

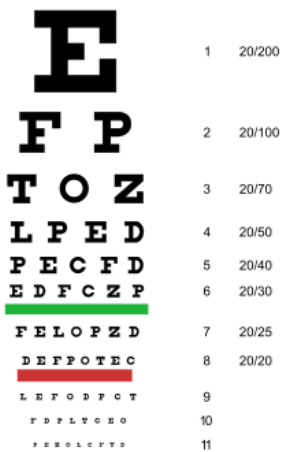


# Understanding Vision Exams

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## Visual Acuity and Eye Charts

Vision and more specifically, distance vision is commonly tested with a chart. Normal distance vision - acuity, can be effectively tested providing there is nothing wrong with the eye, pathways to the brain or the brain itself. Individuals are normally tested with a chart that has letters. The chart is positioned at a set distance, the individual covers one eye at a time and reads the letters seen, in the sequence advised by the doctor or technician. Most people are familiar with the Snellen Chart – the one with the big “E”.

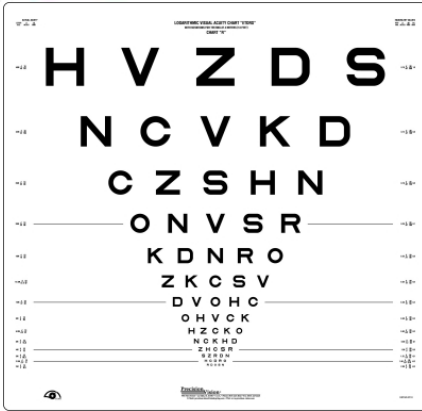


The visual acuity, 20/20, is often used as the baseline for normal vision but 20/15 is within the normal range. A functional way to understand what 20/20 means is to say what a person with “normal” vision can see at 20 feet, the individual being tested can see the same at 20 feet. If an individual’s vision is tested to be 20/80, that means what a person with normal vision can see at 80 feet, the tested individual can see it at 20 feet, thus this individual would not see as far.

Individuals with visual impairment, that is, who have something wrong with the eye or the pathways to the brain, require testing with specifically designed charts. Individuals with low vision need charts that have more rows of larger letters and letters that change size in different increments like the one below.

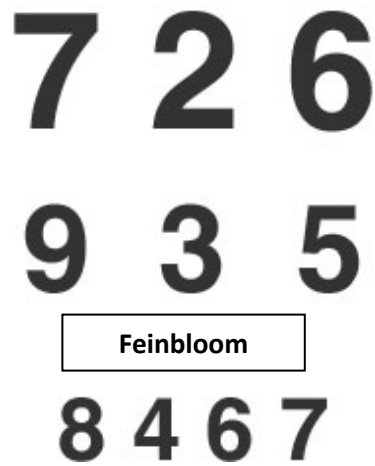
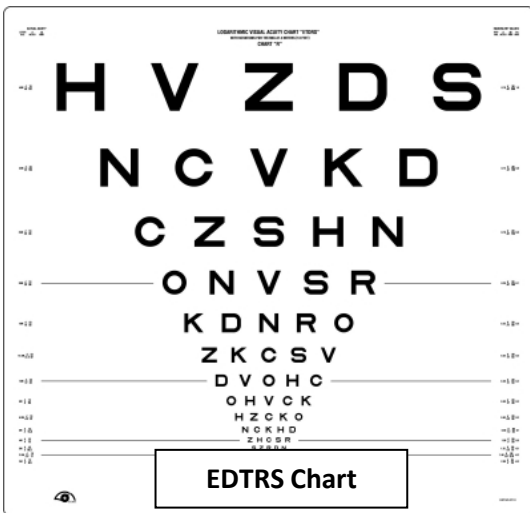


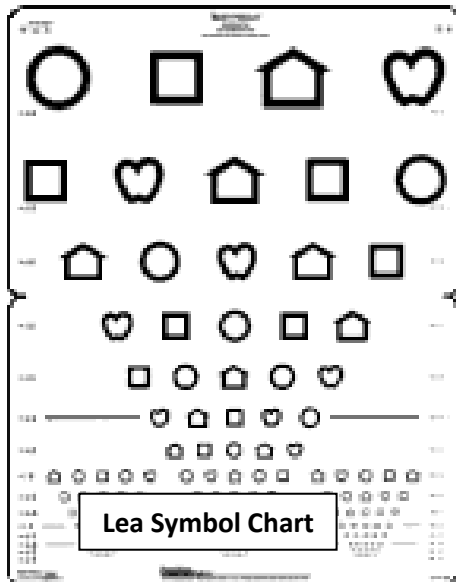
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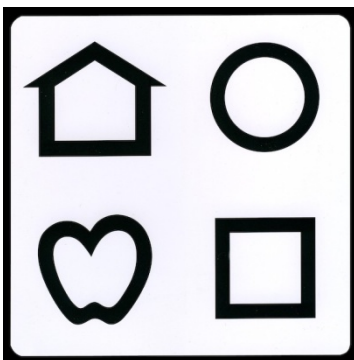
### Eye Charts for Individuals with Low Vision

Some charts have letters, numbers, shapes or even lines. Each chart is viewed at the specified distance but the distance may be altered if an individual cannot see it at the distance designated. The distance calculations may be in feet, like 20 feet or meters, like 4 meters. So a student's distance vision notations will vary depending on the distance and chart used.





Students who are seen in the Low Vision Clinic at Overbrook, would most likely be tested on any of the charts above. Students who either do not know their letters or numbers may still be tested using the charts with shapes by naming the shapes or even matching the shapes seen on a smaller chart in front of them like this one:



For the students who are unable to name or match shapes, a chart with lines of decreasing size can be used. The student views a card with lines on one side and nothing on the other. The student is asked to point/touch the lines. If the student is unable to say or touch the area where the lines are seen, the direction of the students eye gaze is observed and noted.



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