

Bifocal glasses for children

Paediatric Ophthalmology

Information for Patients

Produced: October 2024

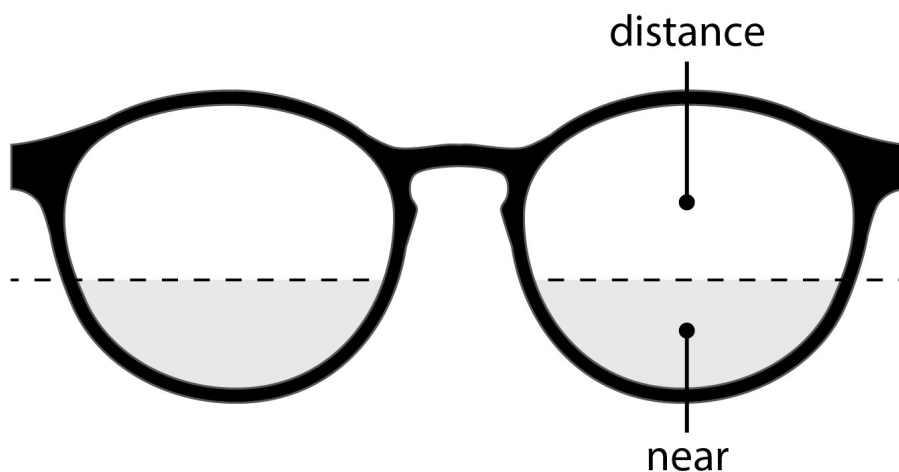
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What are bifocal glasses?

A bifocal lens has 2 segments with a different prescription in each.

The top half of the lens is used for distance viewing, the bottom half is used for near work like reading or writing.



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Why has my child been given bifocal glasses?

Reasons why we may give your child bifocal glasses include:

A focusing difficulty

Some children struggle to change their focus from far to near effectively. This can make near vision blurry for these children, even when wearing their normal glasses. Bifocals help with this by giving extra focusing power at near, making their close-up vision more clear. This problem can be more common in some conditions, such as Down's Syndrome.

To help maintain straight eyes

Some children may not be able to keep their eyes straight when looking at things close up; this is a type of squint. Bifocals can help them to control their squint for close work. They can also help your child to use both eyes together.

A childhood cataract

If your child has had cataracts, the natural lens in their eye may have been replaced with an artificial lens or removed completely.

Without a lens or with an artificial lens, their eye cannot change focus. Bifocal glasses will allow your child to see things clearly, close up and at a distance without having to swap between different glasses.

How often should they be wearing their glasses?

Please encourage your child to wear their glasses all day, every day, or as much as possible as they get used to them. The bifocals will be helpful for close work, so wearing them during school is very important.

In some cases we may need to gradually reduce the strength of the near segment, for example if your child is managing to control their squint well. This will be assessed at each clinic visit.

Where do I get bifocals?

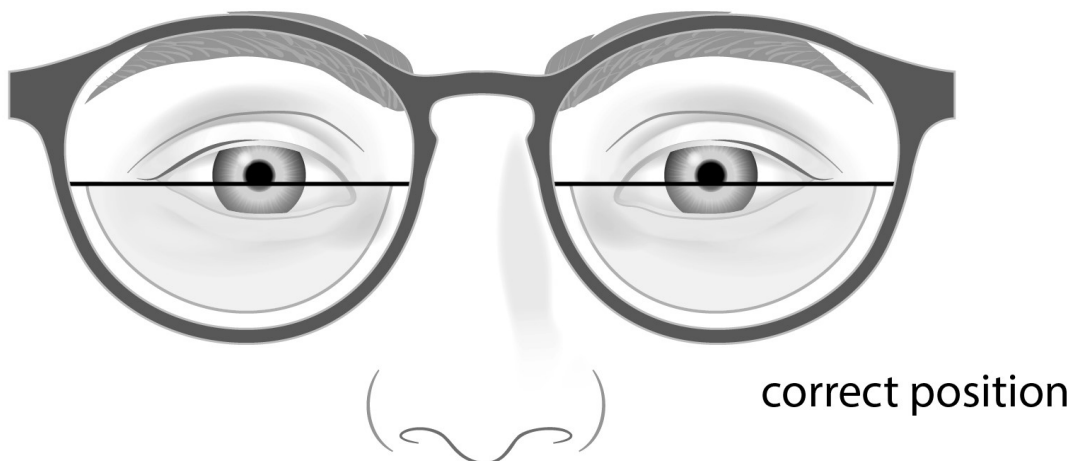
You will get a voucher which can be used towards the cost of a pair of bifocal glasses. This can be used at most opticians. Certain frames or lens thinning may cost more than the voucher value. It is very important that the frames fit properly and are deep enough for the bifocal lens. It is essential that the frames are comfortable and secure.

If your child wears hearing aids or other devices on their head (for example, a protective helmet), please take these with you when you get their glasses. This is to make sure the glasses will fit with the other devices.

Notes for dispensing glasses (please show this to your optician)

When dispensing bifocals to children, the top edge of the bifocal segment must bisect the pupil, or sit at the lower pupil margin when the child is looking straight ahead.

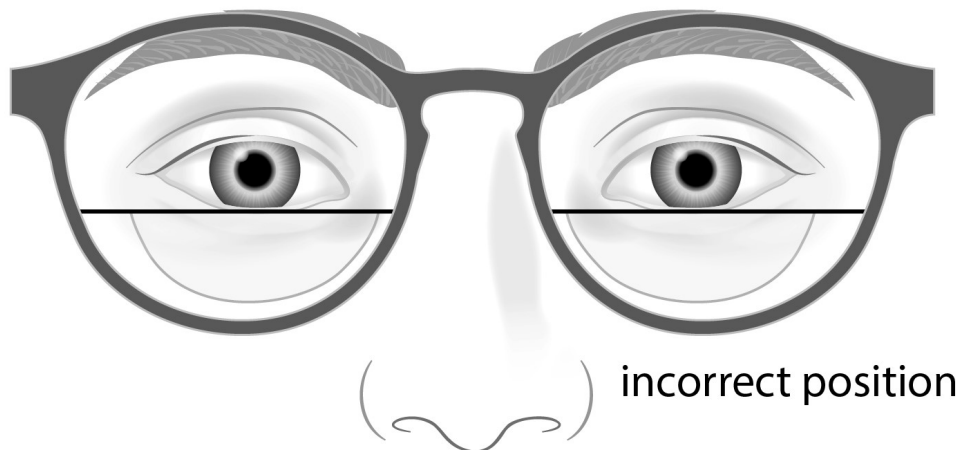
Recommended segments are either large D segments, spanning the lens, or executive (E) segments.



The dispensing objectives for children's bifocals are:

- The segment should be wide enough.
- The segment should be easily found when the child looks down to read.
- The segment should be high enough to discourage lowering of the head to view close work through the distance portion of the lens.
- The segment should be low enough to leave enough distance portion depth for good general mobility.

Please note children's bifocal glasses are not fitted in the same way as adult bifocal glasses.



Things to watch for when your child gets bifocals:

It can take some time for children to get used to bifocal glasses. They should take extra care on stairs and kerbs for the first few weeks of wear. You should monitor them and make sure they are looking through the correct portion of the glasses for the correct activity.

If they are doing close up activities, they should be looking through the lower segment. If they are looking far away, they should be looking through the top segment.

Contact details

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any other questions or concerns.

Orthoptic Department, Leicester Royal Infirmary

Telephone

Orthoptic Department: 0116 258 5277

Optometry Department: 0116 258 5858

Write down any questions you have or notes here to help you remember:

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

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