



Sound Scouts™
Hear for your future.

The Guide to Test Your Child's Hearing At Home

The Sound Scouts App is supported by



Australian Government
Department of Health



**Hearing
Australia**



Why are hearing checks important for kids?

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An estimated **1 in 10 children** suffer from hearing loss which left undetected can lead to speech, learning and behavioural issues.

The **World Health Organisation** recommends that all children should have their hearing checked by the time they start school.

When should kids have their hearing checked?



Every child starting school should have their hearing tested and ideally again in Year 3 & Year 5 in line with NAPLAN



Any child identified with learning or behavioural problems should have their hearing tested





What are the types of hearing loss?

Conductive Hearing Loss (middle ear)

This type of hearing loss occurs when something interferes with sound travelling to the inner ear. Usually temporary, it's often caused by fluid from middle ear infections but can also result from ear wax build-up or a foreign object lodged in the ear canal.

It's estimated that **four** out of **five** children will experience a middle ear infection at least once. Hearing loss can occur even after symptoms resolve because fluid can remain in the ear.

Sensorineural Hearing Loss (inner ear)

Sensorineural hearing loss results from damage to the inner ear and is permanent. It's often present from birth but can also be acquired through exposure to loud noise, some medicines, certain viral infections and head injuries.

It exists on a spectrum, ranging from mild to profound. Hearing aids, or for those with profound loss, cochlear implants, can reduce the impact of a hearing loss.

Difficulty Listening in Noise

This is a hearing issue that can occur despite a person receiving normal results in an audiogram. While hearing in quiet may be normal, hearing in noisy environments, such as the classroom or the playground, may be extremely difficult.

Difficulty hearing in noise can be caused by a number of things including (but not limited to): auditory processing disorder, a developmental delay, a language issue, attention deficit and English as a second language (or bi-lingual/multilingual capabilities).

What you will need to test your child at home



A decent pair of adult headphones



A tablet or smartphone

Before you start...



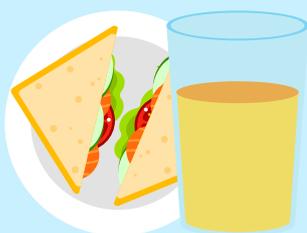
Ensure your device is loaded with the Sound Scouts app.

The app is free to download from the App Store or Google Play.



Ensure the room you are testing in is quiet and free from distractions.

Close windows and where possible turn off air conditioners to minimise noise.



Ensure your child is well rested and has had a bite to eat. We find the best time to test is in the morning.

Avoid testing at night time!



Which headphones should you use?



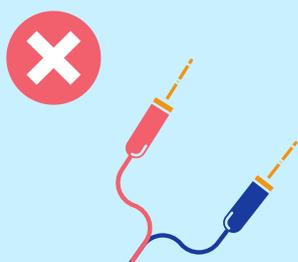
Use a pair of good quality adult headphones.



Good quality earbuds are also suitable (for home testing).
Avoid using cheap earbuds.



Do not use gaming or surround sound headphones

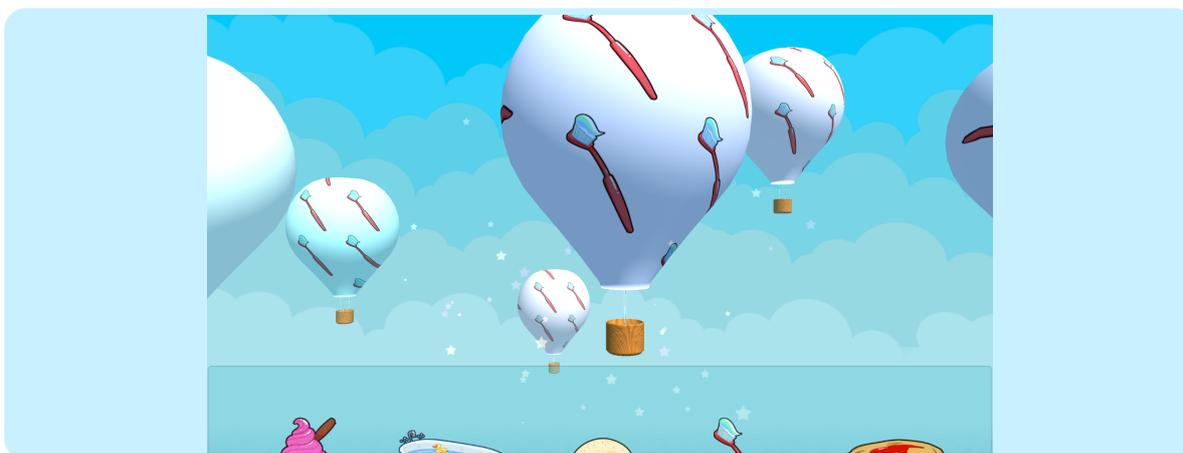


Do not use a splitter as they affect results

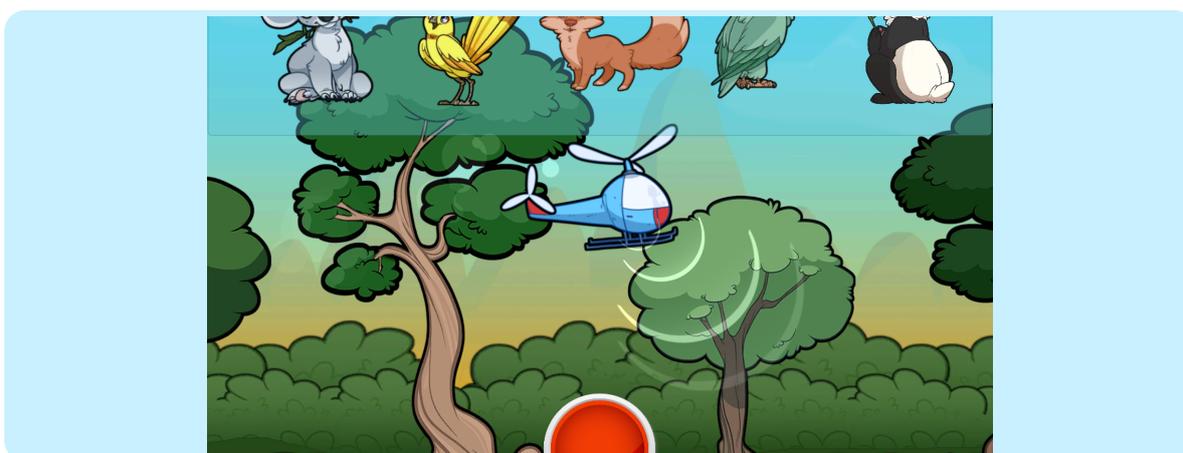


How does the Sound Scouts app work?

Sound Scouts incorporates **three separate test activities** in one game. Each Player's results are compared with the results of players of the same age with normal hearing.



Speech-in-Quiet



Tone-in-Noise



Speech-in-Noise



Getting Ready To Play

To ensure you receive accurate results, we recommend the following steps.



Before playing, explore the trial run with the child to help familiarise them with the game.

The trial run can be found under **Set Up**



Once you're ready to play, click **New Session > **Start** and complete the Supervisor Setup activity.**

To do the set up activity, the supervising adult should have good hearing.



Once you have completed the Supervisor Set Up, head to **Player Set Up and enter the details of the child.**

The child's month and year of birth is required to measure the results against players of the same age with normal hearing.



You're ready to go! Place the headphones on the child and get ready to start the test.

Head to the next page for our top tips to keep your child on track during testing.



Why the Trial Run is important



Dexterity and Familiarity

The trial run helps your child become familiar with the game as it demonstrates the activities in the test.

It also enables you to check the child knows how to swipe and tap, which are the main actions in the test.



ESL (English as a Second Language)

The trial run is important for ESL children as it introduces them to the words in the game as well as how the game works.

If your child can identify 5 words (we suggest they say them out loud) they should be able to undertake the test. Please use the Trial Run with the headphones OUT to ensure they understand each of the three activities.



Cognitive Issues

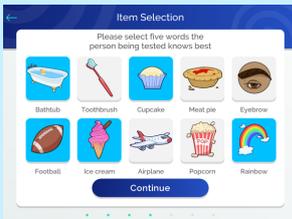
If your child has cognitive issues, you should confirm that they are able to successfully complete the Trial Run activities before undertaking a full test.

If they fail to complete the Trial Run, cease testing and get in touch with a **Paediatric Audiologist** or your **GP** to organise a hearing test.



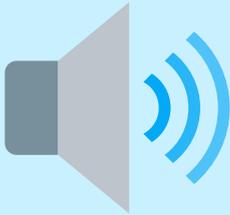
During Testing

The Sound Scouts testing process takes **8 minutes** and has been designed to be easy and fun, but it's important to remember a couple of things to ensure you receive **accurate results**.



At the beginning of the test make sure your child selects the words they know best by saying them out loud.

These words will be used in the test so it's important your child can recognise them.



"The sounds get quieter and quieter"

Tell your child that in the test, the sounds get quieter and quieter. Sometimes they won't be able to hear them - and that's normal.



Try not to speak during the test as it can impact results. You cannot pause the game as it interrupts the testing process.

If your child needs support, encourage them by patting their shoulder or pointing to your ears to demonstrate **listening**.



Using the hidden exit if child is unable to complete the test

If the child is unable to complete the test you can quit the game via the hidden exit. Tap the top right hand corner three times.

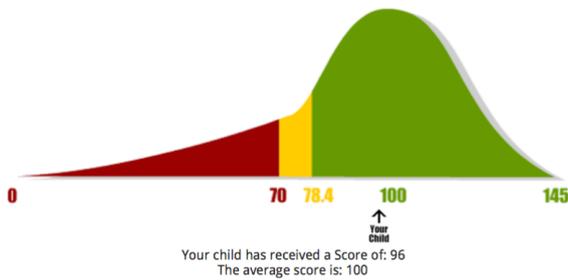


Understanding Results

When the test is complete a report is automatically generated.

The report is viewable on the **device** and is also sent via **email** (if you have provided an email address).

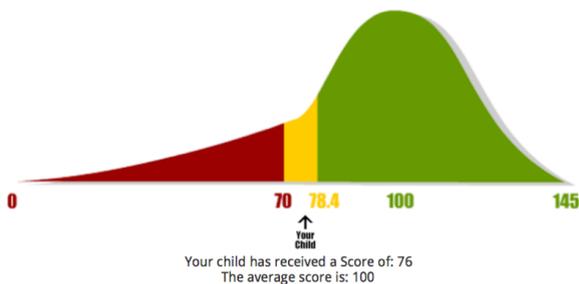
Pass



If the child receives a **Pass** the Report will state that the child has passed the Sound Scouts hearing check. This means that the child's results are within the normal range for children of the same age.

If you have ongoing concerns about the child's hearing we strongly recommend seeing your doctor or a hearing professional.

Borderline



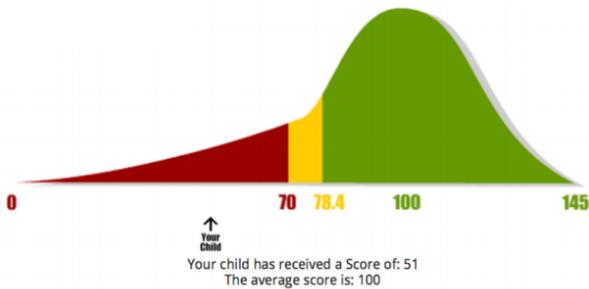
If the child receives a **Borderline** result, hearing may be on the edge of normal.

When a Borderline result is received it is recommended that the child is retested after 24 hours. If the child receives a similar result further investigation may be necessary.



Understanding Results

Fail



If the child receives a Fail result, we recommend retesting after 24 hours. If the child receives a second Fail result, then further diagnostic assessment is recommended.

See below for the next steps once your child has failed the test.

The Next Steps Following a Fail Result

Children who fail the hearing screening may be flagged as having an issue in one of the following areas:

Middle Ear (Conductive Hearing Loss)

If the child receives a fail result with an indication of a conductive, or middle ear, hearing loss, the Sound Scouts report will recommend visiting your doctor for further assessment.

A middle ear issue may be caused by things such as a build up of wax or fluid, and in most cases, with the appropriate treatment, hearing will return to normal.



The Next Steps Following a **Fail Result**

Inner ear (Sensorineural Hearing Loss)

If the child receives a fail result with an indication of a sensorineural, or inner ear, hearing loss, the report recommends follow up with Hearing Australia or an audiologist for a diagnostic assessment.

Please note, Hearing Australia provides free services to children with sensorineural hearing loss (conditions apply). We recommend speaking to the Hearing Australia representatives about the costs when booking an appointment.

Difficulty Hearing in Noise

If the child receives a fail result with an indication of difficulty hearing in noise, the possible causes need to be considered. Difficulty hearing in noise can be caused by poor attention, language disorders, English as a second language (ESL or EAL/D) and Auditory Processing Disorders (APDs), which are related to the brain's ability to process sounds.

Children who experience difficulty hearing in noise can typically hear in quiet environments but struggle in noisy environments like the classroom or playground. By determining the most likely possible cause, the child's care team can determine who best to see for further assessment.



A Sound Scouts fail result indicating **sensorineural hearing loss** is accepted as a referral for the purpose of obtaining an appointment with Hearing Australia.



Ready to get started?

Download the Sound Scouts app for free from
the **App Store** or **Google Play**



Even when I knew that Summer had speech problems, I didn't really think it would affect her too much at school. However, seeing the hearing test results on the screen for myself after she had played Sound Scouts, it brought home the importance of the situation, and made it easier for me to accept that Summer would need a hearing aid to help her hear in the classroom.

Anthea, Parent of Summer - 7 Year Old



An excellent app. Thanks Sound Scouts for putting in the time, energy and money into this app which gives parents and teachers a simple way to screen children for hearing issues.

Tan KD, App Store User

Sound Scouts is an initiative supported by

