

American Players Theatre

Assistive Listening Device (ALD) Information

What options are available for Hearing Assistance?

APT provides assistive listening devices (ALD's) in both the Touchstone and the Hill Theatres.

Hill Theatre: An [Induction Hearing Loop](#) was added in 2017. This system transmits the audio from the stage directly to any hearing aid equipped with a telecoil (or t-coil) receiver through a wire loop surrounding the theatre. Patrons without a hearing aid or t-coil can connect to this system using a portable receiver and headset. These can be checked out from the Information Window at the entrance to Aisle 5.

Touchstone Theatre: The ALD system in the Touchstone uses an RF (radio) transmitter to send the sound to hand-held receivers throughout the theater. The receivers can be used with headphones (to be used *without* hearing aids) or a neck loop (for hearing aids equipped with a t-coil). When you reach the theater lobby, please see a House Staff member or Volunteer Usher to request a listening device.

Do I have to take out my hearing aids to use the headset?

We recommend removing your hearing aids when using an assistive listening device with headphones. The receivers have a volume control and provide enough amplification to use instead of your hearing aids. Wearing headphones over your hearing aids may cause distortion and create feedback (a high-frequency whistling that you might not even hear, but your fellow audience members probably will).

How does the Induction Hearing Loop system work?

This assistive listening system uses a microphone on stage to pick up the actors' voices and then transmits the sound through a wire loop surrounding the theater using electromagnetic energy. The signal can be picked up by telecoil or t-coil receiver, which converts the electromagnetic signal into sound. Because the audio is transmitted directly to the receiver, it provides greater clarity and there is less background noise than using a hearing aid alone. With the loop system, patrons with t-coil enabled devices no longer need to check out or return any hearing assistance equipment and there's no limit on the number of users.

What is a "T-Coil"?

A telecoil (or t-coil) is a small coil of wire inside a hearing aid that is designed to pick up a magnetic signal. Most modern hearing aids (except the smallest in-the-ear devices) are equipped with this technology.

Some hearing aids will automatically pick up a t-coil signal (if they have a Mic plus T-coil setting, or MT). Some may need to be switched from microphone (M) to T-coil (T) mode in order to receive this signal. This may require switching a button on the hearing aid or switching the mode using a remote control.

How do I know if my hearing device has a T-coil?

Patrons should check with their audiologist to see if their device has a t-coil that can be used with an induction loop system. Sometimes a t-coil is installed inside the hearing aid but needs to be activated.

What is a neck loop?

In the Touchstone Theatre, patrons with t-coil equipped devices will need to check out a neck loop and receiver in order to connect to the ALD system. A neck loop is a necklace-size loop of wire that converts the audio signal from the receiver into an electromagnetic signal so it can be heard directly through a t-coil enabled hearing device.

Is the ALD system compatible with a cochlear implant?

Most cochlear implants are equipped with a t-coil and can be used with our ALD systems. A neck loop and receiver are necessary for use in the Touchstone.

Unfortunately, if the cochlear implant is not equipped with a t-coil, neither the headphones nor the neck loop setup will work with our ALD system. The RF ALDs with headphones work best for people with some residual hearing, as it just amplifies the sound across the board. Those with cochlear implants have virtually no residual (acoustic) hearing. Instead, they receive electrical stimulation right at the auditory nerve, which skips the outer and middle ears, which is why headphones/ALDs wouldn't work.