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Christine MacDERMID
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SmartClose Program



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Noisy neighbours driving you crazy?

How to reduce unwanted noise in your building

People who live in apartments, generally accept a certain level of noise as part of the experience of urban living. But there are limits to the amount of noise anyone can or should be expected to tolerate. When that threshold is passed, your once peaceful and tranquil home can suddenly become a source of stress and anxiety.

Acceptable levels of noise depend on a number of factors. These range from how well your building was constructed to the loudness of the sound, your tolerance for noise and even the time of day. To help you keep the peace and quiet in your home, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has a number of tips on how to reduce excessive and unwanted noise in your building. These include:

- Get to know noisy neighbours, and make them aware of how their activities are affecting others. Speak with other neighbours to see if the noise is bothering anyone else, and consider adopting a joint strategy. Discuss ways to reduce objectionable noise, such as laying down carpets, moving stereo equipment away from shared walls and agreeing on reasonable hours for noisy activities. If all else fails, consult your building management or condo board.
- If your building's elevators, refuse chutes, garage door openers, air conditioning units or other mechanical devices are the problem, ask the management to better isolate those devices from occupants. Ensure that motors are mounted on springs or pads to reduce vibrations. Move air conditioning compressors away

from operable windows, or restrict the hours of the day or days of the week when some of the devices can be used.

- To reduce noise coming in through openings or gaps in your walls, place gaskets behind electrical outlet cover plates. Check to see if electrical switches and outlets in plumbing pipes are isolated from solid framing with flexible sleeves and cushions.

- If noise frequently comes in from outside the building, ask management to take measures to discourage loitering and other after-hour activities. Contact a bylaw officer to advise you on noise regulations in your area.

- Inside your apartment, consider adding more or heavier fabrics and upholstery to absorb more sound. Carefully caulk the joint under your baseboards. If you are replacing windows, install windows with a high Sound Transmission Class (STC) performance rating and make sure they open away from any sources of noise.

- If serious noise problems in your building persist, ask management to retain an acoustical consultant to study the problem and recommend solutions.

For more information or a free copy of the About Your Apartment fact sheet, or other fact sheets on owning, maintaining or renovating your home, call CMHC, 1-800-668-2642 or visit www.cmhc.ca.

CMHC is Canada's national housing agency and source of objective, reliable housing expertise.




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