

**Visual Impairment Services
Highland**

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Outdoors:

Anyone susceptible to discomfort glare may well find that tinted or dark glasses will be the best option; the tint chosen should be as pale as is consistent with comfort - the darker the tint the more the much needed contrast will be reduced.

Light coming from the sides is equally uncomfortable; light bouncing off pavements and buildings can be troubling - wrap around spectacles with sideshields are often preferred.

Tinted anti-glare overspecs may be helpful

Spectacle prescriptions may be made up in a tint, perhaps graduated so that it is darker at the top than the bottom, or with photochromatic lenses which darken according to the light level.

Indoors:

Lights which may 'catch the eye' should be carefully shaded.

Indirect lighting in the living room, plus carefully angled spotlights or task lighting for close work could well be an answer.

For reading, an illuminated magnifier will concentrate the light where it is needed - on the text and not reflecting back into the eye.

Light reflecting back from the page can cause discomfort glare; using yellow transparent film over the page being read can sometimes reduce glare and 'sharpen' the print image.

Dark tinted glasses are likely to make things harder to see.

Discomfort Glare

This describes the uncomfortable feeling which people experience when they go too close to a bright light source or approach a large area of light like a large window at the end of a corridor. Light that 'gets in the way', perhaps from a badly adjusted spotlight, also causes discomfort glare.

Older people in general are more likely to suffer from an eye condition, such as ageing maculopathy, which affects the retina and reduces ability to see contrast. The best way of increasing contrast is to increase the level of light - down without causing discomfort glare.

Sunglasses - protection from ultra-violet light can be important for visually impaired people; UVA and UVB light is more likely to cause glare problems and should be filtered out; lenses marked BS2724 give protection from ultra-violet light.

Problems with glare

Glare is light in the wrong place; perhaps shining into your eyes or reflecting back into them from shiny surfaces. Everyone experiences this when the evening sun shines straight into your eyes or when walking along a seaside promenade on a sunny day.

Disability glare

If your eyesight is affected by cataracts, scarred corneas or albinism you will experience this quickly and acutely.

Disability glare

You need good lighting in order to provide the contrast which enables you to see the task in hand. At the same time you need the least possible amount of direct light to enter your eyes. Daylight therefore needs to be welcomed but the disabling effects of direct sunlight prevented.

Indoors:

Roller blinds are preferable to curtains as they allow the maximum amount of light to enter the room, but can be adjusted to keep out direct sunlight; venetian blinds are not suitable because they cast confusing shadows.

The high level of lighting achieved by fluorescent ceiling light is desirable, but the tube must be screened by a diffuser.

A task light which directs the light in to the work in hand is excellent but the surface on which it shines should not be shiny and reflective.

The Rolls Royce solution for reading problems is to use closed circuit television or a television reader; both offer reversed polarity i.e. white print character against a black background.

Outdoors:

A traditional green eyeshade, a hat with a brim or a baseball type cap provide simple solutions to the problem.

Sunglasses should not be the first choice as tinted lenses reduce the much needed contrast; clip on sunglasses fit on the front of spectacles and flip up acting as a sun visor.