

INFOSHEET ON NOISE REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES IN SINGAPORE

OVERVIEW

There are different types of noise. In Singapore, it can be broadly classified into noise from neighbours, congregational noise, traffic noise and construction noise, among others.

- Noise from neighbours refers to noise from residential units. This can be in the form of noise from renovations or DIY works, residents' daily activities such as TV or gatherings, or movement and items such as furniture dragging and item dropping.
- Congregational noise refers to noise from common areas around residential estates. This can be in the form of noise from nearby facilities and areas such as playgrounds, void decks, and coffeeshops.

In a dense living environment like Singapore, experiencing noise may be inevitable, which can lead to conflicts and disputes among residents. Thus, it is important for us to manage noise issues well.

More information on the tips and regulations pertaining to the different types of noise can be found below.

REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO NOISE

Vehicle Noise

NEA sets the [exhaust noise emissions standards](#) for new and in-use vehicles. New and in-use vehicles are required to comply with the exhaust noise emissions standards prescribed in the [regulations](#) as tabulated below.

New Motor Vehicles

Motor vehicles of the following classes shall not emit any noise exceeding the noise level specified in the second column when measured 0.5 metre from the open end of the exhaust pipe of the vehicle or shall conform to the standards for exhaust noise emissions specified in the third column:

<i>First Column</i>	<i>Second Column</i>	<i>Third Column</i>
<i>Class of Vehicle</i>	<i>Noise level in Decibels* (A)</i>	<i>Standard for exhaust noise emission</i>
(a) Motor cycle (with or without a side car), scooter or trivan	94	(i) Directive 97/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17th June 1997 on certain components and characteristics of 2 or three-wheel motor vehicles; or

		(ii) Articles 30 and 65 of the Safety Regulations for Road Vehicles as amended by the Ministry of Transport Ordinance No. 5 of 21st February 2000 and No. 66 of 20th December 1996, respectively, of Japan
(b) Motor car, taxi or station wagon (whether for passengers only or for goods and passengers)	96 or (if the engine is at rear end) 100	(i) EC Council Directive 70/157/EEC of 6th February 1970 as last amended by Commission Directive 96/20/EC of 27th March 1996; or (ii) Articles 30 and 65 of the Safety Regulations for Road Vehicles as amended by the Ministry of Transport Ordinance No. 5 of 21st February 2000 and No. 66 of 20th December 1996, respectively, of Japan
(c) Goods vehicle or bus with gross vehicle weight not exceeding 3.5 tons	97	(i) EC Council Directive 70/157/EEC of 6th February 1970 as last amended by Commission Directive 96/20/EC of 27th March 1996; or (ii) Articles 30 and 65 of the Safety Regulations for Road Vehicles as amended by the Ministry of Transport Ordinance No. 5 of 21st February 2000 and No. 66 of 20th December 1996, respectively, of Japan
(d) Goods vehicle or bus with gross vehicle weight exceeding 3.5 tons	99	(i) EC Council Directive 70/157/EEC of 6th February 1970 as last amended by Commission Directive 96/20/EC of 27th March 1996; or (ii) Articles 30 and 65 of the Safety Regulations for Road Vehicles as amended by the Ministry of Transport Ordinance No. 5 of 21st February 2000 and No. 66 of 20th December 1996, respectively, of Japan.

*To provide a reference point, a normal conversation is around 60 dB, while a doorbell is around 80 dB. A concert is around 110 - 120 dB.

In-use motor vehicles other than licensed motor vehicles registered before 1 July 1999

Motor vehicles of the following classes shall not emit any noise exceeding the noise level specified below when measured 0.5 metre from the open end of the exhaust pipe of the vehicle:

<i>Class of vehicle</i>	<i>Noise level in Decibels (A)</i>
(a) Motor cycle (with or without a side car), scooter or trivan	99
(b) Motor car, taxi or station wagon (whether for passengers only or for goods and passengers)	103

(c) Goods vehicle or bus with gross vehicle weight not exceeding 3.5 tons	103
(d) Goods vehicle or bus with gross vehicle weight exceeding 3.5 tons	107

Excessive vehicular noise emission is mainly due to modifications carried out to the vehicle's exhaust, overloading and/or speeding on the road. In-use vehicles that do not meet the prescribed noise standards during the mandatory periodic inspections at authorised inspection centres will not have their road tax renewed and cannot be used on the road. LTA, TP and NEA conduct regular joint enforcement ops against vehicle-related offences, which includes noisy vehicles.

From 1 Apr 2023, NEA plans to adopt UN noise standards, which are generally more stringent than the current standards.



All vehicles have to adhere to the exhaust noise emission standards tabled above.

Photo credits: <https://www.todayonline.com/voices/plug-gaps-vehicular-noise-emission-standards>

Construction Noise



An example of a construction site that might cause noise.

Photo Credits: <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/cna-insider/too-much-noise-can-harm-your-health-thats-potentially-problem-singapore-2350251>

NEA regulates noise levels from construction sites based on a set of permissible [noise limits](#), tabulated below.

Mondays to Saturdays

Types of affected buildings	7am - 7pm	7pm - 10pm	10pm - 7am
(a) Hospital, schools, institutions of higher learning, homes for aged sick, etc**	60 dBA (Leq* 12 hrs)	50 dBA (Leq 12 hrs)	
	75 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	55 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	
(b) Residential buildings located less than 150m from the construction site**	75 dBA (Leq 12 hrs)	65 dBA (Leq 1 hr)	55 dBA (Leq 1 hr)
	90 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	70 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	55 dBA (Leq 5 mins)
(c) Buildings other than those in (a) and (b) above	75 dBA (Leq 12 hrs)	65 dBA (Leq 12 hrs)	
	90 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	70 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	

Sundays and public holidays

Types of affected buildings	7am - 7pm	7pm - 10pm	10pm - 7am
(a) Hospital, schools, institutions of higher learning, homes for aged sick, etc	60 dBA (Leq* 12 hrs)	50 dBA (Leq* 12 hrs)	
	75 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	55 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	
(b) Residential buildings located less than 150m from the construction site	75 dBA (Leq 12 hrs)	-	

	75 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	55 dBA (Leq 5 mins)
(c) Buildings other than those in (a) and (b) above	75 dBA (Leq 12 hrs)	65 dBA (Leq 12 hrs)
	90 dBA (Leq 5 mins)	70 dBA (Leq 5 mins)

*Reckoned as the equivalent continuous noise level over the specified period, i.e. 5 mins, 1 hr or 12 hrs.

** Only applicable for sites permitted to carry out works on Sundays and public holidays.

NEA has prohibited work on Sundays and public holidays for construction sites located within 150m of residential premises and noise-sensitive premises. No work is also allowed from 10pm on Saturdays or eves of public holidays to 7am on the following Mondays or days after public holidays.

Since 1 January 2017, construction sites at the architectural/project completion stage are allowed to carry out quieter forms of work (see list of permitted quieter works in ePortal) on specific Sundays and public holidays. Contractors shall submit an application via [ePortal](#) to NEA for the permit to carry out quieter works on specific Sunday and public holidays subject to compliance with stringent conditions specified in the application form and any other conditions imposed by NEA.

Industrial Noise

NEA also regulates noise levels from factory premises based on a set of permissible [noise limits](#), tabled below.

Boundary noise limits for factory premises

Types of affected premises	Maximum permitted noise levels (reckoned as the equivalent noise level over the specified period) in decibels (dBA)		
	Day (7am-7pm)	Evening (7pm-11pm)	Night (11pm-7am)
Noise Sensitive Premises	60	55	50
Residential Premises	65	60	55
Commercial Premises	70	65	60

Types of affected premises	Maximum permitted noise levels (reckoned as the equivalent noise level over 5 minutes) in decibels (dBA)		
	Day (7am-7pm)	Evening (7pm-11pm)	Night (11pm-7am)
Noise Sensitive Premises	65	60	55
Residential Premises	70	65	60
Commercial Premises	75	70	65
Factory Premises	75	70	65

GENERAL GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO NOISE

Noise from Neighbours

Residents are advised to be considerate towards neighbours and to observe the quiet hours between 10.30pm to 7am.

Some recommended behaviours for residents include the following:

- Keep volume levels low at home
- Avoid noisy recreational activities, especially during the quiet hours
- Ensure that your children do not make too much noise while playing
- Do not drag furniture across the floor
- Use rubber stoppers on the base of your furniture to absorb noise
- Ensure that surfaces are buffered (e.g. use of carpets) to prevent noise transmission

If you are experiencing issues arising from noise from neighbours, you can consider the following:

- Talk to your neighbours first
- Should you find it difficult to resolve the issue, you may seek help from your Grassroot Leaders (GRLs). GRLs can help to facilitate a conversation between you and your neighbour and try to resolve your concerns.
- Alternatively, you can try formal mediation at the Community Mediation Centre
- If mediation does not work, you may seek legal recourse via the Community Disputes Resolution Tribunal
 - The Community Disputes Resolution Tribunals hear disputes under the [Community Disputes Resolution Act](#) between neighbours involving acts of unreasonable interference with the enjoyment or use of places of residence.



Tips on how to create a pleasant neighbourhood.
Photo Credits: <https://www.mnd.gov.sg/mso/resources>

Note: The recommended tips and behaviours are not exhaustive. Residents are encouraged to exercise consideration and tolerance in generating or encountering noise. When encountering noise issues, we encourage residents to talk to each other to try and resolve the issues as a first step.

GUIDELINES TO REDUCE NOISE FROM RENOVATIONS

Renovations in HDB Flats

HDB regulates renovations to ensure that the works do not damage the structure of the flat, or cause danger to the flat occupants and their neighbours. HDB has in place some guidelines to minimise disamenities and disturbances to neighbouring households when renovations are being carried out. Some of these guidelines are as follows:

- General renovations should only be carried out between 9:00am and 6:00pm on weekdays and Saturdays. No renovations are allowed on Sundays and Public Holidays.

- Noisy renovations within the flat such as demolishing of walls, removing wall/ floor finishes, cutting of tiles and heavy and excessive drilling works, etc. can only be carried out between 9:00am and 5:00pm on weekdays.
- Noisy renovations are not allowed on Saturdays, Sundays, Public Holidays and eve of major Public Holidays (i.e New Year's Day, Chinese New Year, Deepavali, Hari Raya Puasa and Christmas Day).
- A written notice to inform neighbours who live within a 2-unit radius is required for renovations done by all contractors listed in the HDB Directory of Renovation Contractors (DRC). The notice should be put up at least 5 days before commencing any renovation works.

DIY works in HDB flats

Besides renovations, there could also be DIY works taking place within a flat which do not require a permit. Such works can include carpentry installation and electrical works. Even though HDB does not regulate these works, flat owners should keep to the permitted renovation timings to avoid disturbing their neighbours. For such DIY works by flat owners or works that do not require a contractor listed in the DRC, it is a good practice for the flat owners and their contractors to provide a written notice to the neighbouring units as well.

What to do if you experience noise from renovations or DIY works in HDB flats

If you are experiencing issues from noise arising from renovation works, HDB provides the following [tips](#):

- Reach out to your neighbours and seek their understanding to avoid specific days or timeslots (e.g. if you have an important meeting or interview scheduled)
- If your neighbour's renovation works cannot be rescheduled, you may consider returning to your office/ school or visiting the nearby Community Centre or library to carry out your work or study
- If necessary, approach your grassroots leader or other neighbours to act as a mediator when speaking with your neighbour

Congregational Noise



Youths gathering at a void deck, which may cause noise disturbance for residents.

Photo Credits: <https://stomp.straitstimes.com/singapore-seen/hougang-residents-sleep-disturbed-by-youths-making-a-ruckus-at-void-deck-at-1230am>

Noise from common space and amenities such as playgrounds, pavilions, void decks, basketball and badminton courts is handled by Town Councils. Activities that will likely create noise nuisance should not be carried out after 10.30pm.

Noise from entertainment outlets and foodshops should also be minimised after 10.30pm. Guidelines pertaining to these areas can be found [here](#).

Reference websites:

1. https://www1-bca.gov.sg/admin.cwp.sg/docs/default-source/docs-corp-public/be_good_neighbours_amended_23012015.pdf
2. <https://www.hdb.gov.sg/residential/living-in-an-hdb-flat/my-neighbourhood/tips-on-neighbourliness>
3. <https://www.hdb.gov.sg/residential/living-in-an-hdb-flat/renovation/important-information>
4. <https://www.hdb.gov.sg/residential/living-in-an-hdb-flat/renovation/renovating-during-covid>
5. <https://www.mnd.gov.sg/docs/default-source/mso-documents/repository/noise/neighbourly-noise-pe-material.pdf>
6. <https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/pollution-control/noise-pollution/vehicular-noise-control>
7. <https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/pollution-control/noise-pollution/construction-noise-control>
8. <https://www.nea.gov.sg/our-services/pollution-control/noise-pollution/construction-noise-control>
9. <https://www.sfa.gov.sg/food-retail/advisories-for-sfa-food-establishment-licenses/good-practice-guides>
10. <https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/CDRA2015>
11. <https://sso.agc.gov.sg/SL/EPMA1999-RG6/?ProvIds=P1II-#pr5->