

About Eyes and Vision (from the National Eye Institute)

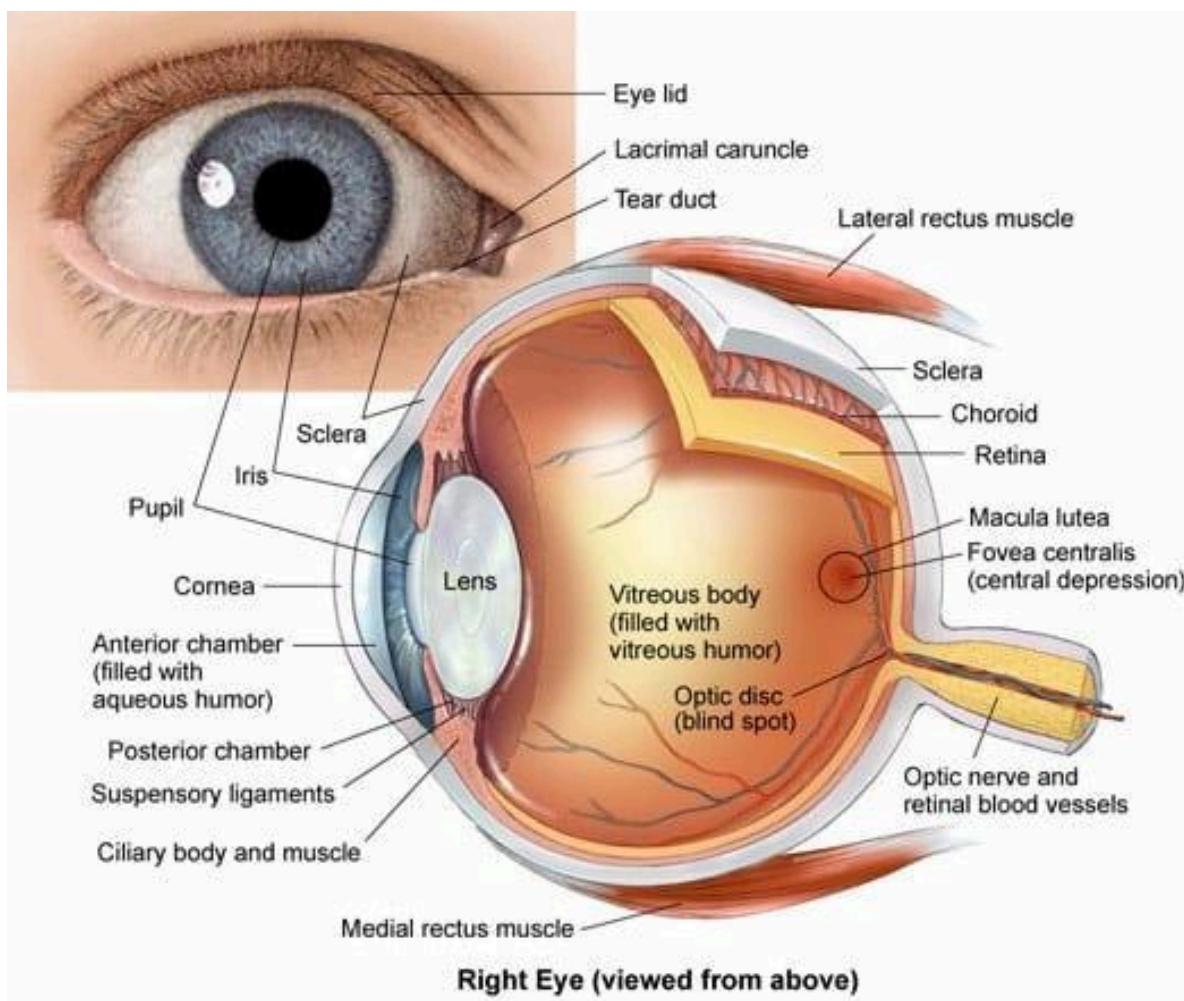
Anatomy of an Eye

How does vision work?

All the different parts of your eyes work together to help you see.

1) First, light passes through the **cornea** (the clear front layer of the eye). The cornea is shaped like a dome and bends light to help the eye focus.

Some of this light enters the eye through an opening called the **pupil** (PYOO-pul). The **iris** (the colored part of the eye) controls how much light the pupil lets in.



2) Next, light passes through the **lens** (a clear inner part of the eye). The lens works together with the cornea to focus light correctly on the retina.

When light hits the **retina** (a light-sensitive layer of tissue at the back of the eye), special cells called photoreceptors turn the light into electrical signals.

These electrical signals travel from the retina through the **optic nerve** to the brain. Then the brain turns the signals into the images you see.

[HERE](#) is a short YouTube video about how vision works.

Eye Conditions and Diseases

Browse or search our resources about dozens of eye conditions and diseases. Get the basics about symptoms, diagnosis, and treatments — or go in depth to see all the details. Click [HERE](#)

Outreach Materials

Search our library of hundreds of materials about eye diseases and conditions. They're not copyrighted, so you can download, print, and distribute them freely. Click [HERE](#)

Vision Rehabilitation

Vision rehabilitation services can help you with your daily activities so you can keep doing the things you love to do! Click [HERE](#)



The [American Printing House for the Blind](#) offers a myriad of useful tools such as tips for job seekers, family resources and a booklet laying out steps for those who are new to vision loss:

If you have recently been diagnosed with a visual impairment, you are about to embark on a journey that may feel overwhelming, and you might have many questions along the way. This booklet is designed to help guide you through this process. While it may not answer all of your questions, it will point you toward the tools, resources, support networks, and guidance you need during this challenging time. "[Getting Started](#)" is a resource that is updated annually to provide the most current information. [Here](#) is the Spanish version of the guide.

You can also connect with experts in your geographic area who can steer you towards services and resources.

They can answer virtually any questions related to blindness and low vision.

Call toll-free: (800) 232-5463, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 8 pm Eastern.



Founded in 1920 by William Hadley, an educator who lost his eyesight later in life, Hadley offers practical help, connection and support free of charge to anyone with a visual impairment, their families and professionals supporting them. Click [HERE](#)

They offer:

- [WORKSHOPS](#) (short videos), you can learn daily living skills such as [COOKING](#) safely, [USING WHITE CANE](#), [STAYING CONNECTED](#), tips for [GROCERY SHOPPING](#) among many other useful topics.
- [AUDIO PODCASTS](#), you can listen to people facing vision loss share their insights about what has helped them cope and adjust or get the inside scoop from experts on a wide range of topics unique to vision loss.
- [DISCUSSION GROUPS](#), Call-in groups give you a chance to connect and learn from Hadley and others who share your interests. Join by phone or computer. Listen in. Chime in. It's up to you. Click on the "Monthly Schedule" to find a topic which interests you and to sign up.

HELP WITH ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The Carroll Center for the Blind offers a variety of access technology instructional programs that can help blind and visually impaired individuals use technology proficiently for work and home. Programs are available for individuals as well as teachers and rehabilitation professionals in the use of speech output, screen magnification, braille technology, iPhone, iPad, tablets, Microsoft Office applications and smartphones. Click [HERE](#) for available classes.

Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired's [Access Technology Training](#) helps blind or visually impaired people learn to use technology that helps them do what they want. They offer training at partner locations in Boston, Brookline, Fitchburg, Franklin, Cape Cod, Natick, Watertown, Worcester, Salem, and Springfield. Click [HERE](#) for locations, schedule and contact information. They also offer remote tech training remotely on Thursdays between 10 am and 11 am. To learn more, email Jerry Feliz: jfeliz@mabcommunity.org

For individuals registered with **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind**, and would like personalized assistance or need further details about assistive technology options, please contact your counselor. They can offer guidance tailored to your needs. To

obtain the contact information for your counselor, please call 1-800-392-6450 or email mcbinfo@mass.gov. [HERE](#) is a list of visually assistive technology they recommend.

If you prefer learning using videos, these are some good options:

The Blind Life: Click [here](#).

American Foundation for the Blind: Click [here](#).

Lighthouse Guild: Click [here](#).

Support Groups

Losing your vision can feel daunting and frightening. You might discover that you need more support than what's available at your doctor's office. Joining a vision loss support group could provide you with encouragement, help, and a sense of understanding from others who are also navigating life with low vision or blindness.

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION
for the
Blind and Visually Impaired

[Our peer support groups](#) meet once a month and provide a warm, relaxed, engaging opportunity to meet peers who are sharing the experience of coping with serious vision loss.



[Massachusetts Commission for the Blind](#): is a state agency that provides rehabilitation and social services to residents of Massachusetts who are legally blind. To obtain a certificate for legal blindness, individuals in Boston, MA, need to first be assessed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist, who will determine if they meet the criteria for legal blindness. The eye care professional will complete a certificate of vision impairment (CVI) form, which records the individual's condition and certifies their legal blindness status. MCB's goal is to help individuals achieve independence and full participation in the community. They offer a variety of services, including vocational rehabilitation, assistive technology, and advocacy.

General information: MCBinfo@mass.gov or 617-727-5550

Blindness Registry: BlindnessRegistry@mass.gov or 617-626-7415.

Benefits offered to those who are legally blind:

- ❖ [Certificate of Blindness \(COB\)](#)
- ❖ [MCB Identification Card](#)
- ❖ [Income Tax Exemptions and Deductions](#)
- ❖ [Real Estate Tax Exemption](#)
- ❖ [Automobile Excise Tax Exemption](#)
- ❖ [Social Security Disability Insurance \(SSDI\) & Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#)
- ❖ [Specialized Telephone Equipment Program](#)
- ❖ [Disability Plates and Placards](#)
- ❖ [MBTA Blind Access CharlieCard](#)
- ❖ [The RIDE](#)
- ❖ [MBTA Mobility Center](#)
- ❖ [Other Regional Transportation](#)
- ❖ [Voting Rights](#)
- ❖ [Talking Book Libraries](#)
- ❖ [Massachusetts Audio Information Network](#)
- ❖ [Housing](#)