Low Vision Aids

Telescopic Spectacle Magnifiers

What is a Low Vision Aid?
A Low Vision Aid is a device that enhances vision. There are many types of low vision aid but the most familiar are the optical low vision aids that rely on magnification to enhance the viewed image. Other types of low vision aids include task lights, glare control filters, closed circuit television systems (CCTV) and daily living aids.

What is magnification?
Magnification is the term used to describe the technique of enlarging the size of the retinal image. There are a number of ways of providing magnification, hand held magnifiers work by enabling objects to be held very close and thus appear larger but what if you need your hands free?

What is a Spectacle Magnifier?
A spectacle magnifier consists of a carrier frame, which may or may not incorporate a prescription lens, to which is attached either one or a pair of close focus telescopes. The telescopes are normally based on simple Galilean principles and enable an enlarged image to be viewed when an object is held at the correct distance from the lenses.

How do I use a telescopic spectacle magnifier?
Telescopic magnifying spectacles usually have a fixed working distance – which may require reading matter to be held quite close to the eye. The best way to use them is by placing the spectacles on your face – be careful anything at a distance will be very blurred – and then placing the reading matter against your nose and then slowly move the reading matter away until it falls into focus. You will need to keep the reading matter at this distance to obtain focus.
Should I use any extra lighting?

Because the reading matter is usually held very close to your eye an additional, adjustable light source should be employed. The light source should be chosen so as not to get too hot (LED units are ideal) and should be placed to illuminate the reading matter but to reflect any stray light away from the telescopes – placing the light source to the side of the reading matter is ideal.

Why is there only one telescope on my glasses?

Due to the difference in the retinal image created by each telescope the brain is rarely able to fuse any image created by a binocular spectacle magnifier of greater than 3x strength – hence it is not recommended to have a binocular unit above 3x.

Do I need my prescription in the lenses?

In most cases to obtain optimal performance and benefit from spectacle mounted telescopic devices it is advisable to incorporate any distance prescription into the carrier lenses. To dispense these unit requires a degree of understanding spectacle prescriptions and spectacle dispensing skills.

Who can supply telescopic spectacle magnifiers?

Spectacles are considered to be optical devices under the terms of the Opticians Act and should only be dispensed by qualified dispensing opticians or optometrists. Thomas H. Collison employ suitably qualified staff at their Low Vision clinics.