

Aim High. Keep Your Hearing

Hundreds of products on the market promise hearing protection. They range in price from a few dollars to several thousand dollars. Using protective services together may improve access in retaining your hearing. But, no matter which device you choose, proper fitting is key.

Look for these types of protective wear:

- Disposable foam earplugs
- Reusable silicone earplugs
- Electronic earplugs
- Non-electronic earplugs



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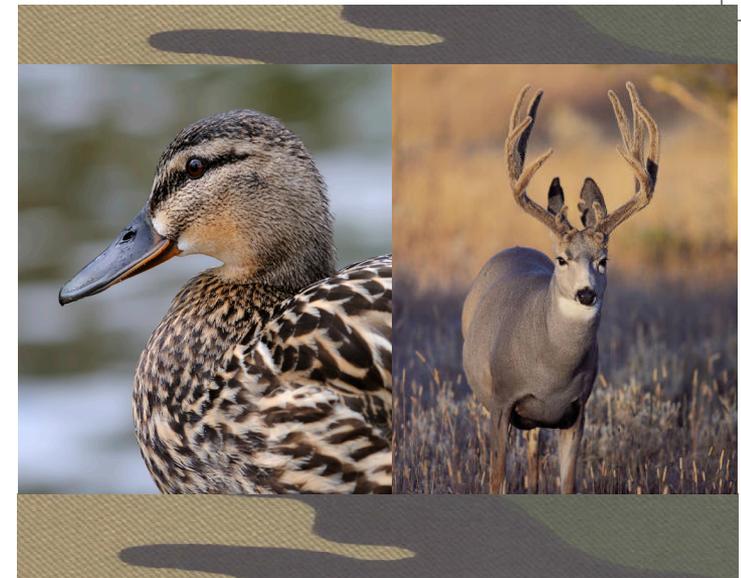
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Hunting & Hearing Safety

Serving Nebraskans since 1979

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Enjoy Life After the Hunt

Hunting safety begins and ends with respect for guns and people. While most hunters would never point a firearm at another person, many fail to realize a second-hand danger of guns.

Noise-induced hearing loss caused by gunfire is among the most preventable conditions in Nebraska. **More than 10 million Americans already suffer from irreversible hearing damage caused by noise.**

Excessive noise damages delicate hair cells in the inner ear. This hearing loss is a cumulative process affected by level and exposure time. It is irreversible, worsens with aging and occurs randomly.

Respecting your ears now helps you enjoy life later.

NCDHH offers community education programs, contact information and other materials on this topic. Please see back panel for contact information.

How Dangerous is Gunfire to Hearing?

Peak Sound Pressure Levels (SPLs)

Type of Gun	SPL (dB)
.44 Revolver	170
44 Automatic	165
M-16	160
.357 Revolver	160
12 Gauge Shotgun	55
.38 Revolver	150
.22 Rifle	145



Noise levels starting at 85dB cause permanent damage

Gunfire is the most hazardous non-occupational noise. Any shot near an unprotected ear may lead to immediate, permanent hearing loss. Past results in retaining your hearing without protection is no indicator of future success.

Exposure to peak sound pressure is similar to dropping a glass bottle: sometimes it breaks; sometimes it doesn't.

Ear protection should always be worn when firing guns. It reduces sound, and it may help increase your shooting accuracy due to the effect of lower pulses on your inclination to flinch. Two health effects of noise are non-auditory and auditory effects. Non-auditory effects include stress and related physiological or behavioral changes. Auditory effects include ringing or buzzing in the ear, temporary hearing loss, or permanent hearing loss.

Impact of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss can affect you in the field as well as at home. Here are some things that you might miss out on during your next hunt if you don't protect your hearing today:

Mild Hearing Loss: Leaves crunching at 50 yards on a calm day or a hunting partner whispering.

Moderate Hearing Loss: Airborn fowl at 300 yards, turkeys calling at 100 yards or a call for assistance from 200 yards.

Severe Hearing Loss: Call for assistance at 50 yards, leaves rustling at 10 yards or airborn fowl at 50 yards.

Prevention

Half of hunters surveyed experienced tinnitus — a constant ringing in the ears, according to researchers at Central Michigan University and Wayne State University. Tinnitus is a sign of noise-induced hearing loss.

Consult with an audiologist or your medical doctor to check your hearing and learn how to protect the hearing you have. NCDHH can refer you to a specialist and offer information on the most advanced hearing protection devices available on the market today.