

Shooting Glasses - Should you wear them? What kind will be the best?

Eye protection is essential for anyone using a firearm, whether at a shooting range or in a forest or field and is every bit as important as Hearing Protection when shooting.

All firearms have a certain amount of recoil, and many shooting activities take place outdoors where wind, sun and dust also can lead to eye and vision problems. Glasses protect your eyes from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays, reduce eye strain in bright conditions and protect you from flying debris and other hazards.

Shotguns and rifles are held on the shoulder, while handguns are no more than an arm's length away. These different shooting activities occur in close proximity to the face, which means you should take every precaution to shield your eyes from harm.

Generic, contoured nonprescription sports goggles are acceptable if you don't require vision correction or if you wear contact lenses. These goggles have a slight wrap around the face and keep out wind and dust.

If you need prescription lenses in order to see clearly, or if you simply want to use the best shooting eyewear available, shooting glasses in styles similar to aviator sunglasses tend to be popular. Eyewear designed for shooters, however, has a few more features to make you more comfortable while using a firearm:

- The frame styles generally have a "sweat bar" that runs the width of the frame above the lenses to add stability to the frame for a secure fit.
- The frames also are made in a rounded shape, to avoid sharp corners that could jab your face.
- Some brands have special padding on the frame around the eyes. The padding cushions the frame against your face in case the gun recoils too far. This also helps to keep out wind and dust.

The temples of shooting glasses often are designed with spring hinges that allow the frame to flex without breaking when recoil occurs. Temples also wrap around the ear in the "cable" style to help keep the frame in place, and the tips of the temples may feature rounded ends to enhance comfort. Nose pads are adjustable so that the frame rests in the optimum position.

Color of the lens is usually not considered by most hunters. However, it can be difficult to achieve a clear and distinct focused sight picture if the lens is shaded to a color that filters out the prominent colors of your target. You need to take into consideration the background colors of where you shoot most often:

Orange Tint - would most likely not do well while Trap shooting

Yellow Tint - does well to blend out the heather and dun colored vegetation you see most often late fall to early spring.

Gray Tint - will filter out the shiny, distracting sun glare off of canal ditches and water puddles after an extended period of rainfall

Green Tint - will filter out the background of tree leaves in spring, and the manicured lawns around a Trap Range.