

## **Murder Most Foul: Hearing Aid Version**

Published May 7th, 2024

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*Warning: The following may contain content that some people find upsetting. Especially you, the HCP, so you may want to warn your clients!*

I am a typical person with hearing loss, and I had one of “those” incidents yesterday. I pulled a sweater off over my head, and in one of those awkward battles we had with ourselves, my hearing aid was disengaged, and I fell to the floor. I narrowly avoided stepping on it because I didn’t feel it or hear it land - it weighs only a couple of ounces and fell on a soft carpet.

Whew! Years ago, I thought back to an incident when I practically pulverized my device by crunching on it with my boot. I also realized that through the years, I have murdered or nearly obliterated several hearing devices. Perhaps a better term is that I have been guilty of sloppy negligence, leading to the death or complete disappearance of a valuable hearing device.

I am guilty of almost all the following. How about you?



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1. **Feed it to the dog.** Not on purpose, obviously. It was my first hearing aid and I came home late one night and put it on the nightstand. My roommate’s huge Komondor puppy (look it up) came in while I slept and ate it. In the morning, he still had bits of my hearing aid caught in the

curly hairs around his mouth.

2. **Grind it beneath your heel.** There was no repairing this device.
3. **Drown it.** There are many ways to do this. On rare occasions, I wear it into the shower, but bolt through the shower door when I realize I can hear the water! Or you might forget you're wearing your devices and go snorkeling, like my friend. One of his aids floated away to become fish food, and his audiologist miraculously revived the other one. Another good drowning method it is to put in your pocket for some crazy and indefensible reason (see #6 below) – and then throw that article of clothing in the laundry. Bye-bye!
4. **Don't take care of it.** Simply don't clean it or change wax guards. Let the air vent fill with gunk, throw it around, and never take it in for professional care. Keep up this negligent behavior until it ceases to be a working device. And then start ranting about how these things never work!
5. **Throw it away.** Not literally in the garbage. But perhaps you discard it for a new device or exchange it for a cochlear implant. Throw it in a drawer, maybe? Your discarded devices will grow moldy in a drawer until the sad, eventual day when you pass, and somebody gets the job of throwing them in the trash. So yes, *literally* in the garbage! (Give old devices to your hearing care professional to be recycled.)
6. **Just lose it.** Usually this is achieved by putting it down somewhere other than your safe, usual place – such as in a dry aid at night. But if you're that person who stuffs things in your pocket or purse, or unusual spot, there's a good chance that you will lose it.
7. **Not protect it** when you're in a high winds area. Yes, your hat *can* blow off taking your device with it. Wear a hiking hat that ties under the chin; you probably won't look as silly as you think. (Although, you might.)

Negligence towards your devices will come back to haunt you with lots of frustration, additional expenses and the worst thing: inability to hear or communicate effectively.

Who would *do* these things, you ask? Um, I do! And your clients will, too, unless you should warn them!

*Note: This article appeared in a slightly different version of [HearingHealthMatters.org](http://HearingHealthMatters.org).*