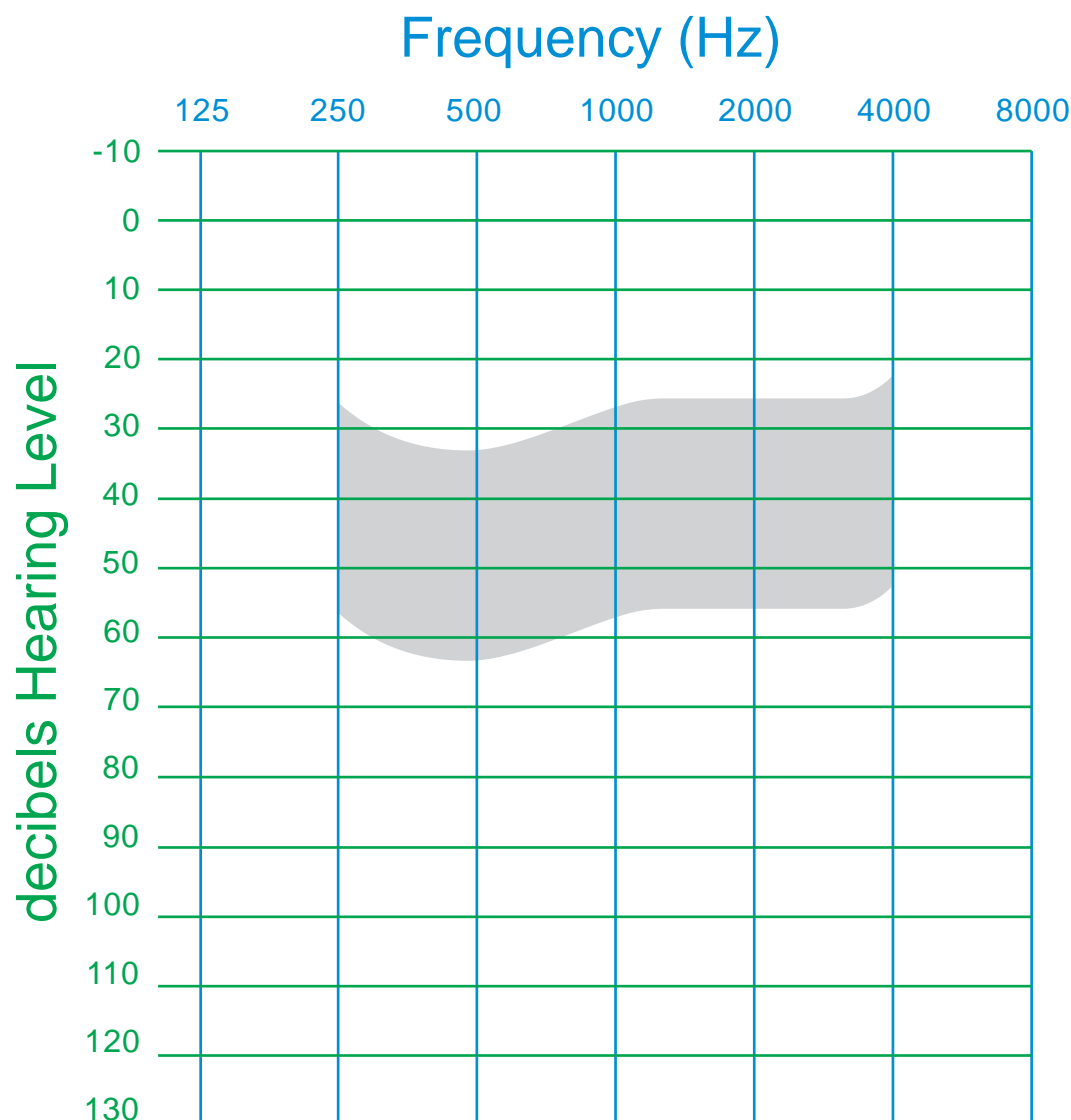


The Audiogram



An audiogram is a graph of the quietest sounds a person can hear.

On the audiogram, the test frequencies or pitch used during hearing testing are shown with the **vertical** (straight up and down) lines. The decibel (loudness of sounds) levels required for a person's hearing threshold are shown with the **horizontal lines**.

Threshold means the loudness needed at any frequency for a person to just hear the test sound very softly. The loudness, of the sounds is measured from soft at the top of the graph to loud at the bottom. These numbers are along the left and right sides of the graph.

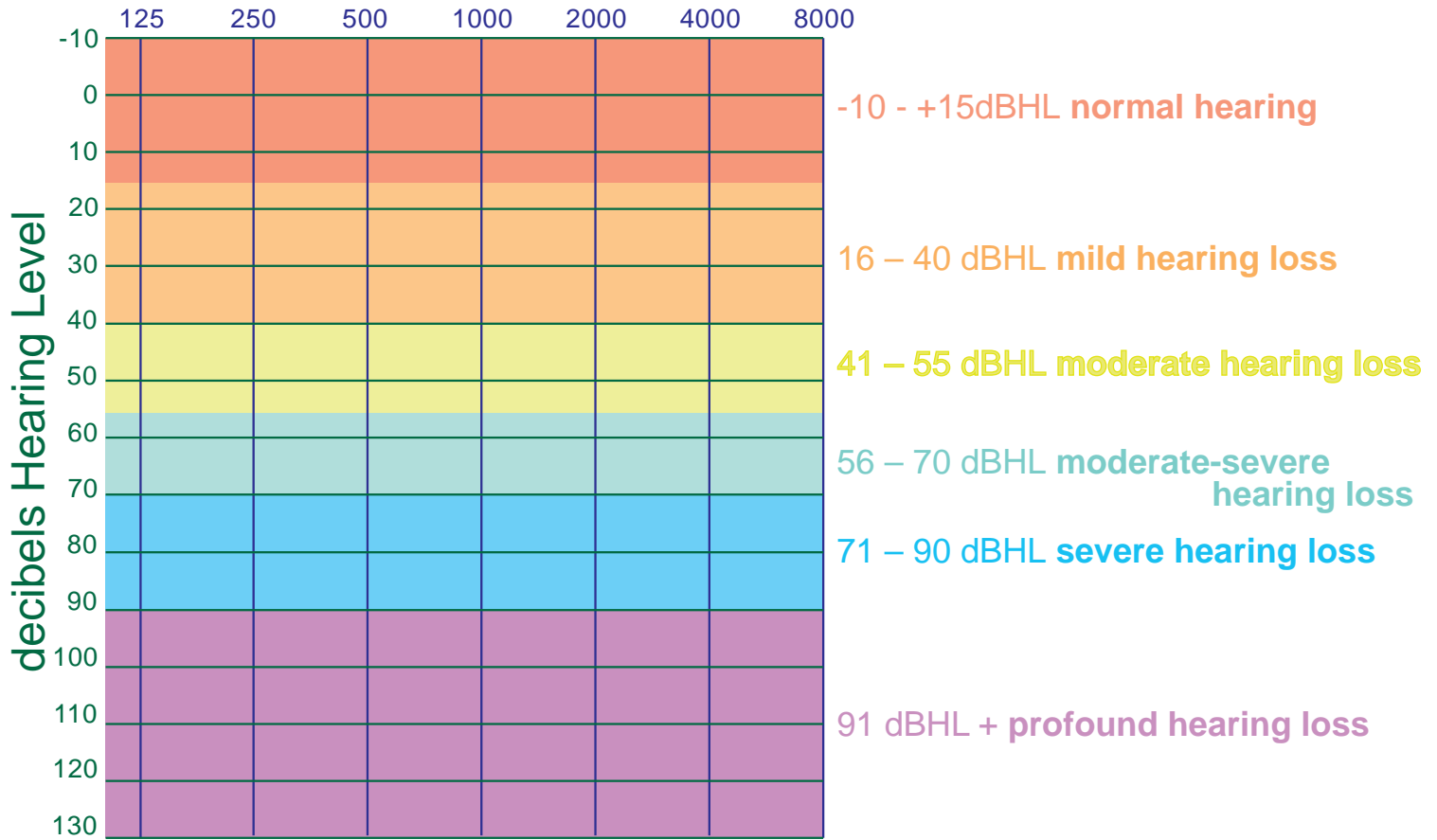
Decibel is the scale of loudness of sounds. The higher the decibel, the louder the sound is. For example 30 dB is a whisper while 100-110 dB is how loud a motorbike engine is. Hearing is **not** measured in percentages %. It is measured in decibels (dB or dB HL).

Frequency is measured by the number of waves or cycles that a sound makes in a second. We use **Hertz (Hz)** to measure **cycles per second (cps)**. Another word for frequency is pitch. All sounds have a certain pitch or frequency. The pitch or frequency of the sounds is measured from left to right (low to high pitch) by numbers at the top of the graph.

The audiogram shows the hearing loss across a range of frequencies and is shown in decibels hearing level (dBHL) or decibels hearing threshold level (dBHTL). Symbols are used to record the test results on the audiogram. Many audiologists use **x** to show it is the left ear, **o** the right ear. Each hearing test center will have a key to the symbols used printed on the audiogram.

Audiologists talk about hearing loss according to its degree. The audiogram below shows the decibel hearing levels, which match to these degrees of hearing loss.

Frequency (Hz)



Normal hearing -10 to +15 dB

Mild hearing loss 16 to 40 dB

Moderate hearing loss 41 to 55 dB

Moderate-Severe hearing loss 56 to 70 dB

Severe hearing loss 71 to 90 dB

Profound hearing loss 91+ dB