



Visual Skills at A Glance

Oculomotor: Refers to the ability to move our eyes in order to take in information and retrieve visual input. Below are skills that fall into this category.

- 1. Smooth Pursuits:** The eye's movements to track information which is both automatic (reflexive) and voluntary. Difficulties with the ability to move one's eyes in various directions presents with struggles in; task completion in a timely manner, reading, task attention, sports, and focus. They may adjust their head when attempting to follow moving targets.
- 2. Visual Fixation:** Present at birth, fixation matures at 4 weeks and helps a baby focus on faces close by. Difficulties with ability to keep eyes from jumping around involuntarily present with struggles in; complaints of blurred vision, words jumping off page, and confused with inattention in some kids.
- 3. Visual Saccades:** The eye's ability to make a quick simultaneous (both eyes) eye movement between two or more points of fixation/stimulus. This skill is necessary for reading. Difficulties with this skill presents with struggles in; reading, reading comprehension, copying work from the board or to a paper without errors, trouble copying work between 2 papers without errors/word omissions.
- 4. Visual Convergence:** This eye-coordination struggle where eyes tend to drift outward especially when reading or doing close work. Difficulties with this skill presents; tired eyes when reading, difficulty with maintaining focus, fuzzy or double vision. You may see kids rub eyes or cover one eye, excessive blinking when trying to focus and trouble reading for a significant length of time which can present as inattention.

Visual Perception: Is the brain's ability to interpret information such as with a puzzle. Below are skills that fall into this category.

- 1. Figure Ground:** Helps you recognize objects thru vision. Difficulties with this skill presents; difficulty with organization, efficiency, attention and focus, impaired safety, and struggles with reading and writing due to letter, word, and phrase omissions.
- 2. Visual Closure:** Assists with recognizing faces or signs or items that are partially covered. Difficulties present with; poor organization, difficulty reading (fluency, speed, making inferences, and comprehension), math, puzzles, sorting objects and other functional tasks such as finding a partially hidden shirt in a bin.

3. **Visual Spatial Relations:** This deals with the ability to understand, reason, and remember the special relationships between objects. Difficulties present with; poor spacing between letters or words, margin awareness, written work that drifts toward the center of a page, letter size and placement, child's body parts in relationship with other objects or people, or in movement. This may look like poor coordination, balance, self-awareness, self-confidence and even impaired social emotional relations.
4. **Visual Attention:** Struggles with this can appear as behavioral or intentional difficulties in the classroom. Difficulties present with; appearance of being "lost" in the task at hand, maintaining the correct place in reading tasks, poor letter formations, difficulties in technical aspects of written work such as capitalization, punctuation, and paragraph parts.
5. **Visual Memory:** Refers to the relationship between perceptual processing and encoding, storage, and retrieval of information. Difficulties present with; reading comprehension, word recognition, spelling, close point and far point copying tasks.
6. **Visual Discrimination:** Interprets the surrounding environment by processing visual information. Difficulties present with; misspelling or misidentifying similar words, letter and number reversals, spacing between words and letters, difficulty determining where the word ends.
7. **Form Constancy:** This is the ability to identify an object when it is rotated, reversed, or displaced spatially. Difficulties present with; difficulty recognizing differences, comparing & contrasting, recognizing uppercase & lowercase or cursive written work, paragraph identification, difficulty finding a specific word or phrase in a paragraph and answering word questions.
8. **Visual Sequential Memory:** The relationship between visual processing and encoding, processing, and retrieval of the neural representations. Visual navigation to a previous visual location over the span of eye movements to years. Difficulties present with; math when required to pattern or order numbers, alphabetizing information, recalling sets of letters and numbers such as a phone number or phrase when copying from a source.

Visual Motor: Is the effective coordination between the visual system and the motor system. Visual Motor Integrations is necessary for handwriting, because of the perceptual components and oculomotor control aspects impacting reception of visual integration. This makes it difficult to separate visual perception from visual motor integration when it comes to interventions. Difficulties present with trouble copying shapes, print letters or copying written work, eye-hand struggles to catch a ball, fasten buttons and other fine motor ADL activities.