Instructions

1. For best results, conduct this test in a quiet room (background noises can interfere with the test sounds). You can listen through speakers or headphones connected to your computer. Speakers will work with either earmuffs or earplugs. Headphones can be used with earplugs and should be the full-sized "circumaural" type that covers the entire ear and does not press on the inserted earplug.
2. Play Track 1 and adjust the volume so the sound is barely audible.
3. Put on your hearing protection. If using soft foam earplugs, we recommend the [NIOSH Roll-Pull-Hold](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/content/earplug.html) method.
4. Play Track 2 and listen for the test sound.
5. You should not be able to hear the test sound if your hearing protection is fitted properly. If you can hear Track 2, re-fit your hearing protection and repeat Step 4.

**How it Works**

The test sounds are bands of random noise with a center frequency of 1000 Hz. This is the same type of sound used in standard hearing protector ratings including the "American National Standard Methods for Measuring the Real-Ear Attenuation of Hearing Protectors" (ANSI S12.6). Both tracks are the same, but the second track is 15 decibels (dB) louder than the first. Most hearing protectors will block or "attenuate" sound by more than 15 dB if they are the right size and shape to fit your ears and are worn correctly. A sound that is barely audible at your threshold of hearing without hearing protection should be inaudible though hearing protection even if it's boosted by 15 dB.

 