

Sonic presents:



THE HISTORY OF HEARING Aids throughout the ages

Hearing loss is nothing new—but manmade solutions have certainly evolved. Throughout the years, vanity and convenience combine to produce formidable, fashionable, and ultimately first-rate hearing instruments.

External Extravagances



Cupped Hand • PREHISTORIC

Even early man knew a hand to the ear helps. (A boost of up to 12 decibels!)

The Ear Trumpet • 1624

There were brass beauties and cavernous cones.



Conversation Tube • 1800s

Coil it a high-end hose with fanciful ends for speaking and listening.



"Hands-free?"

Try two trumpets on a headband.



Acoustic Accessories

Furniture featured resonant boxes with secret listening tubes sewn in the backs.

Enter Electricity



Akouphone • 1895

Like the brand-new telephone, this hearing aid featured a handheld receiver.



Listening Lore • 1913

Giant ear trumpets were used during WWII to detect incoming airplanes.



Vactophone • 1920

At 7 pounds, this vacuum tube technology was "light enough" to carry around.

Where to Wear?



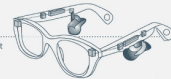
Body-worn Aids • 1935

Worn on a belt, these card deck-sized aids trailed a wire to a loudspeaker in the ear.



Eyeglass Aids • 1950s

A sight to behold: Speakers were built into the temple pieces of spectacles.



Specialty Aids

Let's just take a listen. Doctors could get stethoscopes with hearing aids built in.

Today They're Tiny



Wearable Transistors • 1950s

The first to resemble today's instruments, these wireless aids fit behind the ear.



First Digital Hearing Aid • 1995

Computer chips got smaller and better—and so did hearing aids.



Almost Invisible • TODAY

Today's hearing aids are hard to notice, but offer hearing results that can't be missed.

IMAGE SOURCES:
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