

Common Noise Levels

(Caltrans Noise Manual, California Department of Transportation, March 1980)

Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Noise Levels	Common Outdoor Noise Levels
110	Rock Band	
100	Inside Subway Train	Jet Flyover @ 1,000 feet
90	Food Blender @ 3 feet Garbage Disposal @ 3 feet	Gas Lawn Mower @ 3 feet Diesel Truck @ 50 feet
80	Shouting @ 3 feet	Noisy Urban Daytime
70	Vacuum Cleaner @ 10 feet	Gas Lawn Mower @ 100 feet
60	Normal Speech @ 3 feet Large Business Office	Commercial Area Heavy Traffic @ 300 feet
50	Dishwasher next room	Quiet Urban Daytime
40	Small Theater/Conference Room (background)	Quiet Urban Nighttime Quiet Suburban Nighttime
30	Library Bedroom at Night	
20	Concert Hall (background) Broadcast & Recording Studio	Quiet Rural Nighttime
10		
0	Threshold of Hearing	

NOISE TERMINOLOGY DEFINITIONS

<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Ambient Noise Level	The composite of noise from all sources near and far. The normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location.
A-Weighted Sound Level, (dB[A])	The sound pressure level in decibels as measured on a sound level meter using the A-weighted filter network. The A-weighting filter de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequency components of the sound in a manner similar to the frequency response of the human ear and correlates well with subjective reactions to noise.
Community Noise Equivalent Level, (CNEL)	CNEL is the A-weighted equivalent continuous sound exposure level for a 24-hour period with a ten dB adjustment added to sound levels occurring during nighttime hours (10 pm to 7 am) and a five dB adjustment added to the sound levels occurring during the evening hours (7 pm to 10 pm).
Day/Night Noise Level (Ldn)	The average A-weighted noise level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 10 decibels to levels measured in the night between 10:00 PM and 7:00AM.
Decibel, (dB)	A unit for measuring sound pressure level, equal to 10 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the measured sound pressure squared to a reference pressure, which is 20 micropascals.
Time-Average Sound Level, (TAV)	The sound level corresponding to a steady state sound level and containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period. TAV is designed to average all of the loud and quiet sound levels occurring over a specific time period.