

GLOSSARY

Term	Meaning
A-weight	A standard frequency weighting that simulates how humans perceive sound (dBA).
ambient noise	The totality of noise associated with a given environment, encompassing sounds from many sources near and far.
calibration	Adjustment of the noise measurement system so the measured sound level agrees with a reference sound level.
calibration check	A check of a noise meter for variations between the measured sound level and a reference level; no adjustment is made to the noise monitoring system.
decibel (dB)	A logarithmic-based unit of measure of sound pressure.
duration	The length of time of an event.
energy average	The average of two or more acoustic energies expressed on a common decibel logarithmic scale.
equivalent sound level (L_{eq})	The equivalent steady-state sound level in A-weighted decibels for a stated period of time, which contains the same acoustic energy as the actual time-varying sound level for the same period of time.
hertz (Hz)	A unit of frequency measured in cycles per second.
L_{max}	Maximum sound level, in decibels. This is the maximum value of the noise level that occurs during a single event.
L_{min}	Minimum sound level, in decibels. This is the minimum value of the noise level that occurs during a single event.
L_n	The A-weighted sound level, in decibels, that is exceeded n percent of the time in a given interval. For example, L_{10} is the A-weighted sound level exceeded 10 percent of the time over the given interval (usually 1 hour).
logarithm	The exponent that indicates the power to which a number must be raised to produce a given number. For example: if $B^2 = N$, 2 is the logarithm of N (to the base B), or $10^2 = 100$, and the logarithm of 100 (to the base 10) = 2. Also abbreviated to "log".
noise level	The sound pressure level, measured using a meter with an "A" frequency weighting and reported as dBA.
peak	The maximum sound level during a given time interval when the normal frequency and time weighting is not used.

Term	Meaning
Sound Exposure (SE)	A measure of the total sound energy of the actual sound during a given time interval. Unlike the Sound Exposure Level, it is not expressed in decibels, but in units of Pascal-squared seconds.
Sound Exposure Level (SEL)	The level of a steady one-second-long sound that contains the same energy as the actual (varied) sound over the total measurement duration. SEL is expressed in decibels. SEL is related to L_{eq} , but all the energy is compressed within a one-second period as opposed to being spread over a stated period of time.
sound pressure level or noise level	A noise measurement that uses an A-weighting to modify the frequency response of the measuring instrument, so that it more closely mimics the human ear's frequency characteristics.