

Hyperopia (long-sightedness): your new prescription

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In short

Hyperopia, or long-sightedness, means your eyes have to work harder to focus, especially on close things. Mild long-sightedness can be hard to notice, because the eye adjusts on its own. Glasses take that extra effort away when you need them.

What your result means

When light enters your eye, the cornea and the lens bend it to a focus on the retina, at the back of the eye. In a long-sighted eye, light from close objects focuses behind the retina when the eye is resting. This is mainly due to the size and shape of the eye.

If you are slightly long-sighted, the focusing muscles in your eye can make up the difference. If you are more long-sighted, or do a lot of reading and close work, that extra effort can leave your eyes tired by the end of the day. It gets harder for the eye to correct on its own as you get older. Your glasses use lenses that are thinner at the edge than in the centre.

Common signs

- Strained or aching eyes after close work
- Headaches
- Tiredness, especially at the end of the day
- Blurry close vision, such as books or a phone

Long-sightedness tends to run in families. A standard vision screening, such as reading a chart, might not pick it up, because the eyes adjust automatically. An optometrist measures how your eyes focus as part of a full eye test.

Long-sightedness in children

Children can often focus through long-sightedness using their natural focusing ability. If a child has moderate to high long-sightedness that is not corrected, the extra focusing effort makes other problems more likely, such as a lazy eye (amblyopia) or a turned eye (squint or strabismus). That is why your optometrist may recommend glasses for a child even when their vision seems fine to them. See [children's vision](#).

Your options

- **Glasses.** The most common treatment, especially for reading and close work. Some people wear them for distance too. See our [glasses](#) page.
- **Contact lenses.** Usually an option for adults rather than children. See [contact lenses](#).
- **No glasses yet.** Mild long-sightedness, especially in young people, might not need treatment. This can change as you get older.
- **Laser eye surgery.** An option for some adults, never for children. Ask your optometrist whether it is worth looking into.

Getting used to your new glasses

It can take up to 2 weeks to adjust to new glasses, particularly with long-sighted prescriptions. Mild eye strain, a headache or some blur is most likely in the first week.

- 1 Put your glasses on at the start of the day.
- 2 Start wearing them at home, where you know your surroundings.
- 3 If you are finding it hard, wear them for an hour on the first day and add an hour each day.

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Keep going until you are wearing them as your optometrist advised, for close work or all the time.

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For children, wear them as directed by your optometrist, even if your child says they can see without them.

If you still have trouble adjusting, come back and see us. New glasses carry a 3-month adaptation warranty: if you have trouble adjusting, we re-test your eyes and change the prescription or lens design at no extra cost.

When to come back

Even if you have no concerns, have your eyes checked every 2 years, or sooner if your optometrist advises. Book sooner if close work becomes tiring again, or if your child develops a turned eye. Eye tests are bulk billed for Medicare-eligible patients. See [eye tests](#).

When to call us on (03) 9702 9118

- Your new glasses still feel wrong after two weeks
- Headaches or tired eyes after close work keep coming back
- You notice one of your child's eyes turning in or out
- Your child will not wear their glasses and you are unsure what to do

[Call \(03\) 9702 9118](#)

⚠ Go to the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital emergency department (32 Gisborne Street, East Melbourne, open 24 hours), or call 000, if

you have sudden, severe eye pain with blurred vision, halos around lights, headache, or nausea and vomiting. These can be signs of acute angle-closure glaucoma, which needs emergency treatment. Being long-sighted is one of the things that raises the risk of glaucoma.

To book an eye test, [book online](#) or call us on (03) 9702 9118.

FAQs

— Is long-sightedness the same as needing reading glasses with age?

Not quite. Long-sightedness comes from the size and shape of the eye and can be present from childhood. Needing reading glasses from your 40s is called presbyopia. See [presbyopia](#).

— My vision seems clear. Why do I need glasses?

Your eyes may be working hard to keep things clear, which can cause tired eyes and headaches. Glasses take away that extra effort.

— Will my child grow out of it?

Mild long-sightedness in young people might not need any treatment. Your optometrist will check it over time and tell you if anything changes.

— How often should I have my eyes tested?

Every 2 years is the general advice, even if you have no concerns. Your optometrist may suggest sooner, especially for children.
