

# UNDERSTANDING HEARING AIDS



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Your hearing • Our passion

# Are you about to try hearing aids for the first time?

Hearing aids make listening easier and more comfortable. You can expect to hear most sounds better and to understand speech better.

A little hearing improvement goes a long way. Studies have shown that hearing aid users report better family relationships, higher self-esteem, and improved mental health. They also report greater independence and feelings of security than those with a hearing loss who do not use a hearing aid. The value of this improved quality of life is priceless.

## How Hearing Aids Work

All hearing aids operate on the same basic principles. A miniature microphone picks up sound. An amplifier circuit makes the sound louder. A tiny receiver (or speaker) then delivers the amplified sound to the ear.

## Different Styles

Hearing aids differ in style and in technical features. There are many different hearing aid styles to meet everyone's individual needs and preferences. Your hearing care professional can help you choose the type that will be best for your hearing loss and your lifestyle.

Hearing aids are divided into three main types: BTEs (those that fit Behind-The-Ear), custom hearing aids or ITEs (those that fit In-The-Ear), and RITE (a combination of BTE and ITE with a Receiver-In-The-Ear).

**BTE hearing aids** sit behind the ear. They use a separate piece called an earmold or a thin sound tube with a soft silicone earpiece to direct sound into the ear canal.

**Custom hearing aids or ITEs** come in several subcategories. The size and shape of your ear and your degree of hearing loss will determine which style and size is best for you. If you have selected a custom hearing aid, your hearing care professional will make an impression of your ear using a soft material. This impression will be used to build your hearing aid.

**RITE** hearing aids are a hybrid type. The main components of this system sit behind the ear and the receiver (speaker) sits in the ear canal.



Once your hearing aid is ready for you, the hearing care professional will program and adjust your hearing aid with you. The hearing care professional will also teach you how to use and care for your new hearing aid.

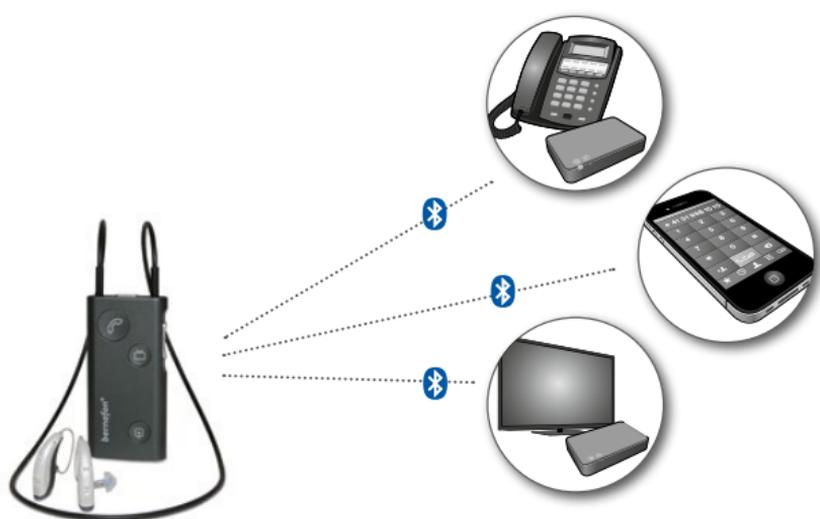
## High Performance Technology

Hearing aids contain a tiny computer chip that is programmed to accurately fit your individual hearing loss. The computer programming is based on research from the field of audiology and is designed to amplify the important sounds around you. The combination of high and low pitches, at soft and loud levels, is continuously analyzed and adjusted. Automatic adjustments to changes in the sound environment provide the best listening experience possible.

## Special Features

Your hearing care professional can set up your hearing aid to meet your individual needs. There are special programs, for example, for listening to music and going to the cinema. There are also multiple systems to make hearing in noisy environments easier.

Many hearing aids also allow wireless (Bluetooth®) communication with a wide range of electronic devices such as mobile phones, televisions, music players, computers, GPS systems, etc. Automatic connections to telecoil systems in theatres, classrooms, and places of worship are also possible.



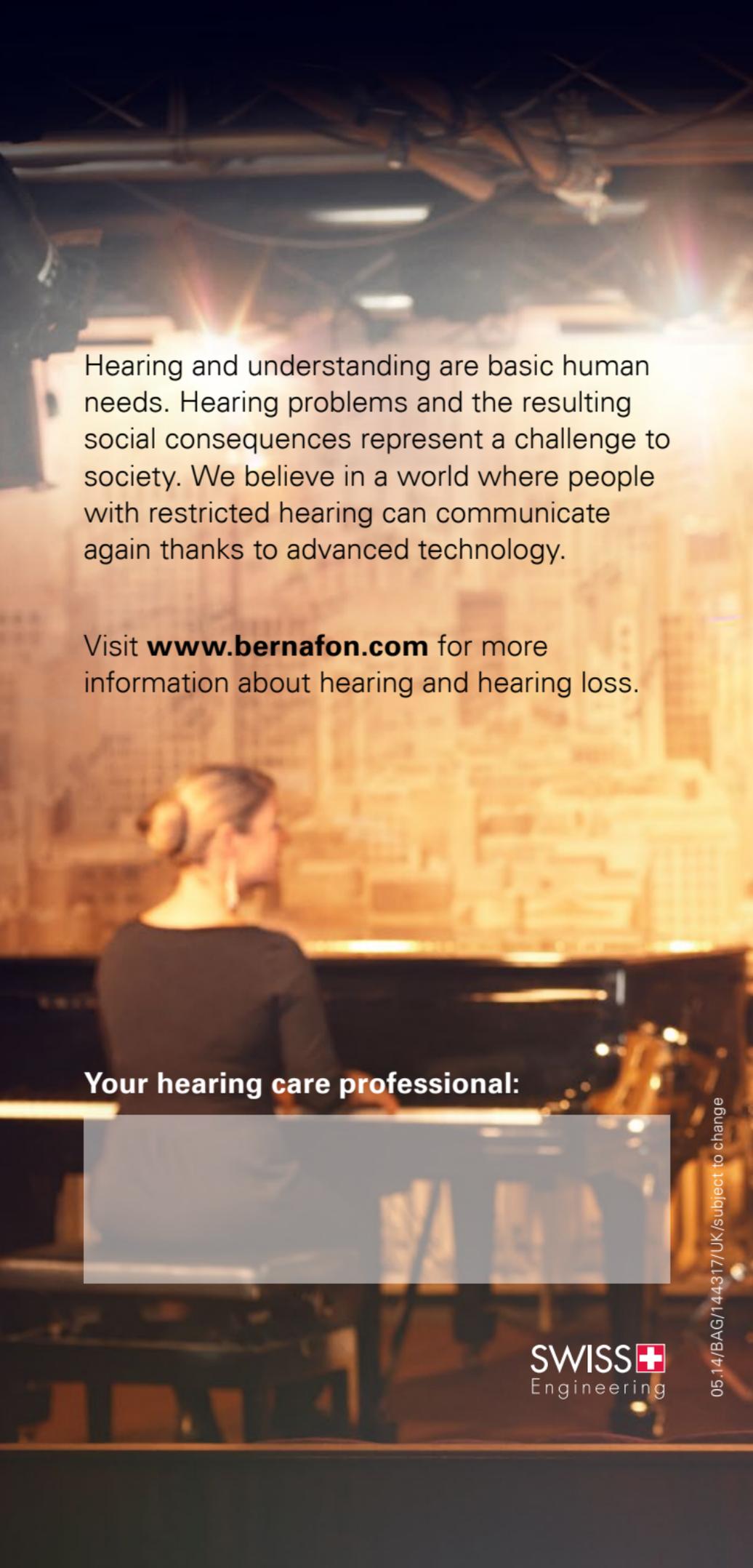
How do you know which special features would be the most useful? It all depends on your individual hearing loss pattern and the severity of your hearing loss. It also depends on your lifestyle and personal preferences. This is why it is so important to find a knowledgeable hearing care professional who can assess your personal situation and recommend the best system for you.

## Looking Ahead

Once you begin to wear your hearing aid, it will take some time to get used to it. You will need to refocus your hearing and readjust to sounds you have been missing for a long time. You may notice some improvement right away, but be patient. It can take several weeks, or even a few months, until you are able to obtain maximum benefit from your hearing aids.

Patience and perseverance are the key. Your hearing care professional will work with you to make adjustments to obtain the best settings for you. You can also practice listening in a variety of environments. With dedicated practice, you will soon be on your way to becoming a happy and satisfied hearing aid user.





Hearing and understanding are basic human needs. Hearing problems and the resulting social consequences represent a challenge to society. We believe in a world where people with restricted hearing can communicate again thanks to advanced technology.

Visit **[www.bernafon.com](http://www.bernafon.com)** for more information about hearing and hearing loss.

**Your hearing care professional:**



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