



Don't Lose the Music at festivals

There are a few issues to think about with sound at festivals. For someone going to a festival, it's a pretty easy thing to think about. For a festival organiser, there's the exposure of staff, exposure of audiences and environmental leakage to think about to name three. We'll leave the leakage to others, but will mention how to tackle the exposures of staff and audiences.

Going to a festival?

If you're going to a festival, there are some really easy steps you can take to protect your hearing:

1. Stand away from speakers – they'll be loud, and can cause real damage and cause tinnitus
2. Take regular breaks from loud music – the great thing about a festival is that there's so much to do between seeing bands
3. Wear earplugs with filters so you can enjoy the same quality of music, but at safer levels – they're available for about the price of a CD and are a great investment
4. There's loads more information about protecting your hearing at festivals, gigs, clubs, and when listening to your mp3 player at www.dontlosethemusic.com

Staff

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 state that anyone who is at risk of damage from loud noise of any kind at work, including loud music, must be protected. If an employee will be exposed to an average of 80dB over eight hours, or a peak of 135dB, there are specific steps that should be taken. There are more steps to be taken with an average of 85dB over eight hours, or a peak of 137dB.

Finally, after allowing for the reduction of exposure by hearing protection, an employee must not be exposed to beyond 87dB over an average of eight hours, or a peak of 140dB. If they could be, the employer must take steps to ensure they are not.

There's a lot more information about the regulations, your rights and responsibilities on the [Don't Lose the Music website](http://www.dontlosethemusic.com).

Audiences

It's important that people who go to events are protected too, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 covers this. Essentially, if a member of the public is potentially at risk from something you'd protect your staff from, you have to take steps to protect them too.

Signs near stages and speakers – anywhere loud – should clearly say that loud music can damage your hearing over time, and suggest a simple way to protect yourself. Also, think about providing hearing protection – Don't Lose the Music can't get to every festival, even though we might like to!