

## Information – Presbyopia correction guidance

Pilots have to change their gaze frequently between objects at near, intermediate and far distances. With age, the ability of the eye to focus on near tasks decreases. This is known as presbyopia and the individual requires a prescription for near tasks. If a distance prescription is also required, some form of optical correction is needed which incorporates focus for both distance and near (and also intermediate) vision. In pilots the ideal presbyopic correction sometimes incorporates a distance prescription as well (even if the distance prescription is zero) so that one pair of spectacles covers all visual tasks. An intermediate zone for screen or instrument panel vision will usually also be required.

### Spectacles

All types of correction (bifocal, progressive or trifocal) are acceptable provided they are well tolerated. Bifocals will offer distance and near correction with the near portion being a distinct segment within the lower part of the lens. There are different bifocal types: D-segment are the most prevalent and these are acceptable. Executive bifocals (where the reading portion covers the whole width of the lens) are less ideal, and are not recommended for helicopter pilots. are not recommended for pilots as the lower half of the distance visual field is blurred by the reading segment. This is particularly important in helicopter pilots and with NVG use.

Progressive lenses (or varifocals) change in prescription gradually from the distance part of the lens at the top, to the near portion of the lens towards the bottom. These lenses will also have an area of intermediate focus in-between the distance and near portions. The other type of lens available with an intermediate prescription is a trifocal lens. These are usually similar in appearance to bifocals but with an extra segment on top of the near portion. Occasionally the intermediate portion is incorporated into the top of the lens, with the reading portion at the bottom of the lens and the distance area in the centre. This may be useful for viewing overhead panels.

### Contact Lenses

See [Information – Guidance on contact lenses](#).