

What is 20/20 Vision ?

The term 20/20 is a numerical expression that describes how well you can see. This is also called your visual acuity. One way visual acuity is measured is by having you read small letters on a distant chart. A visual acuity of 20/20 for each eye is considered normal vision.

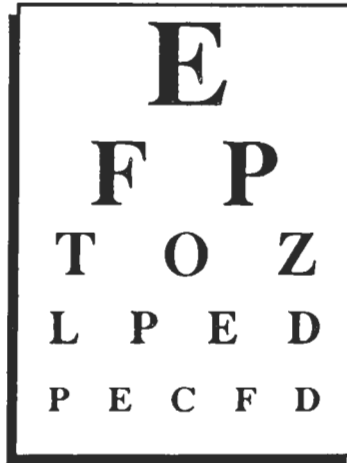
What do the numbers mean ?

The first number in the term for your visual acuity refers to the testing distance. This number is always 20, to indicate that the chart is 20 feet away. In smaller rooms, the letters are calibrated to appear as though they are 20 feet away.

The second number in the term for your visual acuity refers to your ability to see clearly. This number describes the size of the smallest letter that you can read. A visual acuity of 20/40 implies that the smallest letters that you can read are twice as large as the 20/20 letters. A 20/60 letter is three times as large as a 20/20 letter. As the second number in a visual acuity measurement grows larger, it signifies that the vision is getting worse.

An easier way to remember what your visual acuity means is to compare your vision with someone who has "normal vision" (20/20 vision).

For instance, 20/60 vision indicates that for the smallest letters that you are able to read at 20 feet, someone with normal vision could read at 60 feet. Obviously, this means that 20/60 is worse than 20/20.



- People have been wearing glasses for more than 700 years.*
- Most states require a visual acuity of 20/40 or better, to obtain a driver's license.*
- Special vision devices, called Low Vision Aids, may be necessary if glasses can not give vision of 20/70 or better.*
- The definition of legal blindness is when your visual acuity is no better than 20/200, even when wearing glasses.*

Can vision be better than 20/20 ?

Yes! Some people have 20/15 vision. This means that what they can see clearly at 20 feet, someone with "normal vision" has to move up to 15 feet to see clearly. Obviously, 20/15 vision is better than 20/20 vision.

What is the size of a 20/20 letter ?

In a 20 foot exam room, a 20/20 letter is about 9 millimeters from top to bottom. This is less than half of an inch. Research has shown that a normal human eye should be able to identify a letter of this size at a distance of 20 feet.

Does 20/20 vision mean your eyes are perfect ?

No, 20/20 only refers to your visual acuity. There are many other aspects of vision that must be correct to have perfect vision. Besides the ability to see clearly, you need be able to change the focus of your eyes comfortably and easily, coordinate the movement of your eyes so that they work together, discriminate colors accurately, see well at night, have good peripheral vision, be free from eye disease, and much more!

It is possible to have a vision problem, and still have 20/20 vision. Only a complete eye examination can determine if you have perfect vision.