

Visual Perception Skills – a parent’s guide

Basic Skills	Why is this skill useful?	What will I find difficult if I don’t have this skill?	Activities & Games that can help.
Visual Discrimination	<p>This is the skill that underpins our ability to ‘pay attention to detail’ and notice the similarities between things.</p>	<p>A child with poor skills may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • struggle to match clothing such as socks especially when the differences are subtle • struggle to see the difference between similar objects (eg coins) • struggle with complete spot-the-difference or odd-one-out type activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Matching Pairs ✓ Spot the Difference
Visual Memory	<p>Visual memory is the skill we use to recognise people, faces, etc.</p> <p>They also play a vital role in learning how to read and spell.</p>	<p>Children with poor visual memory may struggle to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise numbers and letters • remember sight words • copy work from the board or a book, as they struggle to remember what they saw on the board and have to keep checking back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Matching Pairs ✓ Memory Games – Shopping List, Kim’s Game, etc.
Spatial Relations	<p>This skill allows us to notice even subtle differences in pictures, words and letters.</p> <p>It also supports our coordination of visual and motor skills.</p>	<p>In school, children may struggle with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • struggle to see differences between similar looking letters and words (eg b/d, b/p, 5/S, won’t / want, car / cat) <p>Kids who struggle to coordinate their visual systems and their motor systems may struggle with handwriting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Find the Odd one Out



<p>Form Constancy</p>	<p><i>This is the ability to recognise shapes, letters or words regardless of the size, colour or location. A simple example: you can recognise that a dog is a dog whether you see it in a photo, in your garden or in the park, and whether it is sitting, lying down or running.</i></p>	<p>Children who struggle with form constancy may not recognise shapes, numbers and letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>when the colour, size or font changes,</i> • <i>or when the word/letters/numbers are presented in a different context (for example when they see them in the playground instead of in the classroom).</i> 	<p>✓ <i>I Spy (with words or numbers around the home)</i></p>
------------------------------	---	---	---

Sequencing Skills

<p>Sequential Memory</p>	<p><i>Remembering the order of things (letters, words, numbers, how to get dressed, the sequence for brushing teeth) is a vital life skill as well as a key academic skill.</i></p>	<p>Children struggling with this skill may find these academic skills difficult:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spelling and reading, where children need to remember the sequence of letters in order to spell a word correctly.</i> • <i>Written Maths skills: visual sequential memory is essential to help your child copy the numbers in the correct order.</i> 	<p>✓ <i>An adapted version of Kim's Game</i></p>
---------------------------------	---	--	--



Complex Skills

<p>Figure Ground</p>	<p><i>This skill can help you to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find your favourite socks in a messy drawer • find the ketchup bottle in the cupboard • find a dropped item if it fell onto a similarly coloured background (eg a green button on the grass) 	<p><i>At school, a child with poor skills may:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • struggle to find information on a busy blackboard • lose his/her place when copying work from the board • lose his/her place on the page while reading • struggle to find personal items in a cluttered place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ I Spy ✓ Where's Wally? ✓ Wordsearches (for older children)
<p>Visual Closure</p>	<p><i>You are visually completing what you see when:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you can figure out what a road sign says, even when the writing is partly hidden by a tree • you can make sense of words on a smudged page • you can recognise an object even when you can only see part of it 	<p><i>In school, children need visual closure skills to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help them read more fluently • quickly recognise words by their shape or general arrangement of letters without paying too much attention to each individual letter • together with visual memory skills, to remember letters and words (especially sight words – words that cannot be sounded out) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Jigsaw puzzles

