The Partially Sighted Society



LIVING WITH LOW VISION

The following hints and tips may just make living with low vision a little bit easier.

Lighting

- Extra light is very important. As well as overhead lights, use a goose neck reading lamp which can be angled onto whatever you are trying to see or read. When you are reading leave the main lights on in the room.
- Head torches can be an extremely useful and portable hands-free light source you can angle onto your task.
- A pen-light pocket torch is another useful tool for portable extra light.
- Make sure your windows are kept clean and clear of curtains.
 If you have net curtains make sure they are washed regularly.
- Make sure you have good lighting in danger areas, such as stairways.
- Use large lamp shades which allow light out at both top and bottom. This allows more light to be reflected around the room.

Contrast

 Create contrast. Place objects you are wanting to see on a contrasting colour surface. For example a white plate on a black place mat. Dark coloured food on light coloured plates and vice-versa.

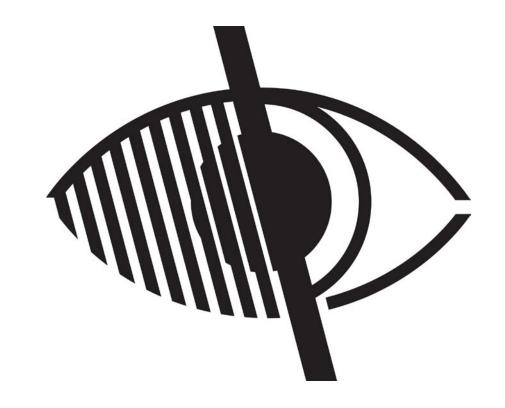
- Talking of food -if you are served food by a family member, ask them to relate the position of the food to a clock face so you don't get a surprise when you take a mouthful of cauliflower when you expected potato.
- As nice as your lovingly collected Royal Doulton dinner service is – the patterns will play havoc with trying to see the food on the plate. Invest in some plain dark and plain light coloured crockery.
- When chopping vegetables in the kitchen use a contrasting coloured chopping board and don't forget the extra light. A desk lamp on the kitchen counter can make all the difference.
- Mix and pour light coloured ingredients into dark coloured containers, and dark ingredients into light containers.
- When pouring boiling liquids place the cup into which you are pouring into the sink and bring the kettle to the cup and then pour.
- Mark the most commonly used settings on your stove, washing machine etc, with a tactile material such as hi-mark 2000. Choose a contrasting colour and you will never burn the food again.
- Place paper with thick ruled lines next to the phone or wherever you may need to take a message or write a note. Use a dense black pen.
- Mark the edges of steps with a contrasting colour paint or tape.
- A typoscope is a simple tool used to create contrast when reading. It is usually made of stiff black card or plastic with a window cut out of the centre roughly 2 lines wide. Typoscopes can be made to suit the width of the material you wish to read.
- When reading, use a typoscope and place floppy reading material onto a clipboard.
- Keep a small version of a typoscope in your wallet or purse to use as a signature guide.

- Decorate your room in light colours; it reflects more light into the room. Use matt paint finishes and contrasting colours around windows, door frames, skirtings etc.
- Use contrasting non-slip mats in bathrooms and on shiny floors.
- Struggling to get your toothpaste on your toothbrush? Put the toothpaste onto your finger and then into your mouth or teeth and then brush.
- If you drop an object onto the ground, use your head torch and search the area using a systematic grid pattern. This can be done visually or with your hands.

Mobility

- If you feel you need assistance when walking with another person take their arm above the elbow. This gives them enough time to anticipate stairs, kerbs, or obstacles.
- A small folding symbol cane can be a useful tool in alerting others to the fact that you have a visual problem.
- Wear a symbol of partial sight badge (available from the Partially Sighted Society.)

The Symbol of



Visual Disability

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