

Play Safe, Protect Your Eyes

Visual safety should be a major consideration for everyone participating in sports. Your eyes are among the most vulnerable organs of the body. Yet, think of the many sports where they can be exposed to risk. Even relatively minor damage sustained during certain sporting activities can have disabling or prolonged effects. It makes sense to avoid injury by making sure you can see clearly at all times and, if necessary, by protecting your eyes against potential dangers.

Are your eyes fit for sport?

The first safety measure to consider before taking part in any sporting activity is to check up on your visual ability. It is also the perfect opportunity to find out more about protective eyewear. Before having your eyes examined, explain to your practitioner the reason for your visit. Maybe you already wear spectacles or contact lenses and want to find out if they will be suitable for your sporting activity. Many people don't wear their glasses when playing sport. Alternatively, you may have been experiencing poor vision or headaches while taking part in sport. By telling your practitioner your needs, you will receive the best practical solution for your visual requirements, thus ensuring your comfort and safety when playing sport.

The Best Choice for You

Choosing the right visual aid for sport is just as essential as choosing the right equipment or accessories. Just two examples of the benefits that can be gained from making the right choice are the specially designed spectacles developed to help top ranking snooker players and the prescription glazed goggles used by swimmers.

Of course, spectacles aren't always the right option for playing sports. It would be impractical to use them in activities where physical contact is involved, or if the lenses are likely to get wet or steamed up. Contact lenses are the practical solution to these problems. Soft contact lenses are the best for most vigorous sports. Most people wear them for the duration of sporting activities even if they don't wear contact lenses for normal daily use. But remember contact lenses provide very little eye protection. They should be worn, when necessary and appropriate, in conjunction with protective goggles.

The Way To Clearer, Safer Vision

Certain sports are best performed with the protection of special frames or goggles. Squash, for instance, requires goggles which protect the temples and bridge of the nose as well as the eyes.

Factsheet

The Eyecare Trust is a registered charity that exists to promote awareness of all aspects of eye health. For more information call our public information line on 0845 129 5001 or log on to www.eyecaretrust.org.uk



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Guidelines for frames

- Lightweight, yet strong enough to resist strong impact.
- Could be fitted with side pieces that curl securely behind the ears.
- Should be fitted with elasticated sports band.
- Metal frames should be fitted with a padded bridge.
- Specially designed goggles are preferable

Guidelines for lenses

- Should be made from impact- resistant plastic or, preferably, polycarbonate
- Glass lenses should be avoided but, if used, should be toughened or laminated
- For indoor use, lenses should not be tinted and should be coated to reduce reflection from lights
- Polycarbonate, tougher than other materials, must be used for squash

Seek Professional Advice

Do you play a sport which presents even the slightest danger to your eyes?
In doubt about the best visual aid to help you do better in your chosen sport?
If the answer to either of these questions is yes, make sure you play safe with your vision. Consult your practitioner for professional advice.

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