

Part 2: Why Your Vision Can Be Worse at Night

Many people notice that vision becomes more difficult at night, even when daytime sight seems satisfactory. This may present as blur, glare, difficulty recognising faces, or reduced confidence when walking or driving in low light. These changes are common, but they should not always be assumed to be “normal ageing.”

What Happens to Vision at Night?

In low light, the eyes rely more on the peripheral retina and require more light to see clearly. The pupil becomes larger to allow more light in, but this can also reduce the sharpness of vision. As a result, contrast is reduced and objects may appear less distinct.

Common Causes

Here are some of the main reasons night vision can get worse:

- **Cataracts:** One of the most common causes. The lens inside the eye scatters light, causing glare, halos around lights (especially car headlights), and blurry vision at night.
- **Reduced contrast sensitivity:** It becomes harder to tell objects apart from their background in dim light.
- **Outdated or incorrect glasses:** Even small changes in your prescription can be much more noticeable at night.
- **Changes in the pupil with age:** As we get older, the pupils don't open as wide in the dark, so less light reaches the back of the eye.
- **Dry eyes:** An unstable tear film can make vision fluctuate, and this often feels worse in the evening.
- **Glare sensitivity:** Bright lights against dark backgrounds can be very uncomfortable.

When Should You Get It Checked?

Please don't ignore worsening night vision. It's worth having it looked at if:

- It is getting noticeably worse
- It affects your daily life or confidence
- You have strong glare, halos, or one eye is much worse than the other
- You struggle to adapt when going from bright to dark places

What Can Help?

- Make sure your glasses are up to date and right for distance vision.
- Improve lighting at home – especially in hallways, on stairs, and near steps.
- Try anti-glare lenses or coatings if recommended.
- Use lubricating eye drops for dry eyes (ask your optician or doctor).
- Take extra time for your eyes to adjust when moving between light and dark areas.

- Drive or walk with extra care at night.

Important Message

Poor night vision is common, but it is not always harmless. It can affect your safety and independence, and it can sometimes be an early sign of other eye conditions.

If you're worried about your night vision, please speak to your optician or GP. Early checks can make a big difference.

If you have experienced night vision difficulties, feel free to share your tips or questions with the group – we can all learn from each other. Croydon Vision is here to support you.

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