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Getting Ready for Your Child's First Eye Exam

A fun, parent-friendly guide from Grapevine Vision

Why Eye Exams Matter

Healthy eyes fuel classroom confidence, playground adventures, and screen-time discoveries. A comprehensive exam lets us catch problems early—long before they cause frustration or falling grades.

What to Expect on Exam Day

Station	What Happens	How It Feels
Welcome & Pre-testing	Auto-refractor takes a quick photo of the eye's focus.	5 sec—no touch!
Vision Check	Read shapes/letters on the wall chart.	Like school eye screening
Follow the Light	Pupil reactivity, eye movements, visual fields.	Gentle light, head stays still
3-D & Rainbow Test	Color dots & 3-D glasses to spot hidden shapes.	Fun & fast
Focus Fine-Tuning	Looking through the phoropter – big funky glasses.	No drops, no pain
Microscope Exam	Microscope & magnifier examine front of the eyes.	Sit still like a statue
Dilation Drops	1–2 eye drops to open pupils wide.	Mild tingle, over in seconds
Retinal Exam	Microscope & magnifier examine back of the eyes.	Bright light, no discomfort

Total clinic time: About 45–60 minutes, including 20–30 minutes for drops to kick in.

Spotlight on the Dilation Drops

- **Truth-Talk:** The drops may **sting for 3–5 seconds** and taste a little bitter in the throat. That's normal and fades quickly.
- **Why We Use Them:** Dilated pupils let us see the entire retina and ensure we measure the most accurate glasses prescription.
- **Temporary Side Effects:** Blurry up-close vision and light sensitivity for 4–6 hours. Distance vision usually stays clear.
- **Comfort Kit:** Bring child-sized sunglasses or a cap, and a favorite book with large pictures to entertain afterward.

Parent Pro Tips

- **Timing:** Morning appointments mean brighter moods (and easier naps while pupils recover).
- **Snacks & Water:** A light snack post-drops keeps energy up.
- **Reward Ritual:** Plan a small treat—trip to the park or sticker—to celebrate bravery.
- **Stay Positive:** Kids mirror your mood; if you're calm and curious, they will be too.

After the Visit

- Light sensitivity fades first; near blur can linger until bedtime.
- If glasses are needed, we'll guide you to durable, color-popping frames.
- You'll leave with a clear summary and the next-check milestone.

Quick-Fire FAQ

Will the drops hurt?

Just a brief tingle—most kids say it feels like soapy water.

Can my child return to school?

Yes, but reading may be tricky; sending them with a hat and sunglasses helps.

How often are follow-ups?

Annually for healthy eyes—sooner if we're tracking a specific concern.

Still Curious?

Call us at (503)343-1603 or email info@grapevinevision.com. We can't wait to make your child's first eye exam an adventure, not a chore!