



BECOMING A FOLEY ARTIST

A Foley Artist is someone who **creates background sounds** for films. These background sounds are usually split into **three areas** – footsteps, movements (e.g. the sound of a raincoat rustling as someone walks) and specifics (e.g. an object hitting the floor after it's been dropped).

Why do you think a Foley Artist is needed, rather than the sounds being recorded on set?

To become a Foley Artist, you need to understand how sound is made.

What are sound waves?

Sound waves are created by objects making vibrations. These vibrations move as waves through the air into our eardrum, which vibrates, allowing us to hear the sound. Sounds have different properties:



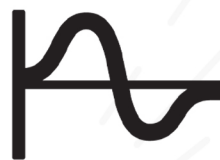
Lower Pitch

Low-pitched sounds occur when there are fewer vibrations



Quieter

Quiet sounds are created by smaller vibrations



Louder

Loud sounds are created by bigger vibrations



Higher Pitch

High-pitched sounds occur when there are more vibrations



Now find some objects near you which you can use to make a noise and answer the following question for each object:

How does this object make noise? Can you tap it, scratch it, press it?

What kind of noise does it make? Is it loud or quiet? High-pitched or low-pitched?

Is there any way to change the sound the object makes?

How do you think you could use this object to create a noise or a sound? Try closing your eyes and imagining what other noises this sound could be used for.

ACTIVITY

Now that you have investigated some objects, it's **your turn to become a Foley Artist**. It is your job to add the sound effects and background noises to a film clip of your choice (preferably one without too much music!).

The job of the Foley Artist is **important for lots of reasons**, including making sure the sounds are of perfect quality (recordings on set may contain interference, for example if a plane flies over) and to ensure background sounds are still present when dialogue is removed for a film to be translated into other languages.

If you have access to the Harry Potter films, **play your favourite scene with the sound muted**. If it's a long scene, you may want to choose a shorter section – up to a minute. **Watch carefully and write down the sounds that you think you should be hearing**.

Now have a look around you – try to find objects that you could use to recreate the sounds you should be hearing. For example, if you think you should hear the sound of a crackling fire and you have some plastic wrapping in your house, crinkle it together and it sounds a bit like fire!

Bear in mind that the same object can make different sounds – you can alter the volume and the pitch by interacting with the object in different ways. Lots of sounds can be made with your own body or voice.

If you have a recording device, you can record your sounds and play them back in time with the clip.

If you don't have access to the Harry Potter films, you can try this activity with any film or TV show – find out what it's like to become a Foley Artist!

SOUNDS