
Subject: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [ABtoJayZ](#) on Sun, 08 Apr 2018 03:14:19 GMT
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I live in a duplex and try to be as respectful as I can with my music volume. My new neighbor complained about the volume of my music. So I've been careful about it. Lo and behold, they're complaining again. There's no way I'm making that much noise. They keep threatening to get our property manager involved. What's a good tool/way to measure noise levels?

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [johnnycamp5](#) on Sun, 08 Apr 2018 16:18:28 GMT
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A db meter.

Will the property manager allow you to make modifications?

Putting up an additional layer of drywall can help dramatically, and it's not very difficult.

A layer of 5/8's adhered (16" on center) with a soft adhesive or "green glue" can work wonders. Don't forget to remove the few screws that held the sheets up once the glue dries...you want the new drywall layer decoupled from the old wall, and leaving the screws can help create a sonic "short circuit" to the original wall.

Better yet is to frame a wall directly across (but not touching) your shared (common) wall, using flimsy 1-5/8ths metal studs or resilient channel, 2' on center, with 5/8ths sheathing.

This flimsy wall (aside from acting as a large panel bass absorber) will almost completely decouple your room from theirs, except for the attachments at the ceiling and floor. These points can also be somewhat decoupled using rubber strips (I use cheap 10' lengths of rubber, garage door bottom seal from the depot) above and below your ceiling and floor starter tracks.

In the past, all common/shared walls were always built out of solid masonry, to avoid the possibility of noise disturbance from the adjacent living space, and also to act as a fire stop.

Of course this way of construction is more expensive.

Good luck!

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [JazzHog](#) on Sat, 21 Jul 2018 12:40:48 GMT
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Yes, I would be inclined to go down the road of soundproofing your home. If the neighbours can't hear anything, then they won't have anything to complain about.

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [sawyer25](#) on Thu, 27 Sep 2018 18:08:57 GMT
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Soundproofing is the best way out but just out of curiosity, do they live so close by? They are neighbors who will always start trouble irrespective of whether or not there is a genuine reason to do so.

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [Jethro](#) on Tue, 13 Nov 2018 23:48:52 GMT
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sawyer25 wrote on Thu, 27 September 2018 13:08 Soundproofing is the best way out but just out of curiosity, do they live so close by? They are neighbors who will always start trouble irrespective of whether or not there is a genuine reason to do so.
Based on what ABtoJayZ, the house they are living in is a duplex, meaning it is a house divided in two. Sounds travel faster through solids, so it is no surprise if the neighbors will complain because the barrier won't block the sound.

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [Acacia](#) on Mon, 08 Mar 2021 09:13:27 GMT
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Since it's more high-tech now, there are mobile applications you could install that can measure noise levels. Although I'm not sure about its accuracy because its effectiveness might depend on the environment it is used.

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [Csharp](#) on Sun, 20 Aug 2023 20:11:46 GMT
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JohnnyCamp's suggestion was a good one.

Drywall comes in 4' x 8' sheets, though, so you might want to get the home improvement store where you buy them to cut them down to a more workable size.

And don't attach them in a way that makes them hard or impossible to detach.

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [George](#) on Thu, 13 Nov 2025 04:08:30 GMT
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It sucks when you are sure that the music that you are playing is not being much of a disturbance in the neighbourhood and they still complain about such.

That being said, if you want to stay the good guy (I wouldn't by the way), I will suggest you make use of the sound level meter app installed on your mobile device such as the Sound Meter that is available on both Apple Store and Playstore or make use of Noise Meter which is good for iPhone users. These apps can help detect the sound level when you play songs.

You need to take into consideration the time of the day when you are doing this because it is a key factor since nights are calmer than during the day.

The options above are if I wanted to be the good guy which ain't in my dictionary. So, assuming I am in your shoes, I will first of all try talking to these guys about why they should mind their business and stop worrying me about whether the sound from my room is high or low.

If they don't stop and keep threatening, I will have to inform the property manager letting him or her warn my neighbours about what has been happening and hopefully the property manager gets to handle it in the best way to avoid issues in the future.

Subject: Re: Complaining neighbors
Posted by [Helen](#) on Thu, 13 Nov 2025 06:08:02 GMT
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Oh, that sounds really frustrating. I would probably feel the same way. You could try using a noise meter app on your phone to check how loud the music actually is around the house. It will give you a rough idea in decibels. If you want something more accurate, there are affordable sound level meters you can get online.

Something like the Extech 407730 Digital Sound Level Meter, Trotec SL400 or even a simple Cadrim Digital Sound Level Meter would work great. They're easy to use and can help you see if the volume is reasonable. It might also help your family feel more confident that you're not being too loud and if the neighbours keep complaining, at least you'll have some proof that you've been respectful because that's what I will do for the sake of my kids to avoid having issues with my neighbours.