

# What's your problem?

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## How do I determine employee noise exposure?

General noise levels within a factory will vary between areas and processes. Although noise levels may be high in some areas it may be that few employees are actually exposed to it whilst other 'quieter' tasks may impact directly upon employees. In assessing employee noise exposure it is important to obtain an accurate noise measurement of the process and determine the duration of exposure to that noise.

Duration of exposure can be obtained by observation, knowledge of the process or by simply asking the employee. Recording an accurate noise measurement will typically require an integrating Sound Level Meter.

Noise exposure is often a product of both direct noise from the machinery and the reverberant noise condition of the building. As a result all noise measurements must be taken at 'the ear' of the employee while they are undertaking their typical daily tasks to determine their individual noise exposure.

The HSE provides a useful online noise exposure calculator [www.hse.gov.uk/noise](http://www.hse.gov.uk/noise) that references the recorded level against the duration to determine individual noise exposure; the result will help to identify those employees that are at the greatest risk.

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