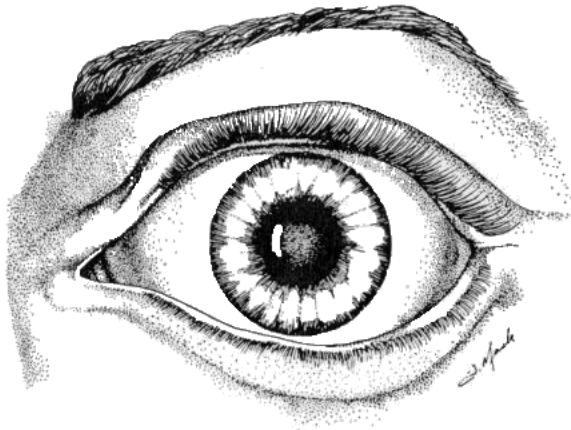


TAKE CARE OF YOUR EYES

You've Got to be 20-20 on the Road



Your eyes are your greatest source of information on the road. No one can be a safe driver with bad eyesight. Therefore, you must constantly be aware of any changes in your vision. Have your eyes examined at least once a year or even more often if you suspect any changes that might be dangerous.

Glasses Okay

As a professional driver, you have to see objects that are far away. You must also have good side, or peripheral, vision. And, of course, you must be able to distinguish a red traffic light from a green one.

It's acceptable to wear corrective glasses or contact lenses. But, if you wear contacts, federal rules require that you carry a spare set with you whenever you're driving.

In many states, adequate vision in one eye is considered acceptable to qualify for a license to drive within that state only. But such drivers, as well as those who are found to be color blind, are excluded from carrying passengers or hazardous materials.

Always make sure your glasses are clean and free of film. The same goes for your windshield.

Field Of Vision

Your field of vision is everything you can see when you're looking straight ahead. You should be able to see in a semi-circle of 180 degrees.

Within this area is your central vision, which is about three degrees of width. It's the only area in which you can see clearly. To either side is your peripheral vision.

You have less time to see objects clearly when you're traveling fast. When you're going 40 miles per hour, your field of peripheral vision is 70 degrees. When you're going 60, it's only 42 degrees. So you can see that speed plays a part in what you can see, particularly to the sides.

Depth Perception

Your ability to see the relative distances between objects is called depth perception. If your depth perception is less than perfect, you should follow other vehicles at a greater distance.

Use fixed points, such as the distance between utilities poles, to estimate your space from other vehicles. Pass only when you're absolutely sure that the distance ahead is clear.

Faulty depth perception will also affect your backing skills. Sometimes eye exercises can improve depth perception. Consult your doctor if you want to know more about this possibility.

Night Vision

Because there's less light, your ability to see at night is greatly reduced. Objects often are fuzzy and colors are harder to distinguish. Even if you have good daytime vision, it's possible that your night vision may be poor.

When you're traveling at night, drive more slowly to allow for this longer reaction time. Never look directly at the lights of oncoming vehicles. Make sure your windshield and headlights are clean and never wear sunglasses.

Eyes Right

As we get older, our vision changes -- usually for the worse. It's your duty to take the best possible care of your eyes. Be aware of your own visual limitations. Know how to compensate for these limitations by slowing down, increasing your following distance and following the advice of your physician or optical specialist.

Above all, for the sake of your eyes, take every possible step to avoid fatigue. There are many reasons for this, but one of the chief ones is that your eyes are at their best when you're well rested.