

Headphone etiquette at work

Wearing headphones at work is a great way to cut out noise and distractions so you can focus on the task at hand. However, wear them enough and it can make you seem like you want to cut yourself off from the rest of the team. Follow these tips to wear them without hurting workplace collaboration or communication:

Use them only when you really need to focus. You must be aware and responsive, and constantly having headphones on or earbuds in reduces your ability to be so. Besides, when they're always in your ears, others can see you as uninvolved or disconnected, and that's not a good look.

Tell people why you wear them. Explain to your manager and nearby co-workers that you wear them because it helps you to focus on what you're doing.

Turn down the volume. You should be able to hear people who are speaking to you without forcing them to yell. No one else should ever be able to hear your music.

— Adapted from ["Managing Millennials Q&A: Why Are My Employees Always Wearing Headphones at Work?,"](#) Lindsey Pollak, www.lindseypollak.com.