

Guideline Values for Community Noise in Specific Areas

Adapted from the World Health Organization Guidelines for Community Noise

Specific environment	Critical health effect(s) (occur at lowest decibel level if time period reached)	Lowest decibel level *	Time period (hours)	Maximum decibel level **
Outdoor living area	Serious annoyance, daytime and evening;	55	16	-
	Moderate annoyance, daytime and evening	50	16	-
Dwelling, indoors	Speech interference, moderate annoyance, daytime and evening	35	16	
Inside bedrooms	Sleep disturbance, night-time	30	8	45
Outside bedrooms	Sleep disturbance, window open (outdoor values)	45	8	60
School classrooms and preschools, indoors	Speech interference, disturbance of information extraction, message communication	35	During class	-
Preschool bedrooms, indoors	Sleep disturbance	30	Sleep time	45
School, outdoor playground	Annoyance (external source)	55	During play	-
Hospital, ward rooms	Sleep disturbance, night-time	30	8	40
	Sleep disturbance, daytime and evenings	30	16	-
Hospitals, treatment rooms	Interference with rest and recovery	As low as possible	-	-
Industrial, commercial, shopping and traffic areas, indoors and outdoors	Hearing impairment	70	24	110
Ceremonies, festivals and entertainment events	Hearing impairment (for patrons, < 5 times/year)	100	4	110
Public addresses, indoors and outdoors	Hearing impairment	85	1	110
Music through headphones/earphones	Hearing impairment	85 under headphones	1	110
Impulse sounds from toys, fireworks and firearms	Hearing impairment (adults)	-	-	140 #
	Hearing impairment (children)	-	-	120 #
Outdoors in parks and conservation areas	Disruption of tranquility	Preserve quiet outdoor areas. Ratio of intruding noise to natural background should be kept low.	-	-

*Lowest decibel level is measured as the average of continuous noise level, where noisy events have a significant influence (LAeq).

** Maximum decibel level is measured as the maximum “A weighted level” of a single sound (LAmax fast).

Measured as peak sound pressure rather than “LAmax fast”.