

# TECH TALK: Hearing Protection: Why?

It's not hard in this country to lose your hearing. In the 80's everyone blamed it on the Angola war; today we blame it on cheap helmets, loud pipes and vuvuzelas.

Rule of the thumb is that anything over 80db for more than just a couple of minutes will begin to tear away at your hearing ability. Most riders have already had plenty of this battering and many are already 25% deaf or worse just from everyday life on the road. The solution is simple. No matter how much hearing you have left, beam yourself over to the nearest **Ear Institute** and invest in a set of custom-made ear plugs.

There is no law against using ear protection when operating a motorcycle; the fact is, once you put your plugs in, you will be able to hear most of the same sounds you would hear if you were driving a car with the windows rolled up. Your visual perception will be stronger because your senses won't be processing so much audio information. It's really quite a treat once you get your plugs in and start riding; you will no doubt be able to ride more because you'll be less tired mentally and faster because you will not feel intimidated by the wind noise in your helmet. Oops, did I say faster?

I recently tested my Interphone F4 Headset (took a phone call) while wearing my **Moto-Ear** plugs and riding at above legal speed; it completely eliminated the high frequency wind noise in my helmet but still allowed me to have a normal conversation with the caller while riding. Furthermore, the faster I was going the more noise I expected but NO! With the **Moto-Ear** the experience was quite the opposite, the faster I was going the more effectively the ear-plugs worked! Awesome stuff, I couldn't believe it at first so I had to try it again...

Many people simply cannot stand (or get used to) wearing them, and if improperly inserted will provide very little noise reduction benefit and will hurt in no time at all. Wearing earplugs of any kind, it seems to me, is counter-productive at speeds below 60km/h, but if you ride our highways for any distance at all you will CERTAINLY be better off wearing a set.

Just because your hearing is already a 'little' damaged from wind noise you should not think it can't get worse. Riding a motorcycle at highway speeds is a GUARANTEED way to damage your hearing - and potentially profoundly. The majority of our hearing needs involve frequencies below 16 KHz. These sounds are what we use when we talk (and listen.) These also happen to be the frequencies most affected by wind noise hearing damage. For perspective, a noisy restaurant produces about 80db of noise; hearing loss can begin at 80db. Max safe exposure at 94db is 1 hour, and only 15 minutes to sounds in excess of 110db.

You can get Earplugs really cheap but the ultimate solution is to get a pair of the **Moto-Ear Hearing Protection** sets which is custom-made and moulded to each ear for ultimate comfort and can be tuned at specific levels of noise management. That's truly the way to go but expect to see this as an investment and not as a consumable item like the cheapies you get from pharmacies and bike shops; they served their purpose, time now to move onto something reliable and more effective.

Use them each time you ride and you'll be doing yourself a great service; stop me any time, and you'll find me wearing my **Moto-Ear**.

Now, if you prefer to ignore this bit of advice, start practising saying "HUH" and get used to it.



**Moto Ear - Hard @ R866 (Acrylic)**

**Moto Ear - Soft @ R798 (Silicon)**

**Prices Include 14% VAT plus Hearing Screening, Consultation, Ear Plugs, Wax Remover, Clip, Cloth, Pouch**



Acrylic



Silicon



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