

Spectacles for Children

Prescribing glasses for children requires consideration of the refractive error, visual acuity, age, eye co-ordination and the child's visual demands. Vision is still developing during childhood and is only considered mature around age 8. Significant refractive errors, strabismus and amblyopia left uncorrected in early years lead to long term vision impediments.

Appropriate glasses and at times patching therapy or binasal occlusion and other spectacle options may be required. Small refractive errors in pre-school age children are often best left uncorrected, allowing the emmetropisation process to develop. As vision demands move from learning to read to reading to learn the smaller residual refractive errors become more clinically significant, along with non-strabismic ocular co-ordination disorders. A myopic (short-sighted) child, particularly those with myopic parents is likely to experience ongoing prescription change due to the axial elongation of the eyes. Special glasses, contact lenses and medical treatments can be recommended to help slow this change.

Our optometrists will recommend specific styles of lenses to provide optimal vision correction. We take into account factors such as lens material, design, and coatings to ensure comfortable and effective vision correction for your child.

Reading Glasses

The association of reading glasses solely with older individuals is a misconception. Reading glasses serve various purposes beyond correcting near-sightedness or farsightedness. Many children and teenagers benefit from wearing glasses to maintain normal eye coordination during prolonged close work, such as reading or studying.



While reading glasses may not dramatically improve the clarity of print for children, their main purpose is to enable both eyes to aim and focus comfortably. They help reduce eye fatigue during tasks that require sustained focus at close distances.

It's common for children to initially struggle to understand how these glasses assist them, especially if there is no immediate improvement in vision clarity. Patience and explanation are key in helping them understand that the glasses are meant to make their visual tasks easier and more comfortable, rather than clearer. An adjustment period is normal and should be addressed with understanding and support.

Vision problems are often more complex than simple refractive errors. Glasses form a part of the solution but if used without treatment of coexisting conditions may simply reposition the stress on the vision system resulting in only temporary relief of symptoms.

Bifocals

Bifocals are specialised lenses containing two prescriptions: one for distance and one for reading. This design addresses the inconvenience of constantly switching between reading glasses and distance vision correction. The reading prescription forms a segment at the bottom of the lens, as we naturally look downward while reading.

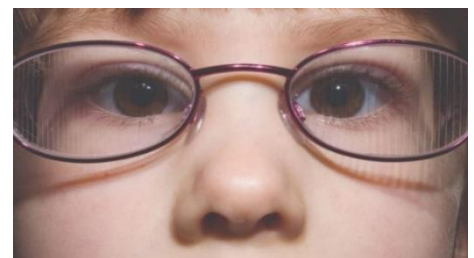


Bifocals help relax an overactive close focusing system and can also be useful in treating certain forms of near-sightedness. In some cases, children who have difficulty relaxing their close focusing (accommodation) may develop near-sightedness. Bifocal lenses allow them to relax their focusing for close objects while maintaining clear distance vision. Additionally, bifocals may be used for children and young adults who have a tendency to over-converge or become cross-eyed.



Prismatic glasses

Some eye coordination problems can be supported with a special type of lens known as a prismatic lens. Prismatic lenses alter the wearer's perception of where objects are located. These lenses have edges of varying thicknesses, with the thin side known as the apex and the thick side known as the base. Depending on where the base of the prismatic lens is positioned in the spectacle frame, objects may appear smaller but closer (base-out prescription) or larger and further away (base-in prescription). While these optical effects may initially seem unusual, the visual system typically adapts to the distortions over time.



To help a child adapt to prismatic spectacles, it's often recommended that they wear them while moving around, such as walking or engaging in activities. This allows the visual system to gradually adjust to the changes in perception.