

# How to deal with noise nuisance

**We encourage customers who want to take action against antisocial behaviour, and we support them where we can. This is one of a series of guides to tell you what you can do to tackle the problem, and how we can help.**

## **What is noise nuisance**

Noise nuisance is defined as 'any significant and unreasonable noise which affects another person'. Everyone should expect to put up with a certain amount of noise during their everyday lives. But no one should have to put up with noise that interferes with the enjoyment of their home.

Many things affect whether or not a noise is classed as a nuisance. For example:

- What time of day does it happen?
- How long are you disturbed for?
- How loud is the noise?
- How frequently are you affected by the noise?

The most common forms of noise nuisance are loud music or televisions, barking dogs, shouting, banging doors and home improvements. If you are planning any noisy home improvements, it is a good idea to let your neighbours know beforehand.

## **How can you avoid receiving complaints about noise?**

Noise is one of the most common forms of antisocial behaviour. If you can hear your neighbours, they can probably hear you too, so please be considerate by following these tips:

- Avoid doing noisy housework, such as vacuuming, DIY or using the washing machine late at night.
- Don't play your TV, radio, music or musical instruments too loudly. A general rule is, if you can hear it outside your home then it's too loud.
- Keep televisions, radios and speakers away from partition walls.
- Try to wear soft shoes indoors whenever possible to minimise noise transferring to surrounding homes.
- Avoid banging your doors shut.

## Things to think about before you report noise nuisance

Before you report any noise nuisance, you should decide whether the noise is Unreasonable by asking yourself the following questions:

- **What is making the noise?**  
Is it the ordinary sounds of life such as talking, children playing and doors closing? These are usually considered reasonable. Or is it playing music or using power tools, which may be unreasonable at certain times of the day or night.
- **When does the noise happen?**  
Noise during the day is more acceptable than at night, although this will depend on how loud it is. Noise should be restricted between 11pm and 8am.
- **How loud is the noise?**  
To be classed as a nuisance, the noise must interfere with whatever you are doing, and not simply be an annoyance. It might be annoying if your neighbours played rock music when you like jazz. But it would be a nuisance if they played it so loudly you couldn't hear your television, or go to sleep.
- **Are there issues in your life that make the noise worse?**  
If you have mental health issues, problems with alcohol or substance use, or another condition such as insomnia, you may be oversensitive to noise. Your neighbours may be behaving reasonably, but it may seem unreasonable to you.
- **Are your personal prejudices part of the problem?**  
You need to be fair. You may not like your neighbours' taste in music or approve of them allowing their children to play in the street, but this doesn't necessarily mean you are suffering noise nuisance.
- **Are you making a noise too?**  
If you are noisy at times, your neighbours may think you don't mind.

## What action can you take?

If you are being disturbed by noise from your neighbour, think about talking to them and explaining politely that the noise is disturbing you. Most people will be glad to help.

If you think your neighbour may react angrily to a complaint, if you feel threatened, or if you have tried to talk to them before and it hasn't stopped the problem, contact us. We can try to help, and we may refer you to an independent mediation service. This is when someone acts as a go-between to help solve the problem.

## What action can we take?

When a customer signs their tenancy agreement, one of the conditions they agree to says they will not cause a nuisance to their neighbours, or allow any visitors to their home that cause a nuisance to their neighbours. If someone is breaking the conditions of their tenancy agreement, we can take action against them if we have proof.

If you report an incident of noise nuisance, we may:

- visit your neighbour or write to them about their behaviour
- install noise monitoring equipment so we can understand the frequency of the disturbance
- speak to other neighbours to see if they are affected by the nuisance too
- ask you to complete 'incident diary forms' to record when and how you are affected

- refer you to an independent mediator
- work with other agencies, such as the police or social services
- try to get an injunction against your neighbour. This is a court order that allows the police to act if your neighbour keeps making a noise. We will need to have good evidence before we can do this
- consider taking your neighbour to court to get an eviction order. This will only happen if we have enough evidence to take the case to court.

You may find it difficult to tell us about the problems you are having, especially if your neighbour is aggressive. We promise you that any information you give us will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

### **What action can the council take?**

Your local council will have an Environmental Health Department. They may be able to investigate noise complaints directly. They will only be able to do this however, if the noise is classed as 'statutory nuisance'. This is serious noise that interferes with your life and affects you enjoying living in your home.

The council can:

- give you practical advice about dealing with the problem
- lend you noise-measuring or recording equipment
- write to your neighbour to ask them to stop causing a nuisance
- give your neighbour a 'noise abatement notice' telling them to stop, or to limit their noise to certain times of the day
- gather evidence for us to use if we take action against your neighbour.

### **What action can the police take?**

If you suspect that there is criminal behaviour taking place, such as drug dealing or physical violence, you should contact the police.

### **How do I report noise nuisance?**

You can report noise nuisance by contacting us in one of the ways listed below. You can also download our guide to antisocial behaviour, which is [available on our website](#).

### **Contact us**

**Online:** [www.a2dominion.co.uk/customers](http://www.a2dominion.co.uk/customers)

**By email:** [customer.services@a2dominion.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@a2dominion.co.uk)

**By phone:** 0800 432 0077 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:30pm)

In person or by post: by visiting or writing to one of our main or local offices.

### **Translations**

We'll consider requests for translations into other languages and formats including large print, audio and Braille.