

The Impact of Poor Visual Skill



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When most people think about their eyes, they only consider their ability to see objects or write clearly. Generally speaking, that's a good thing because the number one task for your eyes is to give you a great picture of the world. We all want to see that beautiful sunset or our kids' smiles or to simply to be able to read the menu in the restaurant without needing longer arms!

However, the impact of vision goes far beyond how clearly you see. It influences how you stand, how you move, how much pain you experience, your athletic performance, and, in some cases, how much frustration or anxiety you feel day-to-day.

The fact is that your vision impacts every aspect of your life, and improving it can create massive shifts for you in areas of your life that may seem far removed from just "seeing better."

Most of this material was provided by
Z-Health® Performance Solutions
www.zhealtheducation.com

Get Started Now

Having been involved in the fitness world for two decades, one of the most staggering statistics to me is that 93% of fitness products are never even opened once they've been purchased. It seems people buy and store them for "when the time is right." Here's a secret—the time is ALWAYS right—and this program is designed with that in mind!

You can make changes to your vision with just a few minutes of work each day. You don't have to go to a gym, buy expensive equipment, or even leave your house or workplace to get this done. All you need to do is watch the videos, follow along with the exercises, and reap the benefits.

So please take action now. Get started. I have seen a great many lives changed from these easy-to-do exercises, and I cannot wait to hear your story in the near future.

As you progress through this program, I want to wish you the greatest success. Please make sure to contact us if we can help you on your journey to better vision.



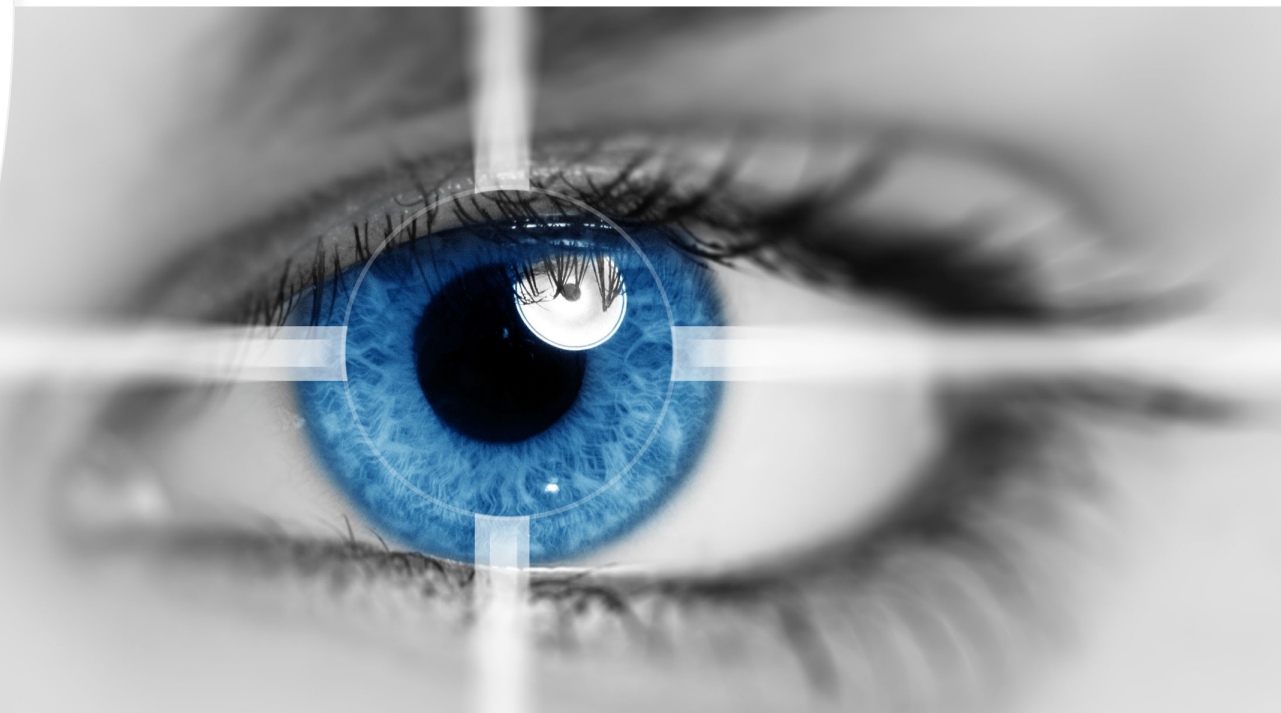
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1

INTRODUCTION

What is *The Vision Gym*?

Put simply, *The Vision Gym* is a collection of the very best brain-body exercises available for improving your vision. We've weeded through thousands of pages of research, combined that with real-world training experiences with tens of thousands of clients and athletes worldwide, and then boiled it all down into this simple follow-along program that can change your life by changing how you see. *The Vision Gym* is a small but vital piece of the total-body pain relief and performance training system known around the world as Z-Health.





How Does It Work?

The Vision Gym takes a unique approach to improving your vision because, as we view it, there are two primary components to making your eyes function their best:

Biomechanics – Your eyes have multiple muscles involved in visual functioning. And, just like the rest of your body, a lack of exercise can lead to both weakness and stiffness in the eye muscles, leading to many different visual problems.

Neurology – Even more important than your eye biomechanics is how your brain processes visual information. We like to tell people that vision lives in the brain and not the eyes. The way we perform the exercises in *The Vision Gym* is specifically designed to teach your brain how to see better.

Is It REALLY Possible to Improve My Vision?

I'm glad you asked because—as opposed to what many people, including many professionals, think—the answer is a resounding YES! When we first begin working with our clients, we often find a mental resignation regarding their eyes: they believe that deterioration of their vision over time is as inevitable as death and taxes.

Thankfully, both science and our experiences are proving that to be incorrect!

For over fifteen years, we've been helping our clients improve their vision, and we have seen things that would boggle your mind—from lifelong glasses wearers throwing their corrective lenses away to world-class athletes setting new personal records—all from the exercises in this program. So, not only is it possible to improve your vision—it's expected!



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THE SCIENCE
BEHIND *THE*
VISION GYM



Critical Basics

We realize you don't want to wade through a scientific treatise on the subject of vision. Our job is to sift through all the research and best practices based on real-world experience and provide you with the tools you need to make fast changes in your life. And we're happy to do that!

So, what follows is not an in-depth research volume. Instead, it's the basic scientific concepts that are foundational to this training program laid out in simple, understandable language. Please take the time to read this section because even though you may not care about the deep science of vision training, you **WILL** get more out of this program if you understand our rationale.

Vital Concept #1

Vision Is A Complex Set of Skills

Vision is a skill, just like learning to ride a bicycle, play the guitar, or speak a foreign language, and it is complex, just like other skills. For example, if you are learning to play the guitar, you must develop the skill to coordinate your left hand with your right, read music, and maybe sing all at the same time! Vision is very similar. It comprises multiple elements—each of which is a vital piece in the equation. To significantly improve your vision, each component needs to be trained.



Vital Concept #2

The 4 Basic Visual Skills

➤ Eye Movements

Your eyes, like the rest of your body, function better when they are strong, mobile, and coordinated. As we mentioned earlier, each of your eyes has multiple muscles involved in both stabilizing your eyeball and moving it. If there is weakness, inflexibility, or excessive tightness in any of these muscles, it can negatively impact your eye movement skills, and this can make focusing on different objects or tracking moving objects very difficult. In *The Vision Gym*, we're going to show you mobilization, strengthening, and coordination exercises that will get your eyes working the way they should.

➤ Visual Clarity

Put simply, visual clarity is how clearly you can see something you are focused on. If you've ever been told you have 20/20 or 6/6 vision, this is an indication that you have relatively "normal" visual clarity. However, there is one GLARING PROBLEM with this measurement—it only tells you how well you can see something in front of you when you are not moving and the object is not moving! This is a measure of what we call static visual clarity, and, while this is important, it is an insufficient measure for how your eyes work in the real world. From our perspective, having excellent visual clarity means having BOTH static and dynamic clarity: the ability to see clearly whatever you are looking at whether you or the object are still or in motion. In *The Vision Gym*, we will give you exercises designed to challenge and improve your visual clarity in both arenas.





➤ Depth Judgment or Perception

This component of vision allows you to precisely judge where one object is in relation to another. In fact, one of the reasons that humans have two eyes is that it allows us to have excellent depth judgment (as long as our eyes and brain are functioning appropriately). Depth judgment plays a role in virtually everything we do on a daily basis, and if it is even slightly compromised, the ramifications are huge. Poor depth judgment will not only affect your visual system, but your posture and movement as well.

➤ Peripheral Awareness

Finally, we come to your peripheral awareness or peripheral vision. We define this component of vision as your ability to see what you are NOT looking at. As you sit and read this page, you can see both what you are focusing on, but also some of the room around you (if you have relatively normal peripheral awareness). While most people do not often consider how important their peripheral awareness is, many sports vision professionals consider it the MOST important component of vision! Good peripheral awareness is essential because it helps keep us safe and it plays a huge role in movement and balance. So, if you want to be better at your favorite activity, improving your peripheral awareness is virtually guaranteed to improve your performance.



Vital Concept #3

The Vision Gym Rationale: Better Vision = Better Body

Training our clients over the last two decades, we have become very clear on what the majority of people need to meet their goals—a balance of mobility and strength coupled with good breathing and excellent posture. Our job as coaches, then, is to remove any roadblocks that may be preventing you from developing these skills.

Less than .001% of all the people that we've worked with over the years have ever thought that their VISUAL SYSTEM could be the #1 thing holding them back from having the healthy athletic body they've always desired, but your eyes may be interfering more with your progress than you realize.

Here's a Simple Example

Walk into any office building anywhere in the world, grab a chair, and simply observe what happens to the typical computer user's posture over the course of a day. They may start the day with a relatively tall, healthy posture, but as eyestrain sets in, you will almost inevitably see that tall, healthy posture begin to more closely resemble a Neanderthal! As their head creeps forward and their upper back and shoulders round without their awareness, they've also now changed how they breathe. And this is just one example out of hundreds that we can point to that demonstrates just how much impact your visual system has on the rest of your body.

We tell the instructors we train that your brain considers your visual system among its highest priorities. As a result, when the eyes get tired, it's the rest of the body that pays the price.

The point we are making here is that you should consider *The Vision Gym* to be a training program not only for your visual system, but for your entire body! You will likely find that as your eyes improve, the rest of your body will follow suit. During your very first session, try some basic range of motion exercises like touching your toes, side bending, or shoulder movements, and then do a couple of *The Vision Gym* exercises and retest. If you are like most people, not only will your eyes respond, but you'll notice an improvement in your body as well.



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3

TRAINING RULES



TRAINING RULES

These five basic training rules are the foundation for getting the best results from your work with *The Vision Gym*. Learn them!

BASIC RULE #1 **Safety First!**

Your safety is our first concern. With regards to the exercises in *The Vision Gym*, there are four important safety elements:

1. CONSULT YOUR EYE CARE PROFESSIONAL

Because we are not there to work with you in person, we do not know anything about your visual health. Caution dictates that you should speak to your eye care professional before beginning the training program to confirm it is safe for you to perform basic vision training exercises.

2. CHOOSE A SAFE TRAINING POSITION

If you have a lot of visual deficits, or you know that you have a tendency to get dizzy with eye movements, perform the drills seated. As you improve, you can progress from seated to a supported lean (think of leaning against a wall here) to standing while holding on to something for balance to full standing and beyond. You will see examples of this progression in the video.

3. BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS

We suggest you begin your training with *The Vision Gym* material in a relatively open environment with nothing to run into or fall on should lose your balance.

4. STOP IF ANY STRANGE RESPONSES OCCUR

When dealing with the visual system, it can be a lot of work for your brain at first to sort out what you are doing. As a result, if you experience dizziness, blurred or double vision, or anything else that makes you uncomfortable, stop immediately and speak to your health care provider. In our experience, vision training is extremely safe, but we want you to be aware that these types of responses can occasionally occur, so just pay attention to your body and take care of yourself.





BASIC RULE #2

Get a Buddy and Get Feedback

While *The Vision Gym* is intended to be a program you can do on your own, occasional feedback on how well you are performing the drills can expedite your results. For example, in many of the drills, we will ask you to move your eyes while keeping your head still. This is FAR MORE DIFFICULT than most people imagine. Having a friend or family member doing the drills with you can help you quickly identify errors so you can correct them. Plus, it's a lot easier to work on yourself when you have company in the process!

Alternatively, if no one you know wants to improve their vision, you can also use your computer, phone, or camera to record yourself doing the drills. It's amazingly useful to watch yourself performing the drills on video, as you will learn very quickly where you can improve.

BASIC RULE #3

Relax, Relax, Relax

We can start this rule with this summary: better vision comes from having more relaxed eyes. When you first begin doing vision drills, it is exceedingly common to strain. We tend to think that working “harder” is the key to better vision, but, generally speaking, this is backwards. We need to learn to relax the eyes as much as possible WHILE they are working. When people strain to improve their visual function—the body pays the price. We don’t want to wind up in a tense, strained posture and holding our breath while we are trying to improve our eyesight.

During the program, you’re going to be asked to do a body scan. When I say to do a body scan, first, take a deep breath in and out, and then take note of whether your neck is tight, your shoulders are tight, your chest is compressed, or you’re holding your breath. Finally, after simply observing, I want you to relax.

You will be amazed how often relaxation is the key to better vision. Finally, as you begin correlating relaxed eyes to better vision and performance, you may find yourself applying that same concept at the office, in the gym, or on the field.





BASIC RULE #4

Glasses or No Glasses?

This is probably the most common question asked by people as they get started with vision training, “What about glasses and contacts? Should I wear them when I am doing *The Vision Gym*?” Because our goal for most clients is ultimately to discard their glasses or contacts, it is generally best to do the drills without them. One thing that comes up for some of our clients, though, is that without their lenses they really cannot see ANYTHING clearly. In most cases, that’s perfectly OK. Simply doing the exercises, even if the targets are blurry, will begin to make a difference.

However, if the blurriness is really bothersome to you, here’s the basic rule. Once you begin the drills, if everything is really blurry and you’re having a difficult time seeing with clarity, wear your glasses for the first two weeks of training. After your second week of exercises, begin weaning yourself off them as you do the drills. You may find you use your contacts or glasses for some drills and not for others. Over time, as your visual system improves, your ultimate goal is to perform all the drills without any corrective lenses because you no longer need them.

Programming



BASIC RULE #5

“How Much?” & “How Often?”

Training your visual system is like training the rest of your body—time and consistency matter. Here’s what we recommend:

- 10-20 MINUTES/DAY
- 4-5 TIMES/WEEK

HERE’S THE REALLY IMPORTANT PART!

How you do those 10–20 minutes is up to you! You can do them in sets of one minute, sets of two minutes, or all in one block. In fact, we are going to suggest you vary your schedule over time and see what works best with your goals and lifestyle.

Can you get by with less than 10–20 minutes? Possibly. We have had many clients achieve phenomenal results in as little as 3 minutes/day of training, but that is more the exception than the norm. The recommendations above are what we find most beneficial for the majority of people we train.

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4

TRACK YOUR
RESULTS

The background of the slide is a 3D illustration. It features a dark asphalt road with yellow dashed lines, receding into the distance. A large, thick red arrow points straight ahead in the center of the road. On either side of the red arrow, there are white arrows pointing in the same direction. The road is flanked by white, raised walls that form a complex maze pattern. In the top left corner, there is a small orange horizontal bar.

TRACKING

In the Z-Health training system that gave rise to *The Vision Gym*, we are fanatical about tracking results.

There is an old saying in health and fitness that “if you’re not assessing, you’re guessing,” and we have taken that concept to great lengths in our system.

Why? As a company centered around neuroscience, we know that your brain and your body are very individual and unique. The simple fact is that some of the exercises that are good for you will make another person worse and vice versa. As a result, we want you to regularly reassess your progress as you practice *The Vision Gym* to ensure that you are creating the results you want.

Here's How It Will Work

- For the first two weeks of the program, reassess your progress every other day using the same three baseline assessments that we cover in Section 5.
- After the first two weeks, you can reassess weekly.
- Most importantly—pay attention to how your eyes seem to be functioning after every drill. You may find that you only need one or two drills out of the entire *Vision Gym* series to improve your baseline testing.
- The charts on the next pages can be used to note changes over the full ten-week program. Downloadable copies are included with your *Vision Gym* materials in Z-Health University.

Looking for Changes and Noting Your Progress

SNELLEN CHART

Snellen Chart Scores	Right eye	Left Eye
Baseline		
Week 1		
Week 2		
Week 3		
Week 4		
Week 5		
Week 6		
Week 7		
Week 8		
Week 9		
Week 10		

DISTANCE VISION CHART

	Better Clarity (Yes/No)
Baseline	
Week 1	
Week 2	
Week 3	
Week 4	
Week 5	
Week 6	
Week 7	
Week 8	
Week 9	
Week 10	

MULTI SIZE FONT CHART

	Font reading	Close distance	Far distance
Baseline			
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			
Week 9			
Week 10			



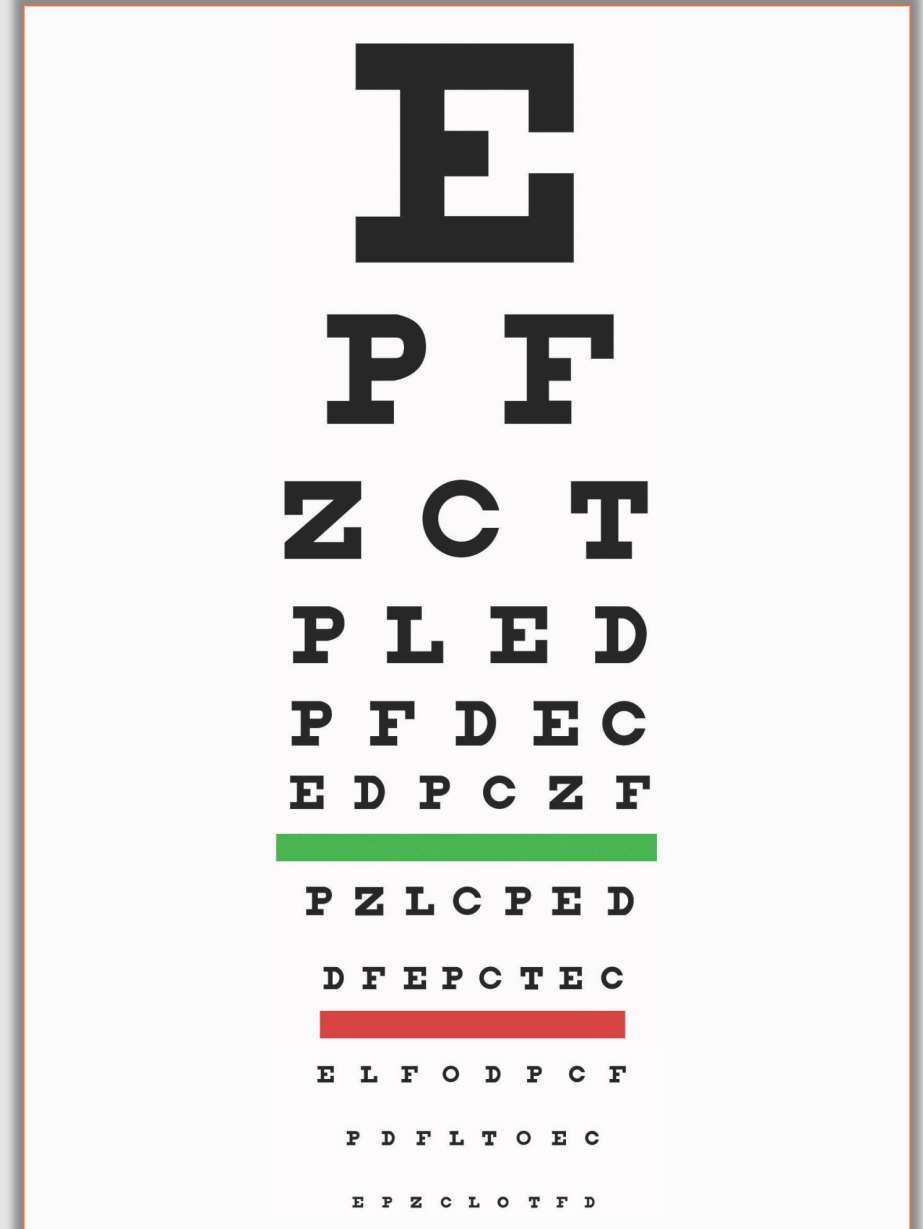
5

BASELINE VISION TESTS

Baseline Vision Test #1

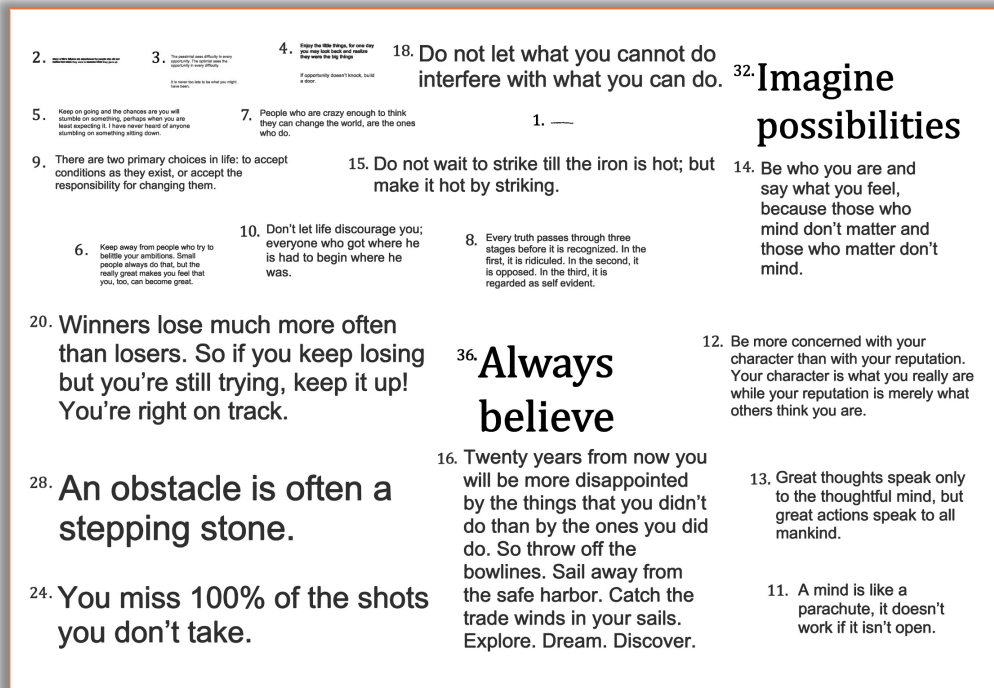
Snellen Chart

- Hang the chart on a wall at roughly eye height and stand 10 feet away. To maintain consistency between assessments, we suggest measuring the distance and then marking that spot with a piece of tape.
- Next, gently cover one eye and read as far down on the chart as you can. Stop when you cannot successfully read all the letters on a line.
- Your “score” is the last line on which you can read everything clearly.
- Repeat this process using the other eye.



Baseline Vision Test #2

Multi-Size Font Chart



Version 1: Comfortable Reading Distance

- While holding the chart at a comfortable reading distance, begin reading the quotes starting with the largest font (36).
- Work your way down in size until you reach a section where you cannot make out all the letters clearly.
- Your “score” is the smallest font size you can read successfully.

Version 2: Variable Distance

- Find the smallest font you can read clearly at your normal reading distance.
- Starting from this reading distance, bring the chart closer to your eyes until it begins to blur.
- Note the distance between the chart and your eyes.
- Repeat this process, but now push the paper farther away from you until it blurs. Note that distance.



Baseline Vision Test #3

Distance Vision Assessment

- Go outside, look around, and find the most distant object you can still see clearly. It is ideal if it is a sign or other item with letters on it, but it could be a stoplight, tree, etc.
- Focus on the object and note how clearly and easily you can see details.
- Place a marker where you are standing.
- Every time you redo your baseline testing, be sure to stand in the same spot to observe how much clarity you can bring to the object.
- As your vision improves, you can increase the challenge by placing yourself farther away from the target or picking a more distance object to look at.



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4-WEEK
TRAINING
PROGRAM



Program Overview

Week 1

- Explore the video program and this manual to get familiar with the words, layout, and general “feel” of the program.
- Perform your baseline tests.
- Learn and practice your visual reset drills.
- Begin practicing the drills using the Instructional portion of the video program.
- Limit the drill time to a maximum of 10 minutes/day.
- Have fun!

Week 2

- Practice your visual reset drills throughout the day.
- Remember to continue to reassess your visual improvements with the included tracking charts.
- Continue practicing the drills by following the Instructional portion of the video program. You want to make sure you are clear on how to perform every drill.
- Limit your drill time to a maximum of 10 minutes/day.

Week 3

- Practice your visual reset drills throughout the day.
- Remember to continue to reassess your visual improvements with the included tracking charts.
- Now that you understand the drills, use the Follow Along portion of the video program this week to save yourself time.
- Limit your drill time to a maximum of 15 minutes/day.

20/15	L E F O D P C T	15 ft. 4.5 m
20/13	F D P L T C E O	13 ft. 3.9 m
20/10	P E Z O L C F T D	10 ft. 3 m
20/8	E D L T O Z F C P	8 ft. 2.4 m
20/6	L P C F E T O D Z	6 ft. 1.8 m
20/5	T F D O P Z L E C	5 ft. 1.5 m
20/4	Z C T L O P D F E	4 ft. 1.2 m

Weeks 4 & beyond

- Practice your visual reset drills throughout the day.
- Remember to continue to reassess your visual improvements with the included tracking charts.
- Primarily use the Follow Along portion of the video program, but at least once each week quickly review one or two of the exercises in the Instructional section to make sure you are performing the drills correctly.
- Judge how the amount of drilling you perform affects your fatigue levels and reassessments.