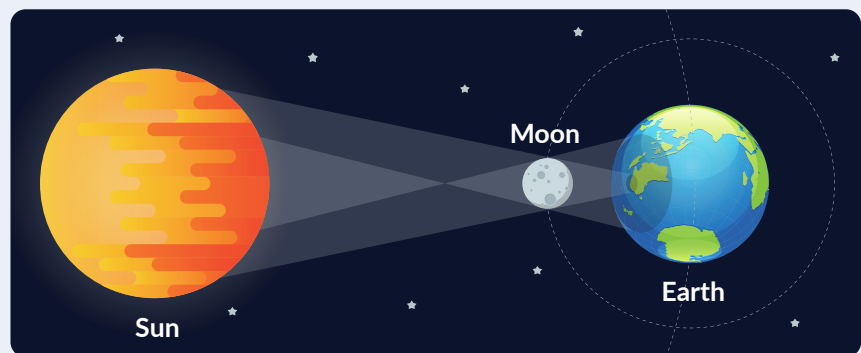


Protecting your eyes during a solar eclipse

A solar eclipse will be visible in Western Australia on Thursday, 20 April 2023. The eclipse will peak at 11.27am for approximately one minute. Exmouth and surrounds will experience a total solar eclipse (100%), and Perth will experience a partial solar eclipse (around 70%).

What is a solar eclipse?

A solar eclipse occurs when the moon passes between the sun and the earth, and the moon's shadow falls on the earth.



How to protect your eyes

Never look at the sun with the naked eye. Looking at the sun before, during or after the eclipse can cause serious and permanent damage to your eyes and vision. Even a brief glance at the sun can cause irreversible loss of sight.

Children and teenagers are most at risk. Educate them about the dangers and supervise them closely during the eclipse to ensure they don't look directly at the sun.

The only way to guarantee that you don't damage your eyes is to view the eclipse indirectly, using a pinhole viewer or by watching it online or on television.

Direct viewing of a solar eclipse may potentially be performed through the correct use of approved solar shades, also known as 'eclipse glasses' and 'eclipse filters'. The use of eclipse glasses carries certain risks.

If you decide to use them, it is essential to note the following points:

- Make sure they meet the international safety standard for eclipse glasses, which is known as ISO 12312-2. This should be clearly stated on the glasses and their packaging. If it's not stated, do not use the glasses.
- Purchase them from a reputable seller to make sure they are not counterfeit. A list of reputable vendors is provided in the links at the end of this advice.
- Even if your glasses state that they meet the ISO standard, it is recommended that you visit the manufacturers website, to confirm that there are no changes or updates to the certification of the product.
- Check the lenses for damage such as scratches, cracks or holes. If they appear damaged, don't use them.



- Eclipse glasses should be worn over your normal distance glasses, if you normally wear these. Make sure they fit your face. Adjust for children so there are no gaps to let light in.
- Test solar eclipse glasses by putting them on and looking at a lamp or normal light. They should block out all light, except from the sun. If you can see a lightbulb through them, don't use them.
- Turn away from the sun before putting them, and before taking them off.

It is unsafe to view the eclipse through sunglasses, mobile phones, cameras, telescopes, binoculars or using a mirror.

How does looking at the sun damage your eyes?

The retina is the thin layer of tissue at the back of the eye that receives light and sends information to the brain via the optic nerve, enabling you to see.

Looking directly at the sun, even for just a few seconds, can cause permanent damage to the retina. This damage is known as solar retinopathy.

Solar retinopathy happens quickly with no pain or warning and can cause permanent loss of central vision. There is no treatment or cure.

What to do if you are worried about your eyes after the eclipse

If you have blurry vision, loss of central vision or are worried about your eyes after the eclipse, **make an appointment as soon as possible with your ophthalmologist, optometrist or a doctor.**

More information



Department of Health

https://www.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/S_T/Solar-eclipse-risk-of-permanent-eye-damage

Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) position statement

<https://ranzco.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/RANZCO-Position-Statement-Solar-Retinopathy-2023.pdf>

Reputable vendors of eclipse glasses

<https://eclipse.aas.org/resources/solar-filters>

Advice on counterfeit glasses

<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/how-i-bought-fake-eclipse-glasses>