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[Study finds why screeching sound irks](#)

[Health](#), [Others](#) | November 7, 2011 12:00 PM



German and Austrian scientists have found the reason why the sound of scraping fingernails on a blackboard is so annoying to most of the people.

A new study suggests that the annoying feeling is caused partly by the shape of the human ear that amplifies certain aspects of the sound of fingernails or chalk scraping on a chalkboard and the power of suggestion.

The researchers, led by Michael Oehler of the Macromedia University for Media and Communication in Cologne and Christoph Reuter from the University of Vienna first selected scratching fingernails on a chalkboard and squealing chalk on a slate as the most annoying sound to people.

The sounds were played to a group of volunteers, half of whom knowing the real origin while others believed they came from modern music pieces.

Researchers found that participants who believed the sounds were music based rated them as less annoying than those who knew the source of the sounds. Findings found that a psychological component must be involved in people's feeling about the sounds they heard.

But the other important finding was that even those who thought they were listening to an experimental piece of music still had a measurable physiological "disgust" response such as increased heart rate, sweating and blood pressure.

The reactions suggested scientists that there may also be a biological component involved in making the sounds unpleasant for people.

Their further investigations revealed that the pitch frequency of the two annoying sounds were between 2,000 and 4,000

hertz, which is the range of the human speech amplified within our ears.

The sounds with a pitch within the range hits the “sweet spot” at which the human ear is considered to be the most sensitive because of the anatomy of the ear canal, researchers concluded in their presentation at the Acoustical Society of America in San Diego, US.

“We supposed that frequencies in the low-to-mid range [of human hearing] would play a major role,” Ohler said in a statement. “But we did not know the exact range. Furthermore, the influence of pitch information was greater than we thought.”

The new findings contradict a previous study that suggested scraping fingernails on a chalkboard was annoying for the human because it resembled a primate’s warning call.

Scientists hope their finding may help finding new ways to mask annoying noises emitted from instruments like vacuum cleaners or airplanes.

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Today's Schedule

Today's Date: Sun Nov 13 2011, 2:40 pm Tanzania Time

Time	Program
00h00 - 01h00	The Wide Angle Talk Show - Dr Shamim Daya
01h00 - 02h00	Seminar - Philosophy of Ziyarat Ashura (p3)
02h00 - 03h00	Lecture Maalim HAssnain Rajabali
03h00 - 04h00	Qur'an
04h00 - 05h15	Ziyarat

Time	Program
05h15 - 06h00	Fajr Adhaan - Salaat 5.23am Dsm Time
06h00 - 06h30	Lecture - Shk. Murtadha Alidina
06h30 - 07h30	Daily Supplication - Dua
07h30 - 08h00	Lecture Syd Aliraza Naqvi
08h30 - 09h00	Islam & Life
09h00 - 09h30	4/40 Program
09h30 - 10h00	Reporters File
10h00 - 11h00	K & K Cooking Show
11h00 - 11h30	Kids Show
11h30 - 12h00	Art Show
12h30 - 13h15	Zohr Adhaan - Salaat 12:28pm Dsm Time
13h15 - 14h00	Lecture 13:20 to start
14h00 - 15h00	Little Mosque...
15h00 - 18h00	Movie - Cartoon
18h00 - 18h30	Lecture - Shk. Murtadha Alidina
18h30 - 19h30	Maghrib Adhaan - Salaat 6:31pm Dsm Time
19h30 - 20h30	Lecture - Syd. Ammar Nakshwani (Part 5)
20h30 - 21h00	Friday Sermon
21h00 - 22h00	FILM - Nabi\` Ebrahim (a) - Part 5
22h00 - 23h00	Majlis in Urdu - Syd. Zaigham Abbas
23h00 - 24h15	Lecture - Shk. Bahmanpour

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