

# Sport in Sight

When your child needs to wear glasses, ball sports like cricket, netball and football can be a bit of a challenge. But glasses don't have to stop them joining in.

There's no doubt about it, glasses can be a pain when it comes to vigorous sports. They can fall off, get damaged, fog up with sweat and blur with rain - but there are ways to make sport a lot safer and easier with glasses.

- If your child has only a mild problem with their distance vision, or needs their glasses for only for close activities, then they may well not need to wear them when playing sport. Make sure to teach them to put their glasses away safely, particularly when they are at school.
- Choose sturdy frames for your child, particularly if they are very active. Frames made of titanium-based materials may be a great investment. They are very flexible, able to spring back into shape and often come with very good warranties.
- Optical lenses are made from glass, plastic or polycarbonate. Usually glass lenses are not recommended for children, as they can shatter if they suffer an impact. They are certainly not recommended for playing contact sports. Polycarbonate lenses, on the other hand are virtually unbreakable (although they can still scratch).
- A simple piece of elastic, tied to each ear piece can help to keep glasses firmly anchored to your child's head.
- There's nothing more heartbreaking than a mangled, scratched pair of brand new glasses. If you can, hang on to your child's last pair of glasses and make them the sports pair. That way you can keep the new ones safe.
- Prescription sports goggles and swimming goggles are available. Although they can be expensive, they may be the safest option, particularly for contact sports. Talk to your optometrist or optical supplier.
- Contact lenses, particularly disposable lenses, can be an effective option for some children, but you need to evaluate whether your child is capable of handling them. Young children often find it very confronting to have anything put into their eyes and contact lenses certainly require a significant level of care. If your child is interested in contact lenses, discuss it with your optometrist or ophthalmologist.
- Laser vision surgery is generally not recommended for children as their eyes are still growing.

Having a vision problem doesn't mean your child has to miss out on sport. A bit of planning can help to make sure they can participate without any spectacle (or should that be spectacular) disasters.