

Hitting the Target with Eyewear for Hunters

If you're tired of hunting for eyewear that offers you the visibility and protection you need, set your sights on Optics Unlimited at The Eye Clinic. They offer sports eyewear that a specialized selection of frames and lenses developed just for hunters.

Theresa Fluty, certified optician with Optics Unlimited, says any person involved in hunting or shooting sports should wear protective eyewear. "Protective eyewear is important to hunters for several reasons," she explains. "Having the right eyewear can sharpen your vision, provide safety in the field, protect your eyes from damaging UV radiation and enhance your overall performance. Of course, the quality of your frames and lenses will determine your overall benefit from sports glasses."

Features to look for in hunting glasses include frame designs that are tailored to your facial features and to accommodate your specific firearm and shooting style, spring hinges, bridges that can be adjusted for any shot, comfortable nose pads, wrap-style features for secure fit around the ears and lightweight materials like plastics or titanium.

The lenses themselves may be the most important feature when it comes to choosing your hunting glasses. Fluty says protective eyewear should be worn at all times while hunting, and polycarbonate is the lens material of choice. "Polycarbonate lenses can sustain the impact of a 12-gauge shotgun blast at 10 meters. It's amazingly strong – approximately the strength of steel." She says polycarbonates should be at least 3.0mm thick in the center for the lens to provide optimum protection, and should include built-in UVA and UVB protection.

The lens color used in hunting glasses has become a science of its own. Fluty explains that the lens color you need is determined by several factors, including the terrain, game and lighting conditions. "Many hunters are most comfortable in lenses that are yellow or orange. These hues block haze, and with the addition of an anti-reflective coating, allow 99% of the light through the lens. A yellow contrast enhancing lens will absorb blue light which if present on overcast days. This will help make objects against a colored background appear brighter, helping you better distinguish an animal in the field," explains Fluty.

Other popular lens colors and recommendations are:

- Red – excellent for hunting in green background
- Purple or violet – shooting sports like clay targets
- Orange – excellent for clay-target shooting
- Bronze – good for bright, glaring days with open backgrounds
- Green – good all-purpose lens; best in bright sunny conditions

Fluty recommends purchasing shooting eyewear that features interchangeable lenses so you can change your lenses based on the type of shooting, the color of the target, the color of the background or the lighting conditions. Most sports frames can be fitted with prescription lenses as well and tinted with the colors you specify.

"Most hunters invest a great deal of time and energy in making sure they have the equipment they need to improve their performance in the field. Unfortunately, they forget about protecting their eyes or enhancing their most important hunting skill – their vision," says Fluty.

For more information about specialized eyewear for hunters, stop or call the Optics Unlimited nearest you, located within The Eye Clinic in Lake Charles, Sulphur, DeRidder or Jennings.