

Tips for Increasing Reading Speed

Choose the best lighting:

- Good lighting may decrease the need for magnification.
- Put task lighting near tables and chairs.
- Adjustable task lamps have an arm and head you can adjust to give you light where you want it. Keep the lamp below eye level, with the light shining from a 45-degree angle directly on the page.

Choose reading material and assistive devices:

- A slant board and a reading stand may help you get closer to the reading material.
- Use a translucent yellow acetate overlay sheet to enhance the color contrast between the print and the white page. This overlay sheet can block glare, too.
- Use large print reading material and magnification.
- Use a video magnifier for longer reading materials like books, and a handheld magnifier for shorter materials like grocery lists. You can use a smart device as a handheld magnifier, too! Smart devices have built-in screen magnification.
- Braille lets you read by touch.

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Find your “sweet spot”:

- The best area of peripheral vision (or side vision) is called the “sweet spot.”
- Tilt your head or neck, if you can, to find the “sweet spot.”

Holding the sweet spot still, move reading material across the area:

- Use a clipboard to hold shorter reading materials, like poems or grocery lists, in place.
- Use a handheld magnifier. Hold the clipboard in your nondominant hand, the magnifier in your dominant hand. If stamina is a factor, rest your elbows on a table or desk, or put the materials on a reading stand or lap desk.

To keep your place when reading, try these tips:

- Put a finger at the beginning of the first line as a place holder. After you read the line, return to the beginning, and then move your finger down to the next line.
- Use a paper clip. As you move from one line to the next, slide the paper clip down.
- A typoscope is a reading and writing guide that blocks unnecessary text and lets the eye focus on just a few words at a time.

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Adjust technology settings:

- Increase the text size on computer screens and screens of smart devices, like tablets and eBooks devices.
- Increase the contrast between the text and the background. For example, use a black background with white text.
- Wear yellow tinted sunglasses to reduce the amount of blue light from computer and smart device screens. Prolonged use can cause eye fatigue, eye strain, and headaches.

For more information, see the resource list. Also, check out the lighting and color filters workshops in the low vision series, as well as the tracking resource. Check out the workshops on assistive technology, too.