

DEVELOPEMENT OF A  
HEARING LOSS SIMULATOR

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## DEAFNESS

Definitions of deafness take for granted an understanding of what is meant by hearing. They are stated in terms of some deficiency, impairment, or absence of hearing, and the deaf are described as those whose hearing is nonfunctional or below a certain standard.

Deafness is further defined in a variety of ways according to whether the perspective is educational, medical, psychological or legal. The most widely used definition is one given by the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the deaf and states that the deaf are 'Those in whom the sense of hearing is nonfunctional for the ordinary purposes of life.'

The deaf are divided into two subgroups, which are differentiated in terms of when the loss of hearing occurred. The congenitally deaf are those who were born deaf; the adventitiously deaf are those who were born with normal hearing but whose sense of hearing became nonfunctional later through illness or accident. This distinction of the time of the onset of deafness is of great importance in rehabilitation. A child who is born deaf has far greater difficulties in acquiring language skills than a child who becomes deaf at the age of 10.

The hard-of-hearing constitute another major group. They are defined as those in whom the sense of hearing although defective, is functional with or without a hearing aid. This people can usually hear only a certain range of the complete frequency spectrum audible to people with normal hearing.