

– Named on a valid NHS certificate for full help with health costs (HC2)

People named on a HC3 NHS certificate may also get help.

For full details of who is entitled to sight tests paid for by the NHS please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/free-nhs-eye-tests-and-optical-vouchers/>

Certain groups in Wales are also entitled to an extended eye examination.

For details of enhanced eye examination entitlements in Wales please visit [www.eyecare.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.eyecare.wales.nhs.uk)

You may also be entitled to a voucher towards the cost of any eyewear prescribed.

Ask your optician for details.

Your local optical practice will also be able to advise on eligibility for NHS sight tests at home.

For more information about looking after your eyes visit [www.visionmatters.org.uk](http://www.visionmatters.org.uk)

This information is a guide only and should not replace advice given by your healthcare professional.

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# The sight test an essential health check



**Routine eye checks.  
When to have  
them, how much  
they cost and what  
to expect...**

Many people think that a sight test is just about checking whether your vision needs correcting. But there are other important reasons to have regular sight tests.

A sight test is a vital check on the health of the eyes and can detect a range of common eye conditions.

Many of these, if found early, can be treated successfully, avoiding potential sight loss.

A sight test can also spot other health conditions

such as high blood pressure, raised cholesterol, diabetes and increased risk of stroke.

**Who needs a regular sight test?**

Everybody! Sight tests should be part of your health care routine just like going to the dentist.

And remember, children are never too young to have an eye check. Special tests have been devised to help optometrists examine even the youngest children.

**How often should I have a sight test?**

Most people should have their eyes checked every two years, unless advised otherwise by their optometrist.

Certain groups may need their eyes checked more frequently, including

people with a family history of glaucoma. Your optometrist will advise you.

**What happens during a sight test?**

Sight test appointments usually last around 30 minutes. Your optometrist will tailor the examination according to your individual circumstance, taking into account your age, medical history and lifestyle.

Tests performed during your test might include: using a retinal camera or ophthalmoscope to examine the retina; assessing your visual acuity by asking you to read letters from a Snellen chart and measuring the pressure inside your eye.

**How much does an eye test cost?**

Costs vary but normally

start around £20. However, over 30 million people in the UK are entitled to free sight tests paid for by the NHS.

And, if you regularly use a computer at work you may be entitled to a test paid for by your employer.

**Do I qualify for a free sight test?**

Those entitled to a sight test paid for by the NHS include the following groups:

- Aged 60 or over
- Under 16 or under 19 still in full time education
- Diagnosed as having diabetes or glaucoma
- Live in Scotland
- Registered blind or partially sighted
- Complex lenses wearers
- Receive Income Support
- Receive Pension Credit Guarantee Credit