

Lessons for Living with Vision Loss

Introduction to Lessons for Living with Vision Loss

Welcome to Lessons for Living with Vision Loss brought to you by the [National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision](#), home of [Independent Living for Older Individuals who are Blind Technical Assistance Center \(IL OIB-TAC\)](#).

Through this series of lessons, you will learn about your eye condition and ways to get around safely in your home, and you'll develop basic techniques to perform your daily tasks. You already use many of these techniques every day without vision but probably don't realize it. For example, everyone has reached into a pocket and pulled out house keys, a quarter, or something else typically carried in a pocket, using only the sense of touch. The taste or smell of a glass of milk lets you determine if it's fresh or sour. In truth, not one task is done using only vision. Learning to gather information from all of your senses and develop the techniques presented in this course can help you become confident in your ability to live more independently with vision loss.

Adaptive strategies and techniques to accomplish everyday tasks with low vision and blindness are covered in this course. For example, Lesson 1 will give you a brief overview of the eye's anatomy and discuss several age-related eye conditions that cause vision loss and how those conditions affect daily activities. Lesson 2 describes various eye care providers. Some questions you might consider asking to gain a greater understanding of your eye condition, what you should expect, possible treatments, and so on. Many lessons introduce helpful techniques you can use to perform tasks with little or no vision, including how to use your senses more efficiently and ways to use your remaining vision more effectively. Lessons address topics such as low vision aids, reading, and writing, moving around safely, organization and labeling, cooking, handling money, using computers and smartphones, and engaging in leisure and recreation activities. There is also a lesson devoted to helping you adjust to vision loss emotionally and socially.

As you read the information in these lessons, keep in mind that the information is in no way comprehensive. If you come across a topic or situation in your life, which is not addressed, go online to search for strategies or adaptive devices. Check out the list of resources to find examples of companies and services.

Although some specific products are mentioned by name, many similar products are available. At the end of each lesson are several suggested activities to help you apply the information. In lessons where specific products or services are discussed, you will find the website and or phone number listed at the end of that lesson. Additionally, we have compiled the complete list of services and companies mentioned throughout the lessons in a separate resource section.

Those listening to this on their talking book player, note that this introduction, table of contents, each lesson, and list of resources can be navigated to by navigating at the chapter level. Additionally, each lesson's headings or subsections can be reached on the next level of navigation. You can move both forward and backward throughout this recording by pressing the fast forward and rewind buttons. You will hear an audible tone as you pass the heading and chapter markers.

Helpful Suggestions

- You do not have to read the lessons in order. However, we do suggest that you take Lessons 1, 3, and 4 first. These lessons are used as building blocks for the techniques and information presented in the other lessons.
- You may revisit a lesson as many times as you want. We suggest that you take your time as you read through each lesson. Don't hesitate to read through a section several times and take notes if you wish, especially about techniques you want to try later. Stop and try the techniques when you encounter them in the lessons. If you want to work on a part of a lesson one day and finish it the next, pause the recording and restart it again when you are ready to continue. If it would be easier to have a print copy of a lesson, feel free to visit [IL OIB-TAC](#), where you can find a downloadable version of these Lessons for Living.
- You can use the following links to locate rehabilitation agencies and professionals by visiting [American Foundation for the Blind \(AFB\) VisionAware](#), the [IL OIB-TAC](#), or if you are a veteran, <https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/blindrehab/VIST.asp> for help with your vision loss.

[AFB VisionAware](#) created the Lessons for Living through an award from [IL OIB-TAC](#). They were revised and updated in 2020 to reflect the most up-to-date information and products. This sub-award is from a grant (#H177Z150003)



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Resources

[American Foundation for the Blind \(AFB\) VisionAware](#)

[Independent Living for Older Individuals who are Blind Technical Assistance Center \(IL OIB-TAC\)](#)

[National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision](#)

[Rehabilitation Services Administration \(RSA\)](#)

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