Earbuds & Smart Phones as Hearing Aids

Although not formally announced, in recent years Apple has pushed out additions to both the iPhone and AirPods that can allow them to work like hearing aids and has added Beats to the devices that can use Apple's Listen Live feature on iOS.

Samsung's Galaxy Buds Pro are also touted as functioning as entry level hearing aids when paired with Samsung phones running Android 11 or later with 1.5 GB of RAM and the Galaxy Wearable app.

Phones Compatible with Hearing Assist Features

iPhones running iOS 14.3 or later
iPads running iPadOS 14.3 or later
Samsung phones running Android 11 or later with 1.5 GB of RAM

Earbuds Compatible with Hearing Assist Features

Apple AirPods Pro (iPhone or iPad)
Apple AirPods Max (iPhone or iPad)
Beats Powerbeats Pro (iPhone or iPad)
Beats Fit Pro (iPhone or iPad)
Samsung Galaxy Buds Pro (Samsung Android phone)
Galaxy Buds+ (Samsung Android phone)
Galaxy Buds 2 (Samsung Android phone)
Galaxy Buds 2 Pro (Samsung Android phone)

Note that there is almost no cross compatibility, so you will need to choose an ecosystem and stick with it.

iPhone

iOS hearing assist features include:

Live Listen
Live listen uses the microphones in your earbuds to feed processed external sounds into your ears.

You must add the hearing icon to the control center to use Listen Live.

Conversation Boost
Conversation Boost focuses your AirPods Pro on the person talking in front of you but can mute other important sounds.

Active Noise Cancellation and Transparency
Active Noise Cancellation uses microphones to detect external sounds and using anti-noise, cancel the external sounds.

Transparency lets outside noise in, allowing you to hear the sounds around you.

Amplify Mode / Stereo

Stereo mode uses the left and right channels of your music. Amplify mode puts the exact same sounds into both ear buds.

Live Captions

Live captions are still in beta (testing) but they turn spoken dialog into text displayed on your phone.

Sound Recognition

Sound recognition notifies you when it recognizes certain sounds (doorbell, sirens, crying babies).

Subtitles and Captions

Subtitles and captions give you subtitles in video programs that provide it.

Using iOS Headphone Accommodations

1. Take a hearing test and upload your audiogram.
2. Update audio accessibility settings.
    a. Open your settings
    b. click accessibility
    c. Select AirPods
    d. Select audio accessibility settings
    e. Select headphone accommodations
    f. Select "tune audio for audiogram."

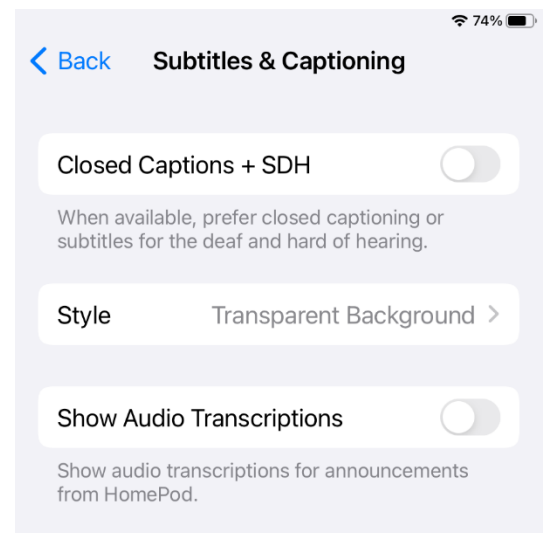## Change the Transparency Mode in iOS

1. Settings
2. Accessibility
3. Audio/Visual
4. Headphone Accommodations
5. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and tap "Transparency Mode"

Adding the Hearing Icon to the iOS Control Center

1. Settings
2. Control Center
3. Scroll down and tap the Add button add icon next to the Hearing button hearing icon.

Using Live Listen with iOS

1. Open Control Center
2. Tap the Hearing icon
3. Tap the Live Listen icon
4. Place your iPhone or iPad in front of the person that you want to hear. Adjust the volume on your device if needed.

Samsung Android

Galaxy Buds Pro are compatible with smartphones and tablets running Android 7.0 or later and with more than 1.5GB of RAM

Hearing aid support

Optimize the sound quality for use with hearing aids, or use Bluetooth to pair compatible hearing aids.

Amplify ambient sound

Using your headphones, you can increase the volume of conversations around you.

Adapt Sound

Find the appropriate sound based on your age range, or create your own personalized sound.

Mono audio

Easily switch between stereo and mono audio.

Live transcribe

Download the Live Transcribe app to hear live speech.

Live caption

Live Caption on Android will automatically caption media playing on your phone. Any video, podcast and audio message, across any app

Subtitle settings

Choose between Samsung or Google subtitles if you'd like subtitles to appear on your screen when playing videos with embedded subtitles.

Sound detectors

Receive alerts when a baby is crying or when a doorbell rings.
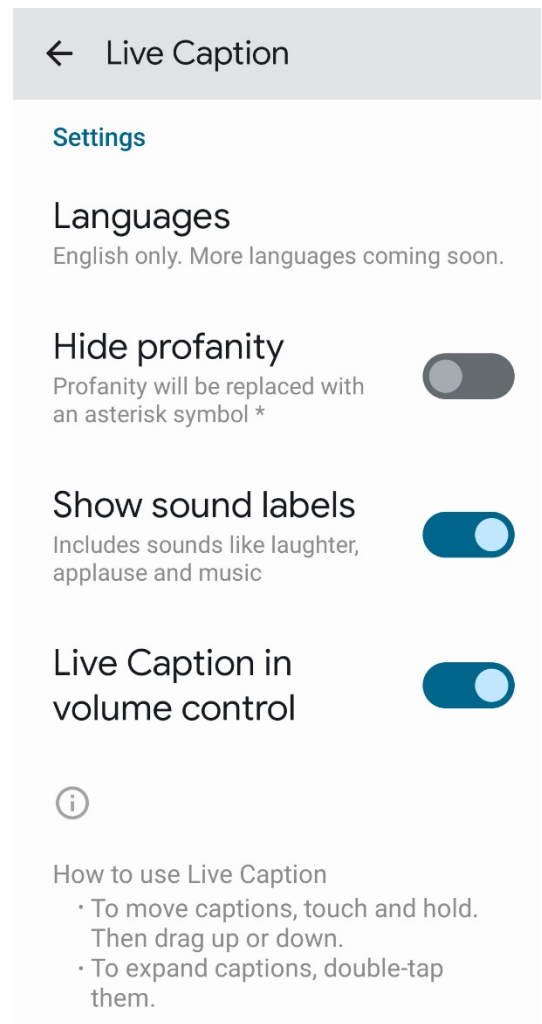
Customize ambient sound

Galaxy buds helps you to hear the surrounding sounds in your preferred tone. You can adjust the tone, the L/R volume, and make the sound more audible in the viewing direction

Left / right sound balance

Adjust the left/right sound balance to suit your hearing preferences.

Using Hearing Enhancement Features with Samsung Galaxy Phones

1. Open Settings
2. Swipe to and tap Accessibility
3. Tap Hearing Enhancements

← Live Caption

Settings

Languages
English only. More languages coming soon.

Hide profanity
Profanity will be replaced with
an asterisk symbol *

Show sound labels
Includes sounds like laughter,
applause and music

Live Caption in
volume control

ⓘ

How to use Live Caption
· To move captions, touch and hold.
  Then drag up or down.
· To expand captions, double-tap
  them.

Resources

[How Apple Airpods and Other Wireless Earbuds Can Be Used as Hearing Aids](#) (Healthline | 2022)

[How to Use AirPods as Hearing Aids](#) (Senior Living.org | 2024)

[AirPods as Hearing Aids: New Features Announced](#) (NCOA.org | 2024)

[Hearing](#) (Apple)

[How to use your device as a hearing aid in Android 11](#) (Ability.net)

[Samsung Earbuds as A Starter Hearing Aid](#) (Soundly | 2023)

[Samsung Earbuds Show Promise as a Hearing Enhancement Device](#) (The Hearing Review | 2023)

[Use hearing enhancement features on your Galaxy phone](#) (Samsung)