

...WHO Guidelines for Noise

Updated on : 11 Sep 2017

In WHO noise quality guidelines, values are summarized with regard to specific environments and effects. For each environment and situation, the guideline values take into consideration the identified health effects and are set, based on the lowest levels of noise that affect health (critical health effect). Guideline values typically correspond to the lowest effect level for general populations, such as those for indoor speech intelligibility. Noise guideline values are for the onset of health effects from noise exposures.

Specific Environment	Time Base (hours)	Standard limits as per WHO guidelines	
		LAeq [dB]	LAm _{ax} , fast [dB]
Outdoor living area	16	50 - 55	-
Dwelling, indoors, Inside bedrooms	16	35	-
	8	30	45
Outside bedrooms	8	45	60
School class rooms and pre-schools, indoors	During class	35	-
Pre-school bedrooms, indoors	Sleeping time	30	45
School, playground outdoor	During play	55	-
Hospital, ward rooms, indoors	8	30	40
	16	30	-
Hospitals, treatment rooms, indoors	-	As low as possible	-
Industrial, commercial, shopping and traffic areas, indoors and outdoors	24	70	110
Ceremonies, festivals and entertainment events	4	100	110
Public addresses, indoors and outdoors	1	85	110
Music through headphones/earphones	1	85 (under headphones, adapted to free-field values)	110
Impulse sounds from toys, fireworks and firearms	-	-	120-140 (peak sound pressure (not LAm _{ax} , fast), measured 100 mm from the ear)
Outdoors in parkland and conservation areas	-	Existing quiet outdoor areas should be preserved and the ratio of intruding noise to natural background sound should be kept low	