

Can you feel it?

Music is something that inherently belongs to our everyday's life whether you like it or not. It's in movies to set the atmosphere, in our phones to calm our nerves after a long stressful day, or it can be a really exciting way to make money if you give it some time. However over 5% of the world's population isn't able to hear music as good as everyone else or isn't able to hear at all. But that doesn't mean they can't enjoy it.

When you're talking to somebody who really passionately loves music, you can hear them say that they "feel the music". And if you were wondering, how can deaf people enjoy it, that's the answer.

How is it possible?

We all can physically feel music to certain point. Like the buzzing in your core when you hear the bass or the power of a

drum that makes you jump a little. But deaf or hard of hearing person can feel so much more than that, because they are used to feeling sounds and their sense of touch and feel is more developed in them than in a hearing person. This is basically how our bodies work, when one sense is lacking the other senses make up for it. In case of deaf or hard of hearing person they simply feel the vibrations

of played music. Based on where they feel it, they can tell if it's a high or a low tone. They feel the low sounds mainly in their legs and feet and high sounds might be particular places on face, neck and chest.

You can try is yourself. Earplugs are commonly used to protect hearing, but you can use them to try to feel what it might be like to only be able to feel music.



Signs for **Sign Language Interpretation Provided**
and **Assistive Listening Devices.**

Thanks to modern technology, company called **CuteCircuit** made a shirt that can help deaf people experience a classical concert. The sound from eight different types of instruments is picked up by microphones on stage and a software translates the sound into data. The data is then sent wirelessly to the Sound Shirt where 16 micro actuators vibrate with the exact intensity of the music, enabling a real symphonic concert for the deaf person

How about lyrics?

The lyrics are also an important element of every song. It is common for bands or musicians to have language interpreters who sign song lyrics for their deaf audience, so they can feel the music and also know the words to the song. The problem is that as there are many different languages in the world there are also many different versions of sign language.

Can deaf people sing/make their own music?

Yes, they can. You remember Beethoven? He was an amazing composer who later in his life became deaf, but it didn't stop him. Sure he once could hear and was able to know what his music sounded like without actually having to hear it, but he also depended on vibrations from the piano when he was playing it.



He kept going. That's the spirit!

If that isn't enough for you, how about Sean Forbes? Sean is deaf (about 90%, due to spinal meningitis when he was an infant), but he's also rapper, prolific drummer, songwriter and communicator. He already released three albums and worked with Evelyn Glennie, Britain's best known deaf musician.

Even you can help!

If you are interested in some charity stuff, consider UK charity Music and the Deaf that provides access, education and opportunities in music for deaf children, young people and adults.

Or if you are interested in music charities in general MusAid that provides musical institutions in under-resourced parts of the world might be the right choice for you.

And now?