

The Preschool Visual Development Checklist, which follows some general notes below, can help you know where your child is on the scale of developing visual skills. Because the sequence of child development is more important than the age at which a given skill developed, all ages given on the checklist are approximate. If your child lags behind the scale by more than four to six weeks in the time from birth to age two, professional help should be sought to assure your child's successful performance in his academic future.

Appearance of the Eyes

Most of the conditions noted will immediately catch your attention. However, none of these conditions should ever be allowed to continue. Children do not "outgrow" developmental delays or gaps. The basic physical condition of the eyes must be normal, and the eyes healthy, if your preschooler is to develop the visual skills necessary for achievement in the classroom. **Special Note:** Parents frequently become alarmed when they see one of their child's eyes appearing to turn in toward the child's nose. When the child is very young, and the bridge of the nose is still very flat and broad, this can give a false appearance of a crossed-eye. Look carefully at pictures of your child, and if the reflections of the camera flash bulb are centered in the pupil (the black, round center of each eye), there is probably little cause for concern. However, if this reflection is not in the center of the eye, professional attention should be sought immediately. Do not hesitate to get several opinions for your child at these early ages. There are several proven clinical (non-surgical) procedures to alleviate most of these problems, and surgery should always be the last resort.

This checklist has been prepared by developmental optometrists and informed educators to help you assure your child of the success and pleasure available in all the academic years that lie ahead. It will be good for both of you.

Appearance of Eyes:

- * Unusual redness of eyes
- * Unusual redness of lids
- * Crusted eyelids
- * Sties, or sores, on lids
- * Excessive tearing
- * Unusual lid droopiness
- * One eye turns in or out with fatigue

Evidence of Discomfort:

- * Excessive rubbing of eyes
- * Avoids bright light
- * Keeps eyes closed too much of the time

Expected Visual Performances:

Birth to 6 weeks of age:

- * Stares at surrounding when awake
- * Momentarily holds gaze on bright light or bright object
- * Blinks at camera flash
- * Eyes and head move together
- * One eye may seem turned in at times

8 to 24 weeks:

- * Eyes begin to move more widely with less head movement
- * Eyes begin to follow moving objects or people (8 to 12 weeks)
- * Watches parent's face when being talked to (10-12 weeks)
- * Begins to watch own hands (12-16 weeks)
- * Eyes move in active inspection of surroundings (18-20 weeks)
- * While sitting, looks at hands, food, bottle (18-24 weeks)
- * Now looking for, and watching more distant objects (20-28 weeks)

30 weeks to 48 weeks:

- * May turn eyes inward while inspecting hands or toy (28-32 weeks)
- * Eyes more mobile and move with little head movement (30-36 weeks)
- * Watches activities for longer periods of time (30-36 weeks)
- * Looks for toys he drops (32-38 weeks)
- * Visually inspects toys he can hold (32-38 weeks)
- * Creeps after favorite toy he can hold (40-44 weeks)
- * Sweeps eyes around room to see what's happening (44-48 weeks)
- * Visually responds to smiles and voice of others (40-48 weeks)
- * More and more visual inspection of objects and persons (46-52 weeks)

Expected Visual Performances:

12 months to 18 months:

- * Now using both hands and visually steering hand activity (12-14 months)
- * Visually interested in simple pictures (14-16 months)
- * Often holds objects very close to eyes to inspect (14-18 months)
- * Points to objects or people using words "look" or "see" (14-18 months)
- * Looks for and identifies pictures in books (16-18 months)

24 months to 36 months:

- * Occasionally visually inspects without needing to touch (20-24 months)
- * Smiles, facial brightening when views favorite objects and people (20-24 months)
- * Likes to watch movement of wheels, egg beater, etc. (24-28 months)
- * Watches own hand while scribbling (26-30 months)
- * Visually explores and steers own walking and climbing (30-36 months)
- * Watches and imitates other children (30-36 months)
- * Can now begin to keep coloring on the paper (34-38)
- * "Reads" pictures in books (34-38 months)

40 months to 48 months:

- * Brings head and eyes close to page of book while inspecting (40-44 months)
- * Draws and names circle and cross on paper (40-44)
- * Can close eyes on request, and may be able to wink one eye (46-50 months)

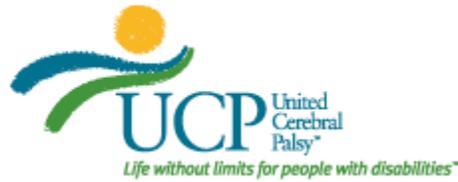
4 years to 5 years:

- * Uses eyes and hands together well and in increasing skill
- * Moves and rolls eyes in an expressive way
- * Draws and names pictures; colors within lines
- * Cuts and pastes quite well on simple pictures
- * Copies simple forms and some letters
- * Can place small objects in small openings
- * Visually alert and observant of surroundings; tells about places, objects, or people seen elsewhere
- * Shows increasing visual interest in new objects and places

More than 98 percent of all infants are born with normal, healthy seeing organs--the eyes. Many authorities believe this high rate of normalcy occurs because the eyes and the entire visual system are so important to humans.

However, the normal health and structure of the eyes do not guarantee that your child will be able to use those eyes efficiently in the world he must see and interpret. The classroom, into which your child enters around the age of six, demands much of a child's vision. This classroom, and its special tasks, demands visual abilities and skills every child must learn before he enters school if he is to be successful there. These abilities and skills are learned much better by your preschool child when you (and all others caring for your child) know how to evaluate your child's progress, and how to guide and assist this vision development for future academic success.

**Information obtained from:
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**Understanding Disabilities
Creating Opportunities**

Visual Development



This guide is designed to give you enough information about visual development so you can make intelligent observations, and know when, where and how to help your preschool child.

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