

A sport-by-sport guide to protecting your vision



Whether it's helping you judge a sharp turn down the ski slope or seeing when to hit an oncoming pitch, your eyes are key players in all your sporting activities. But you can also hurt your eyes if they're left unprotected.

Almost all sports pose some type of risk for eye injury. Making all the right moves in protecting your eyes can significantly reduce your risk of injury and improve your performance. Here are some tips to help keep your eyes protected and well equipped for whatever sports you play ¹ :

Baseball—Protect yourself from a wild pitch, thrown bat or pop fly with a face guard made of sturdy plastic and/or eye guards.

Basketball—Wear eye guards to safeguard yourself from flying elbows, fingers and basketballs.

Boxing—Always wear headgear during sparring sessions and in amateur bouts.

Soccer—Wear eye guards to help shield your eyes from wayward elbows, balls or feet.

Football—As a full-contact sport, football dictates you should wear eye guards and a full face guard to prevent injury.

Hockey—Use a full mask to defend your eyes and face from flying sticks, pucks and players.

Tennis or Racquetball—Wear eye guards to guard your eyes from a misjudged ball or flying racquet.

Skiing—Sports lenses are often made of polycarbonate materials, which are the best way to safely shield your eyes from wind, snow, sun and glare.

Swimming—Wear goggles to keep lake, ocean and chemically treated pool water from getting in your eyes. Always remember to take out your contact lenses before swimming.

Hiking or Camping—Beware of insect bites and poison ivy, oak and sumac. Keep your hands, as well as repellent, away from your eyes.

If you do suffer an eye injury, seek immediate medical attention from an eye care professional, especially if you have pain, blurred vision or loss of vision. Wearing the proper eyewear can greatly reduce your chance of an eye injury. That means you can stay in the game and keep enjoying the sports and activities you love, worry-free.

1. Prevent Blindness America, "Recommended Sports Eye Protectors," 2010.

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