

Assistive Listening Systems Quick Guide

Choosing an assistive listening system can be overwhelming and confusing, especially in light of emerging technologies like Auracast Assistive Listening Systems (ALS).

Here are some guidelines to help people with hearing loss hear **today**.

- Any system must provide clear, intelligible sound, use well-placed microphones, and have minimal latency or sound delays.
- Any proprietary, complex system limited to specific equipment or requiring people to bring additional devices will leave some people out.
- Any system that requires technical know-how, such as downloading and using additional apps on a smartphone, will leave some people out.
- Bluetooth Classic is not designed for large venues; it typically wirelessly connects people to their own personal devices, such as smartphones and TVs.
- Auracast Assistive Listening System (ALS) has future potential, but it currently faces some international hurdles before it's widely available. For example, the required International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standard is estimated to be completed in 2027; hearing instruments will need to become compatible, which could take decades, and testing with consumers with hearing loss is necessary. Auracast will co-exist with current ALS, especially hearing loops, for the foreseeable future.
- Consumers prefer hearing loops. They are the only user-friendly, widely available, non-proprietary assistive listening system used worldwide.

	Hearing Loop	FM	Infrared (IR)	Wi-Fi	Auracast	Bluetooth Classic
Easy to use	✓				In development	
Needs no equipment check-out	✓				In development	
Used at Service Counters	✓				In development	
Used in large areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	In development	
Meets ADA standard	✓	✓	✓		In development	
Needs no smartphone or app	✓	✓	✓		In development	
Minimal latency (sound delay)	✓	✓	✓		In development	
Available now	✓	✓	✓	✓	In development	✓

Pacemakers — FM and IR neckloops, and counter hearing loops. Check with your doctor.