FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What makes earplugs high-fidelity?
Most earplugs reduce sound more in the high frequencies than the lows and mid-range, which produces unnatural, muffled sound. Etymotic’s high-fidelity earplugs reduce sound evenly at all frequencies so sound is unaltered, just quieter.

How much noise is too much?
Noise-induced hearing damage depends on the intensity, duration and frequency of exposure (how loud, how long, and how often). Some persons are more susceptible to hearing damage from loud sound than others. Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and temporary hearing loss can occur from a single concert, sporting event, or sudden loud noise like a firecracker or gunshot. Over time, tinnitus and hearing loss can become permanent. This damage usually occurs so gradually that it isn’t noticed until it’s too late. Noise-induced hearing damage is permanent, and there is no cure. The best treatment is prevention.

About Noise reduction rating (NRR)

NRR is a single number based on a formula required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to indicate the amount of noise reduction expected from hearing protectors. ETY-Plugs and ER-20XS earplugs provide 20 dB of protection (attenuation) across frequencies. Their NRRs (12 dB for ETY-Plugs and ER-20XS earplugs) provide the most options when it comes to proper fit and comfort. Choose 3-flange or foam earplugs. Advanced technology lowers sound levels evenly by 20 decibels. Music sounds natural and clear, only safer.

How do I know if I need standard or large?
Both sizes fit most ears, but the standard earplugs are more comfortable for many users with smaller ear canals. Studies by Etymotic Research and an independent, accredited lab show that most users can achieve a seal with the standard fit. Ear size cannot be predicted by a person’s physical size, age or gender.

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CUSTOM-FIT EARPLUGS
Musicians Earplugs™ are a customized product made from ear impressions and purchased from hearing professionals. The combination of custom molds and Etymotic’s attenuators (filters) produces a resonance that replicates the response of a normal ear canal, resulting in smooth, flat sound reduction. Interchangeable filters are available in three levels of sound reduction: 9 dB, 15 dB and 25 dB.

WHICH EARPLUG IS RIGHT FOR ME?
Ready-Fit Earplugs

ETY-Plugs® are ready-fit high-fidelity earplugs, developed as an alternative to Etymotic’s original custom Musicians Earplugs. Both ETY-Plugs and ER-20XS earplugs have the highest fidelity of any non-custom earplugs available today.

ER-20XS earplugs are small, discreet high-fidelity earplugs that match the response of ETY-Plugs. They give the most options when it comes to proper fit and comfort. Choose 3-flange or foam earplugs. Advanced technology lowers sound levels evenly by 20 decibels. Music sounds natural and clear, only safer.

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About Etymotic

Etymotic Research is committed to protecting and enhancing the listening experience for musicians, music educators, audio professionals and consumers. For over 30 years, Etymotic has manufactured products to help people hear better now, and preserve their hearing for the future.

ETYMOTIC RESEARCH®

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Noise-Induced Hearing Loss Can Be Prevented

Hearing loss is cumulative over a lifetime. Using high-fidelity hearing protection reduces the risk of hearing damage from noise in the workplace, loud music at concerts and excessive noise at venues such as air shows, parades, athletic events and motor sports.

A little time may be required to acclimate to any earplugs. Ultimately, most musicians report that when they use high-fidelity earplugs they can hear their own instrument better, as well as the balance and blend with those around them.

History of Musicians Earplugs

Musicians Earplugs are the original high-fidelity earplugs, developed over 25 years ago by Etymotic Research, based on a design by the late Elmer Carlson, an engineer at Knowles Electronics. Carlson’s design replicated the natural response of the ear canal so that sound heard with these earplugs would have the same quality as the original, only quieter.

In 1985, while consulting with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Mead Killion PhD, CTO and founder of Etymotic, concluded there was a real need for Carlson’s earplugs. Killion’s study revealed that musicians are at risk for occupational hearing loss just like workers in industry, but musicians need special hearing protection that allows them to hear clearly and without compromising sound quality. Musicians Earplugs were the first high-fidelity hearing protection available to musicians. The filters attenuate by 9-15- or 25 dB, and attach to custom earmolds. These custom products are made from ear musicians. The filters attenuate by 9-15- or 25 dB, and attach to custom earmolds. These custom products are made from ear

Charts showing average attenuation in dB across different frequencies for foam earplugs and reusable earplugs. The charts illustrate how each type of earplug reduces sound evenly by 20 decibels as sound levels change. Natural hearing is restored when sound returns to safe levels.


ERT Plugs provide almost equal sound reduction across the range of hearing. Foam earplugs reduce high frequencies more than lows, which degrades the quality of speech and music.

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