caring for your sight

Spectacles

After you have had your eyes tested, your optician or optometrist will give you a copy of your new prescription or, if you don't need any correction, a statement to this effect. They will also be able to explain any changes they have found between your old prescription and the new, and demonstrate this to you. They will discuss your options with you, and help you to choose new spectacles or discuss putting new lenses in your current frames.

Different types of Spectacle frames

Spectacle frame materials fall into 2 main categories; metals and plastics.

Metals

Monel (blended alloy) is used to manufacture most of the metal frames available in the world today. In its best form this malleable material is strong and durable, and, though it does contain some nickel (many cheaper frames contain significant levels of nickel which can cause skin irritation), the plating found in the better quality frames give a superb barrier between the wearer and the base metal.

Stainless steel - lightweight, strong, durable - is often used to create ultra thin frames due to its excellent tensile strength and durability.

Titanium alloy frames, including **memory metal** frames, are ultra light, have superb memory shape retention and are extremely durable. These frames give a peerless tensile strength and will perform and excel in extreme circumstances and can be ideal for near vision spectacles, which are taken on and off regularly.

Pure Titanium frames are ultra light, nickel free, hypo-non-allergenic and have excellent tensile strength. The material is used to create the perfect equilibrium between strength and comfort.

Plastics

Cellulose Acetate and **Proprinate** are the most widely used plastics to create spectacle frames. These materials are available in an almost infinite range of colours, from the layered colour combinations (laminates) to the solid colours. The material is also perfect for cutting and shaping to create intricate shapes and creative styling.

Optyl is an extremely light and durable, high quality plastic. Optyl is available in a vast array of both solid and translucent colours. Optyl resists perspiration as well as retaining its shape extremely well.

SPX, a plastic made famous by the prestigious frame manufacturer **Silhouette**, is the lightest plastic used for spectacle frames. SPX is extremely strong, hypo-non-allergenic and - due to its high resistance to perspiration absorption - retains its colour and lustre particularly well.

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Spectacle Lenses

There are also now a wide variety of lenses available to choose from to suit the patient's needs and differing prescriptions. As well as the normal single vision, bifocal and varifocal lenses, there are now lenses designed for specific tasks like computing and many different materials which will be suitable for different types of frames and prescriptions.

Plastic (CR39) Lenses

Traditional plastic lenses (called CR 39) are much lighter than glass lenses and safer in case of breakage. They can be tinted almost any colour and darkness and also treated to reduce scratching.

Hi Index Lenses

These are newer plastic materials that are denser (higher index) than traditional CR39 above. The end result is that the lenses can be made thinner and lighter. They can still be tinted, they absorb the UV light and come already treated to reduce scratching.

Aspheric Lenses

The aspheric lens is actually a lens design that can be used in most lens materials. It is a way of shaping the lens to create a flatter, thinner and less distorted lens than traditional designs, allowing lighter and far more cosmetically appealing lenses to be used in modern designer frames to most prescriptions.

Photochromic Lenses

These are lenses, which react to light, so that in dull conditions they have a soft neutral tint, and in bright light react with a tint appropriate to the strength of that light.

Reflection-free coating

Spectacle lenses can also be treated so they have refection free surfaces, which virtually eliminate distracting reflections, helping people to see better and to be visually more satisfying.

Whatever glasses you choose, it is vital that you keep them clean. Use the appropriate cleaner for your lenses and avoid putting them 'face down'. If possible try and always put them in their protective case when you are not using them.

For advice or more leaflets, please call

0800 85 44 77

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