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| Over-The-Counter (OTC)  Hearing Aids | | |
| What are OTC Hearing Aids? | | |
| Learn the facts! | | |
| Over-The-Counter (OTC) hearing aids are a less expensive hearing technology option that can be purchased without a formal hearing evaluation or professional diagnosis, prescription, and support.  The devices are available at local pharmacies, large retail stores, online, and in some audiology clinics. OTC hearing aids may allow more timely access and lower cost for *adults with perceived mild to moderate hearing loss*. OTC hearing aids are inappropriate for children 18 and under due to their complex educational and communication needs.  OTC hearing aids are generally less expensive than traditional, prescriptive hearing aids as the technology is less sophisticated and there is no formally trained in person servicing and support. Although it is not required some audiology clinics may offer service packages for your devices to ensure proper fitting, tuning, support, and maintenance.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | OTC | Prescriptive | | FDA Regulated | YES | YES | | Hearing exam | Approximated by self or online tools | Comprehensive audiologic assessment | | Hearing levels | Mild to moderate | Normal to profound | | Age | 18+ | Any age | | Average price | < $1,000 /pair | ~ $1,000-$7,000 /pair (service package may or may  not be included) | | Selection, purchase, and fitting process | Self-selection and approximated fitting. Can be purchased from retail stores, online, and some hearing care clinics. | Audiologist guided selection and customized fitting. Can only be purchased from a hearing care clinic. | |  | Are OTC Hearing Aids right for me?  Since no formal hearing evaluation is required, it is at your discretion to determine if it’s right for you. Here are some questions to help identify your candidacy:   * Are you able to hear easily in quiet, one-on-one situations? * Are there only a few listening situations where you need an extra “boost” as opposed to all listening situations? * Does turning up the phone or TV just slightly help you hear better?   When in doubt, schedule a comprehensive hearing evaluation with your local audiologist! |

***RESOURCES  
American Academy of Audiology*** <https://www.audiology.org/consumers-and-patients/managing-hearing-loss/consumers-and-otc-hearing-aids/>  
***National Council On Aging***<https://www.ncoa.org/adviser/hearing-aids/over-the-counter-hearing-aids/> ***National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders*** <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/over-counter-hearing-aids>

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