

Symptoms

- Complains of blurred vision
- Rubs eyes frequently
- Squints

Possible Vision Problems

Nearsightedness, Farsightedness, or Astigmatism

inability to see clearly in the distance or up close

- Closes or covers one eye
- Occasionally sees double
- Rubs eyes frequently
- Able to read for only a short time
- Poor reading comprehension

Eye coordination problems

inability to coordinate the eyes together effectively

- Holds things very close
- Complains of blurred vision
- Poor reading comprehension
- Says eyes are tired
- Able to read for only a short time
- Has headaches when reading

Eye focusing problems

inability to easily refocus eyes or maintain clear focus

- Moves head excessively when reading
- Frequently loses place, skips lines when reading
- Uses finger to keep place
- Poor reading comprehension
- Short attention span

Eye tracking problems

inadequate ability to smoothly and accurately move the eyes from one point to another

- Mistakes words with similar beginnings
- Difficulty recognizing letters, words, or simple shapes and forms
- Can't distinguish the main idea from insignificant details
- Trouble learning basic math concepts of size, magnitude, and position

Faulty visual form perception

inability to discriminate differences in size, shape, or form

- Trouble visualizing what is read
- Poor reading comprehension
- Poor speller
- Trouble with mathematical concepts
- Poor recall of visually presented material

Faulty visual memory

inability to remember and understand what is seen

- Sloppy handwriting and drawing
- Can't stay on lines
- Poor copying skills
- Can respond orally but not in writing

Faulty visual motor integration

inability to process and reproduce visual images by writing or drawing

- Trouble learning right and left
- Reverses letters and words
- Trouble writing and remembering letters

Difficulty with laterality and directionality

Poor development of left/right awareness

and numbers

Physical signs or symptoms

- Frequent headaches or eye strain
- Blurring of distance or near vision, particularly after reading or other close work
- Avoidance of close work or other visually demanding tasks
- Poor judgment of depth
- Turning of an eye in or out, up or down
- Tendency to cover or close one eye, or favor the vision in one eye
- Double vision
- Poor hand-eye coordination
- Difficulty following a moving target
- Dizziness or motion sickness

Performance problems

- Poor reading comprehension
- Difficulty copying from one place to another
- Loss of place, repetition, and/or omission of words while reading
- Difficulty changing focus from distance to near and back
- Poor posture when reading or writing
- Poor handwriting
- Can respond orally but can't get the same information down on paper
- Letter and word reversals
- Difficulty judging sizes and shapes

How to Identify a Vision Problem

Children should be referred for a **comprehensive eye exam** whenever visual symptoms are noticed or if they are not achieving their potential. Many of these vision problems will not be detected during a school vision screening or limited vision assessment as part of a school physical or routine pediatric health evaluation.

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