extension bell will ring. The bell can be placed in the same room as the phone - or in a different room to the phone.

If you do not have a spare phone socket, then you can use a double adapter and extension lead if necessary, or ask for a second socket to be fitted.

If you are hard of hearing then BT will provide you with an extension bell on long term loan, free of charge. BT will also provide you with a double adaptor, and if you are unable to fit the adaptor and bell yourself, will arrange for an engineer to call. You must be a BT customer - if you are a cable customer then you will have to buy an extension bell.

There are several different BT extension bells available, the **Tonecaller II** is the most popular of these.

The Tonecaller II has the following features:

- ✓ volume control
- ✓ choice of 4 different rings
- ✓ small and neat

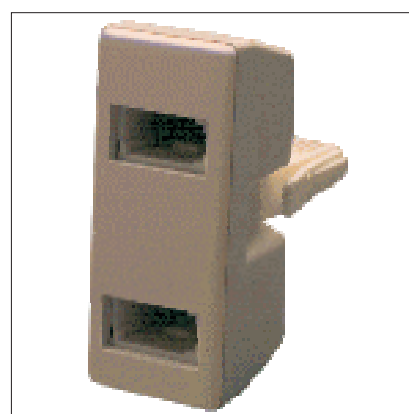
The BT Tonecaller retails at about £15, or can be rented from BT if you have a BT phone line. It is available on free loan to BT customers with a hearing loss.

BT can also provide a doubler, so that you can plug the extension bell into the same socket as your telephone if necessary. You can purchase a doubler from any high street electrical retail shop, for about £2.

BT can also supply a simple extra-loud bell for indoor use, and a loud bell for external use.



BT Tonecaller II



BT Doubler

I still can't hear the phone ring, are there any other options?

An alternative to an extension bell, is a flashing alert. This plugs into a modern phone socket, but when the phone rings, it flashes. Some units flash and ring.

Flashing alerts are ideal for people who cannot hear an extension bell, or who live/work in noisy surroundings. They are an essential accessory to a textphone.

Flashing alerts are not available from BT, and must be purchased privately. Occasionally, local social services will provide flashing alerts for people who are deafened or Deaf. This service may or may not be free of charge and/or means tested.

There are several models on the market, ranging from £5 through to £40.

Some models plug into a telephone socket, so a doubler may be needed (see previous question), others are connected between the telephone socket and the phone, and others use a sensor placed against the phone to tell when it is ringing.

VAT relief is not available on flashing phone alerts.

Phoneflash 2

- ✓ Mains powered
- ✓ Plugs into a phone socket (includes a double adaptor)
- ✓ Flashes only
- ✓ Retails at about £40 (inc. VAT)

Teleflash 1

- ✓ Mains powered
- ✓ Sensor goes under phone
- ✓ Flashes or rings or does both
- ✓ Retails at about £33 (inc. VAT)

There are also smaller units available from most stationary/office stores for about £5. These plug into a phone socket (or between the phone and the socket) and flash, ring or both. They require no external power source. The disadvantage is that their smaller size means that you need to be nearer to notice the flash - although I find the one I use very bright/noticeable.



Teleflash 1



Phoneflash 2

What are Pager Systems (in brief)?

Pager systems are designed to alert you to more than one sound. For example, a pager system will normally let you know:

- ✓ the alarm clock is ringing
- ✓ the fire alarm is going off
- ✓ the telephone is ringing
- ✓ the doorbell is ringing
- ✓ the baby is crying
- ✓ etc....

A pager system generally consists of: a pager that you carry around, a charging unit and/or base unit, and transmitter units for the telephone, doorbell etc. You buy however many transmitters you want (phone, doorbell, etc). When a transmitter is activated, the pager will vibrate and an icon (or number) let you know which transmitter has been triggered.

I can't hear my mobile phone ring, what can I do?

Most mobile phones can be fitted with either a vibrating battery, or a vibrating alert. This will probably cost about £70. Some models have a built in vibrating alert option to 'discreetly' let you know that the phone is ringing.