

Sound Level Ratings of Tulsa Area Restaurants

Thank you for requesting a copy of the Audiology of Tulsa, PLLC Sound Level Ratings for Tulsa Area Restaurants Guide. We hope that this information will be helpful to our hearing aid patients and their families when selecting Tulsa restaurants in which they can enjoy a meal AND carry on a conversation with their dining companions without the intrusion of unnecessary background noise.

We have measured the following sound levels using an iPhone Application called “Decibel Tenth”. It has been found to be accurate up to approximately 100dB. We have sampled sound levels for several minutes in each restaurant and used those data in determining an average sound level in each eatery. Please keep in mind that the number of people in a restaurant and time of day can both contribute to greater sound levels and we have tried to give a rough idea of crowd conditions in each at the time we measured.

You will notice that there is no mention of the quality of food or service in any of the listings. We are hearing experts, not food experts. The primary focus of our ratings deals with the question “How easily could someone with hearing loss communicate in each of these restaurant environments?” For example, we always prefer booths over tables, with the higher seatbacks being preferable. Carpeting also helps absorb sound and usually lowers sound levels. Music, while possibly contributing to a “festive” atmosphere, is a detriment to most of us with hearing problems. Avoid setting beneath loudspeakers.

As a general rule, sound levels of 70dB or less make for ideal listening conditions for most listeners. 70-75dB levels are usually OK, but even this relatively low amount of sound can cause some difficulty for older listeners (particularly those with more severe hearing losses). Sustained sound levels above 75-80dB are going to be impair communication for most persons above the age of 40 who have even mild to moderate hearing losses. Also, you may notice that if we have visited a particular restaurant several times, there may be significantly different sound levels measured from one time to the next. This speaks to the inherent variability in any restaurant depending on time of day and how busy they are at a given time of day.

Here is our rating system for restaurant sound level measurements

- +++ Sound levels 70dB or less (should be suitable for almost any listener)
- ++ Sound levels 70-75dB (should be suitable for most listeners)
- + Sound levels 80dB and above (unpleasant dining and a lot of repeating of speech)

+++Restaurants (<70dB)

Jimmy's Egg- 41st and Peoria; lunchtime; (packed with people) 70dB

McAlester's- 81st and Lewis; (½ full) 7pm; 65-70dB

Polo Grill- Utica Square; lunchtime Sunday; (¼ full) 65dB

Cardigan's- London South; 8pm (very busy) 65-70dB

Subway- in order line; (not very busy) 70-75dB

Charlie Mitchell's 49th and Yale (¾ full); 65-70dB

All About Cha - 2nd and Cheyenne (¼ full) Sunday lunch; 60dB with jazz music!

Panera Bread - Tulsa Hills (½ full) 70dB

++Restaurants (70-75dB)

Hideaway Pizza - Tulsa Hills (½ full) 7:30pm 70-75dB

Kings point (¾ full) 7:30pm 80-83dB

Ted's Escondito Mexican Restaurant - (¼ full) 8pm - 72dB

Bar area (½ full) 75dB

Subway Sandwiches (standing in order line) -70dB

McNellies - downtown: (empty with music playing) - 75dB

Chimi's - 15th and Peoria (on patio with loud music) - 75dB

Charleston's Peoria - 70-75dB in "the Cubby" - 72dB

+ Restaurants (80dB+)

Fleming's - Utica Square- (holidays, full) - 90dB!!!

Hideaway Pizza - Kings point (packed) - 80-83dB

Charleston's - Peoria - dinner (packed) center of restaurant - 80dB

Cracker Barrel - I44 and Memorial - Saturday noon (busy) - 80dB