

Hearing Aid Compatibility (HAC) for Wireless Devices

Hearing aids do not always function well with wireless handsets. Hearing aids operate by using a microphone to pick up sound waves, converting the sound waves into electrical signals to be amplified. Distortion or amplification of unwanted sound (noise) often occurs.

The FCC's hearing aid compatibility requirements address hearing aids that operate in either of two modes – acoustic coupling ("M" rating) or inductive coupling ("T" rating).

M-Ratings: Hearing aids operating in acoustic coupling mode receive through a microphone and then amplify all sounds surrounding the user, including both desired sounds, such as a telephone's audio signal, and unwanted ambient noise.

T-Ratings: Hearing aids operating in inductive coupling mode turn off the microphone to avoid amplifying unwanted ambient noise, instead using a telecoil to receive only audio signal-based magnetic fields generated by inductive coupling-capable telephones.

The FCC's "M" and "T" ratings indicate whether a handset can be expected to function well with a hearing aid and are generally marked clearly on the handset packaging. The "M" or "T" rating does not guarantee that the handset will function without distortion or noise, so Randolph Telephone recommends that you test the handset before purchasing.

Levels of Functionality

Randolph Telephone offers HAC-compatible handsets and devices in all major price categories, including low-cost ("C" level) (<\$100), moderate-cost ("B" level") (\$100-\$250), and high-end/feature-rich ("A" level) (>\$250). Costs generally correlate with the number of features, but, if through experience, Randolph finds that a certain handset contains features that work well with hearing aids, such as volume control, it will be labeled accordingly with an "A" level for functionality. Randolph's sales staff are trained to assist all existing and prospective customers looking for a HAC-compliant device/handset. HAC-compatible handsets and devices vary in their inherent "levels of functionality," but typically at least one (1) HAC-compliant handset/device with features and services typical of its price category can be found that meets each customer's price range.

Phones	Rating	Functionality
BlackBerry Curve 8330	M4,T4	A
LG 260 Rumor	M3,T3	B
LG 3280	M3	C
LG 3300	M3	C
Motorola QA30 Hint	M4,T3	B
Motorola W385	M4,T4	B
Motorola Z6m Rokr	M4	B
Motorola W315	M3	C
Kyocera M2000	M4,T4	B

Our handsets have been tested and rated for use with hearing aids for some of the wireless technologies that they use. However, there may be some newer wireless technologies used in these phones that have not been tested yet for use with hearing aids. It is important to try the different features of these phones thoroughly and in different locations, using your hearing aid or cochlear implant, to determine if you hear any interfering noise. Consult your service provider or the manufacturer of the handset for information on hearing aid compatibility.