

Top tips for communication

12 things to remember when communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing



DO

Always make sure you have the person's attention before speaking



DON'T

Never make assumptions about communication preferences. Some people use sign language, some use lipreading – most people use a combination of approaches

Make sure there isn't lots of noise in the background (like a TV) or try to talk to someone from across the room



Face the person while you are speaking, do not turn away

Always stand with your face to the light and make eye contact where possible



Start by making the topic of the conversation as clear as possible

Try to speak clearly and naturally and use facial expressions

Don't cover or put anything in your mouth while talking. Eating or biting your nails while talking to someone is a definite no-no



Avoid standing with your back to a window – this can turn your face into shadow and make it harder to lipread



Remember: take your time and be patient. Repeat or rephrase what you have said if you need to as some words might be tricky to understand. If you're stuck, try writing it down!



Try not to speak too slowly, mumble or shout – this will distort your lip patterns

Don't give up, get frustrated or say "Forget it"!