

The Partially Sighted Society



Information Sheet

HAND MAGNIFIERS

If you have, or are going to have, a hand magnifier, it is very important that you look after it correctly. If your magnifier becomes badly scratched and dirty, or if it is not held at the correct distance from the page, it will be of little use to you and will probably end up discarded in the back of a drawer. To get the best out of your hand magnifier, just follow these few simple rules:-

- **KEEP YOUR MAGNIFIER CLEAN**

You do not need to buy an expensive cleaner, in fact COIL (Britain's largest manufacturer of magnifiers) suggests that you use warm water with a little washing up liquid in it. Use a soft cloth to help remove any stubborn marks, then leave to dry naturally.

- **PREVENT DAMAGE TO THE LENS**

As most lenses are made from plastic rather than glass, you have to be extra careful; plastic gets scratched easily if not looked after. When carrying your magnifier around, keep it in its case. If you do not have a case for it, why not make a pouch for it out of soft material to prevent damage to the lens.

- **FIND THE CORRECT FOCUS**

If a magnifier is held too close or too far away from the paper, the writing will look blurred. To take the guess work out of focusing, hold the magnifier near to the page and then draw it away until the print becomes nice and clear.

- **FIND THE CORRECT WORKING DISTANCE**

It is a pity, but it is impossible to make a strong magnifier that can cover a large area. As magnifiers get stronger, so the lens gets smaller. To prevent light reflecting onto the lens, and to see as many letters as possible, place your eye closer to the lens, still keeping the magnifier at the correct distance from the page. At first it may feel rather strange using a magnifier, but with ten minutes practice each day it will soon become easier. Try not to get discouraged - using a magnifier properly is a skill and any new skill takes time and patience to acquire.