

Eyewear for the Weekend Warrior



Besides gearing up with the proper golf club or tennis racket even casual athletes recognize the need for sunwear that will enhance their performance. The following are some sports specific features that will keep weekend warriors at the top of their game.

- **Golf:** Golfers need sun protection, depth perception and superior color discrimination. Sunwear that has brownish-rose lenses with a 28% light transmission during bright days because brown increases the green contrast of a golf course. On hazy days, a brown lens with a 50% light transmission works best. Rubber or silicone nose pads and temples help eyewear cling better to the face, even while perspiring.
- **Tennis:** In order to make the fluorescent yellow tennis ball pop out all the more, blue or brown lenses are recommended because their light wavelength makes the ball scream out of the landscape. Frames should rest close to the face to protect from dust and wind. Frame material should also be lightweight - making plastic more appropriate than heavy metal.
- **Cycling and mountain biking:** Serious bikers who fly along mountain trails and roads need glasses that will protect against wind and debris. Since they rely on peripheral vision, the lenses must be distortion free. Blue lenses with flash mirror coating or polarization are ideal because they highlight contrast while riding in tree shadows. The flash mirror cuts glare in bright sunlight, making them the best overall lens choice for variable light conditions. A clear yellow lens is recommended for nighttime biking because it maximizes light contrast. Eyewear must grip the face and be lightweight. Plastic wraps work best.
- **Water sports including fishing, boating, rafting and windsurfing:** Lenses for watersport eyewear should eliminate both direct and reflective glare. Sailors, fishers and swimmers need eyewear that blocks blinding light that bounces off water and distorts vision. For fishing in deep waters or whitewater rafting, a dark gray lens with flash mirror coating or polarization to cut glare is recommended. A yellow polarized lens enables fishers to see the bottom of the water in early morning or in cloudy conditions. Lenses with hydrophobic coatings wherein water automatically beads off the surface are also good for windsurfing, rafting or canoeing. For swimmers and surfers, goggles and eyewear retainers better hold eyewear in place.
- **Baseball, basketball, soccer and hockey:** Every time kids engage in high impact sports, they put their vision at risk because their hand-eye coordination is still developing. That's why transparent goggles are the ideal protection for indoors. For outdoors, a sleek eight base wrap with lenses in red or orange for variable weather would work well. They should offer complete eye coverage, be heat-adjustable and have a venting system to prevent fogging.
- **Mountain climbing, hiking:** Avoid lenses that are exceptionally dark and have flash mirror coatings because they will cause sunburned noses. Lighter brown lenses are recommended because they enhance contrast.
- **Driving:** Finally, while driving may not be a traditional sport, those behind the wheel still need to see clearly. Copper-colored photochromic lenses or brown polarized lenses are recommended because they filter out some of the blue light and they lighten or darken depending on the atmospheric conditions for optimum visibility.

from Bill MacGillivray, Eyecare Business, April 2003