5 Biggest Noise at Work Mistakes...

...And How to Fix Them

A Free eBook from The Noise Experts
Getting Started

Who Is This eBook For?

Are you responsible for making Noise at Work measurements in your workplace? Looking for the best tools for the job? Not sure where to begin? If so, this eBook is perfect for you.

We’ll take a high-level overview of The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005, highlighting the 5 biggest mistakes that are made when it comes to controlling occupational noise and how to avoid them.

What Will You Achieve?

After reading this guide, you will feel more confident about making accurate noise measurements and identifying noise hazards in the workplace. You’ll also get some useful hints and tips on the right products to use in your role.

If you any questions, make yourself heard by contacting our Noise Experts.

Sound good to you? Let’s begin >>>
Find Your Way Around

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What Is Noise At Work?

Preventing Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL)

In a nutshell, this is why we monitor noise at work. The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 introduced safety limits for daily noise exposure. It’s one of the most overlooked risks in the workplace. But what are the limits?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noise Level dB(A)</th>
<th>Safe Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>8 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>4 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86</td>
<td>2 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89</td>
<td>1 Hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>30 Minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, the noisier it gets, the less time you can legally be exposed to that noise level. If these daily limits are exceeded, you dramatically increase the chances of developing NIHL.

To check noise levels, you need accurate noise monitors from an experienced manufacturer like Cirrus.

Did You Know?

Recent statistics released by the Health & Safety Executive revealed the number of people currently claiming Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit scheme (IIDB) for Noise-Induced Hearing Loss.

18,000

The estimated number of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss cases in the UK last year

#KnowTheFacts  #CirrusOptimus

This doesn’t include the 10000s of claims being made by Personal Injury Lawyers. After coining the term “Industrial Deafness” they are now seeking compensation for anyone who has suffered hearing loss due to occupational noise. This is why you need to ensure you’re taking the right precautions.
How It Works

What Are The Action Levels And Limit Values For Noise?

This relates to the levels of noise exposure your employees face over an average working day or week; and the maximum noise (peak sound pressure) employees are exposed to in a working day. The values are:

**Lower Exposure Action Values:**
- Daily LEP,d or weekly LEP,w exposure of 80 dB;
- Peak sound pressure (LCPeak) of 135 dB

**Upper Exposure Action Values:**
- Daily LEP,d or weekly LEP,w exposure of 85 dB;
- Peak sound pressure (LCPeak) of 137 dB

**REMEMBER:** A single machine might exceed these levels but as long as the overall noise level over the average working period does not exceed these noise levels, you are within the legal limits.

There are also levels of noise exposure that you must not exceed. These are called exposure limit values:

**Exposure Limit Values:**
- Daily LEP,d or weekly LEP,w exposure of 87 dB;
- Peak sound pressure of (LCPeak) 140 dB

If your readings exceed any of these values, you must take action to reduce noise in your workplace first before providing hearing protection. Remember, the aim here is to prevent Noise-Induced Hearing Loss.
Who Are Cirrus?

We Believe In Making Noise Measurement Simple

Ever since we started distributing noise measuring technology in 1970, we have been committed to making life easier for our customers. How do we achieve this? By combining innovative technology and usability. This, together with our 40+ years experience, has enabled us to create a suite of instruments that are perfect for Noise at Work measurements. All you have to do is switch on, point and go. It’s that simple.

The Optimus Range of Sound Level Meters

Meet our latest generation of Sound Level Meters. The Optimus has evolved to measure all applications and parameters, easily. Whether you need simple noise measurements or detailed noise analysis, the Optimus has you covered.

For added peace of mind, the Optimus comes with a 15-Year Warranty, so you’re always covered.

Discover more about what the Optimus can do for you >>>

www.cirrusresearch.co.uk
Questions? Call: 01723 891 655
Mistake 1

Not Doing Anything
3 Reasons Why This Is A Mistake

1. You could be exposed to high noise levels that are damaging your hearing


2. You could become liable if your employees develop Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

   Personal Injury Lawyers are actively seeking compensation under “Industrial Deafness” claims. Protect your business from action.

3. You are breaking the law. Control of Noise At Work Regulations 2005

   One manufacturer was fined £16,000 and ordered to pay £11,000 towards the cost of the prosecution for breaching this Act.
How To Fix It

Start A Noise Risk Assessment

**Identify where there may be a risk from noise and those likely to be affected**

*TIP:* Most common risks include machinery, sound systems and high-traffic areas

**Obtain a reliable estimate of your employees' exposures and compare the exposure with the exposure action values and limit values**

*TIP:* You’ll need fully compliant noise measurement equipment to complete this task

**Work out what you need to do to comply with the Regulations. Are there noise-control measures you can introduce or is hearing protection required?**

*TIP:* Invest in the right level of hearing protection rather than choosing the cheapest option

**Regularly assess noise risks to ensure optimum protection**

*TIP:* If you’ve changed a process or introduced new equipment, it’s time to do another survey

Learn how our noise measurement equipment can help you
Mistake 2

Not Using The Right Instruments
3 Reasons Why This Is A Mistake

1. Your readings might not be accurate or provide enough data for your risk assessment

While cheaper instruments might sound attractive, their accuracy and level and detail can be called into question.

2. If you’re using an instrument that doesn’t meet the Standard, your readings could be invalid

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 is pretty clear about what you need to use to comply. Are you?

3. You could be putting yourself at risk taking the measurements

There are different types of noise measurement instruments, handheld and mounted. Are you using the right one?
How To Fix It

Top Questions When Choosing The Right Measurement Instruments

**Q: What measurements do you require?**

**A:** Don’t over complicate matters. Choose an instrument that offers what you need, not everything going. Here’s the minimum data you need for compliance, provided by basic sound level meters.

**Do you need more data than this?**

- The equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure level (LAeq)
- The maximum C-weighted peak sound pressure level (LCPeak)

Meet the doseBadge Noise Dosimeter

"Your sound level meter should meet at least Class 2 of BS EN 61672-1:2003 (the current Standard), or at least Type 2 of BS EN 60804:2001 (the former Standard)"

**Q: Is it practical to use a handheld meter?**

**A:** Is access an issue? Is it unsafe? You need a noise dosimeter. This unobtrusive device is worn by your employee and captures all the noise data you need.

**Q: Does it meet the required Standards?**

**A:** It’s all about the Regulations. If it doesn’t meet the Standard, your measurements could be called into question further down the line.

**Q: Can you calibrate the instruments?**

**A:** If the answer is no, how can you ensure the instruments are still working and measuring accurately? It’s also against the Regulations.

Our Optimus Sound Level Meter fits the Standard & is simple to use. Discover what it can do for you >>>
Mistake 3

Not Measuring Correctly
3 Reasons Why This Is A Mistake

1. You are not getting an accurate representation of the noise levels

   Just because you have measured the noise in a certain area doesn’t mean it represents the noise exposure. Are you doing it right?

2. You are breaching the best practice guidelines

   If you don’t follow the best practice guidelines, your assessments could be invalid during potential disputes.

3. You could end up either under or over-protecting your employees against excessive noise

   If your readings are not an accurate representation of the noise level, how can you provide proper hearing protection?
How To Fix It

Follow Best Practice Techniques From The Guidelines

The Regulations say that the noise should be measured at the position of the operator’s head, preferably without the operator being present. If they do need to be present then the measurement should be made at least 15cm away but near enough to be representative.

Done Correctly with an Optimus and doseBadge

Why Should I Do This?

• You are now capturing accurate data on the risks facing your employees
• You can assess and analyse noise risks based on these measurements
• You will be able to choose appropriate hearing protection and noise control measures to protect your workforce, as well as your business

Top Tip from our Noise Experts

Have you checked if your employee is right or left-handed? This can make a difference to your readings. Make sure you’re measuring from the side of the body that faces the most exposure.
Mistake 4

Not Calibrating Your Meter
3 Reasons Why This Is A Mistake

1. You don’t know if your instrument has been damaged or malfunctioned before use.
   Are your responsible for your equipment 100% of time? Even if you are, how do you know it has not developed a fault?

2. The microphones of the instruments are very sensitive (for obvious reasons) so you want to make sure it’s measuring accurately.
   Not calibrating your meter regularly means your readings could be inaccurate.

3. You are not complying with the Regulations on calibration.
   Using a meter that hasn’t been calibrated for a long time? Your readings might be invalid. Calibrate!
How To Fix It

Calibrate! Calibrate! Calibrate!

What the Regulations Say:
A sound calibrator should be used to check the meter each day before and after making measurements.

“Your calibrator should meet at least Class 2 of BS EN 60942:2003.”

How Do I Calibrate My Equipment?
The easiest way is to choose a manufacturer that supplies a calibrator with their instrumentation. The calibrator fits on top of the microphone.

There’s Also Recalibration
You must send your instruments to be recalibrated at least every two years to comply with the Regulations. This will ensure that both your instruments and the calibrator are working correctly.

If you choose Cirrus Research, we recommend sending your instruments for recalibration every year. Why? This extends your warranty to 15 Years and covers against accidental damage.
Mistake 5

Not Trying To Control Noise Risks First
3 Reasons Why This Is A Mistake

1. There is still a risk from excessive noise levels in your workplace
   You’ve identified a noise hazard and given all your workforce hearing protection but there’s a still a risk. Can you reduce the risk?

2. You’ve not reduced the noise risk but given hearing protection that cuts noise levels below 70 dB. Can your workforce still hear other warning sounds? Probably not.
   You could be over-protecting your staff from excessive noise

3. You’re still open to action from the Health & Safety Executive
   Hearing protection is always the last resort. You should be trying to reduce the noise risks first. Businesses that don’t do this can be fined by the Regulator.
How To Fix It

Protect Your Employees By Eliminating The Risks

What Are We Aiming For?
To make sure the legal limits for noise exposure are not exceeded.

Why?
If you don’t attempt to reduce noise, you’re still open to action from HSE.

How? Here’s Some Tips From Our Noise Experts
Invest in quieter machinery or adjust working patterns to reduce exposure times. There are also plenty of noise reduction measures you can introduce, such as sound barriers, walls and enclosures.

Can’t Reduce Noise? Here’s The Last Resort Option

You’ve attempted to control noise risks in your business but they’re still above the legal limit, what do you do?
You can now issue hearing protection. Once taken into account, noise exposure should be between 70 dB and 80 dB.

TIP: Select protectors that are suitable for the working environment. Consider how comfortable and hygienic they are.

Finding the right protection can be difficult but there is an easier way.

Our NoiseTools Software can automatically recommend a range of hearing protection from your noise measurements.

Even better, it’s FREE with our Noise At Work Measurement Products.
Measure Your Success

Now It’s Over To You

We’ve given you some guidance on implementing an accurate process for measuring Noise At Work. Now it’s time to review your risk assessments and ensure you are adhering to these best practices.

Remember, it’s not just about protecting your employees, it’s also about protecting your business against potential injury claims and fines for breaching these important Regulations.

Further Reading

Want to know more about measuring Noise At Work? Our Noise Experts have written a series of highly-popular blog posts, based on their years of experience. Check them out for yourself:

The Risks of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss in an Industrial Workplace

Control of Noise at Work Regulations – What You Need to Measure

Choosing Noise Measurement Equipment for Noise at Work

What's the Difference Between a Class 1 and Class 2 Sound Level Meter?

What are A, C & Z Frequency Weightings?
Extra Support

We Don’t Only Provide Noise Measuring Instruments

5 Reasons To Choose Cirrus Research

**UK Support & Training**

Buying noise measurement instruments is one thing, but using them properly is another. Our Noise Experts provide training courses around the UK. We’ll show you how to get the best from your instruments, as well as help you comply with the Regulations.

**dBA Advantage Card**

Do you like the sound of £1000 of FREE benefits? That’s what you get with the dBA Advantage Card. Call or email us to find out more.

**15-Year ‘No Quibble’ Warranty**

With Cirrus Research, your instruments are always covered. This warranty also includes accidental damage if you recalibrate with us annually.

**Calibration & Service**

Keep your instruments performing at their optimum capacity with our calibration and servicing packages.

**NoiseTools Software**

What’s the point of having all that data if you can’t analyse it? With every Optimus Sound Level Meter or doseBadge, we’ll give you our FREE NoiseTools Software so you can easily analyse your data and choose suitable hearing protection.
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Want to find the right instruments for the job?

Contact our Noise Experts today for a FREE Demo and Quotation

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