

# Improving your child's awareness of sounds

Learning to tell the difference between sounds is a really important skill that children need to learn so that they can say words clearly and so that later on they can spell them too. Helping children to be more aware of sounds they can hear around them is a really good way to build the foundation for this skill.

Here are some ideas to try:

**Listen! Is it a fire engine or an ambulance? What noise is it making?**

## Listening for everyday sounds

When out and about with your child encourage them to listen out for sounds around them. For example, noises of the bus, a car, a train, birds singing etc. Talk about these sounds with your child – are they noisy sounds? Or quiet sounds?

**Listen.....can you find one the same?**

## Matching musical instruments

Use a set of 2 or 3 matching musical instruments or sound makers. You have one set hidden in a bag and the child has the others. Play one of the instruments inside the bag – can they listen and find the same instrument? If they find it hard, try showing them the instrument as you play it and then later see whether they can do it just by listening.

**Listen!  
Have you got to run or jump?**

## Actions to sounds

Choose two sounds e.g. bells and a shaker. Decide on two actions such as running and jumping to go with them. For example, when they hear the shaker they have to run and when they hear the bell they have to jump. This is a great game to play with a group of children. If they are doing well, try it with three sounds and three actions!

**Listen! Is it going to be very long or really short?**

## Long and short sounds

Choose an instrument that you can play for a long or short time such as a tambourine or a shaker. If you play a long sound the child has to stretch up high and if you play a short sound they have to curl up as small as they can.

