



Hearing Protection vs. Hearing Aids

Though my wife and kids have been known to accuse me of not listening, usually it is more a matter of not being able to hear as well as I would like.

Jim Ruen

Tuesday, November 24, 2009

Though my wife and kids have been known to accuse me of not listening, usually it is more a matter of not being able to hear as well as I would like.

Too many years of working around engines, large and small, without protection has taken its toll. Hours on a rifle range in basic training probably didn't help either.

If we lost the little rubber stubs we had been issued, we would grab a couple of cigarette filters, strip them of paper and stuff them in our ears. They were crude, but they helped.

Back on the farm, post U.S. Army, the roar of the diesel when I lowered the plow or disk into the ground was something to relish. I remember shaking my head as a young farmer when one of our neighbors started wearing headphone-style hearing protectors.

It's not so funny anymore. All that noise combined with passing years has damaged the hairs and nerve cells in my inner ear. Higher pitched tones are a bit muffled, and it is tougher to pick out words from the background.

Now it's me wearing the headphones as I start up a chain saw, weed whip or other loud motor. If I forget, that first roar usually sends me scuttling back to the shed to grab the hearing protectors.

I want to make sure I don't narrow my frequency range even more, and since I never took up smoking, cigarette filters are no longer an option.

<< More Shop Talk >>