

Your guide to buying
**GREAT
GLASSES**

How to choose glasses that make you
look and feel good.

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VILLAGE OPTICIAN
EXCEPTIONAL EYEWEAR



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Foreward

WHY YOU SHOULD READ THIS BOOK

I understand that you probably don't enjoy the process of buying new glasses. That's exactly why I've written this book.

Unfortunately our industry promotes itself with 2 -for-1 offers and free eye tests but gives you poor advice, glasses that all look the same and in the worst cases pushy sales staff.

They don't stop to consider that you are unique, with individual requirements, so a one-fits-all approach simply doesn't work. Sadly they just want to sell you some glasses.

Read this book with yourself in mind – remember it's about you and your eyewear, some parts will really resonate with you, others may not, and as you'll find out if you've had bad eyewear experiences, it's

not your fault - it's the way some of the big optical players have set things up.

This book is here to help you make educated decisions. To let you know there is a better way of choosing glasses, a way that you may even enjoy. By the end of this book you will be much more informed, and better able to find eyewear that you feel good about.

Our priority at The Village Optician is to give you the best information and advice we can about eyewear, and how to choose the right eyewear for you that makes you look and feel good.

So, if we at The Village Optician are a good fit for you then that's great, but if not, then I hope this information will be of some use to you wherever you go for your next glasses.

So here's to your eyewear journey!

Chapter 1

**DON'T COMPARE
APPLES WITH
ORANGES**





You shouldn't compare apples and oranges. That's obvious isn't it? They are both fruit though, so they are the same, right?

The same thing can be applied to Opticians - not all Opticians are the same. As far as the public know, they all do the same thing – test eyes and supply glasses. The high street chains and their marketing have led the public to expect the deal, the offer, the lowest price. That is their not so unique selling point.

Some Opticians, however, want to do better for you.

They want you to have the best vision available to you by using the newest and the best lenses. They want to give you the best quality frames. Above all, they aim to make sure that what they provide you with is the best fit for your needs.

Just like any retailer, there will be a difference between the Optician that sells you any pair of glasses they can, to the place that spends more time with you, finding out what you actually need before recommending a pair of glasses.

All Optometrists (the Optician who performs the examination) are qualified and registered with the General Optical Council (GOC), so all should be clinically competent. Wherever you go for an examination, you should get the same level of competence.

What is very different between Opticians is the amount of time the Optometrist is allowed for the examination.

You can do a basic eye examination in 15-20 minutes, and this is what a lot of places do. It's because they work to volumes of people. The more through their doors the better. They want people in and out to make space for the next sale. Due to time constraints they are happy to sell you a pair of glasses, whereas with more time available for you, Opticians should be selling you the best solution for your needs.

So when an Optician can give you more time for your examination, they won't rush you in and out, they'll take their time and make the whole thing a much more pleasant experience. This extra time means that they can make much better recommendations based on what you actually do with your glasses.

At The Village Optician this is exactly how we work.

We focus on what is right for you, the client. To do this we give ourselves more time for examinations, a minimum of 30 minutes (45 for an enhanced examination), so we can advise you better and offer you much better solutions for your eyecare needs. We discuss with you the best options available, then you can decide which option is for you. It's fairly simple really when you look at it that way.

My Top Tip

Find out how much time they allow for the eye examination before you decide to book an appointment. Will it be enough to really get to know what solutions you need?



Chapter 2

THE DESIGNER GLASSES REVOLUTION?



Since the early 1990s, fashion brands have been putting their logos or names on the sides of glasses frames.

“Designer glasses” are everywhere. People want to buy into their favourite brands. The majority of Opticians (chain Opticians and independents) will have stocks of the same designer fashion frames. People want them because they are told by the brand advertising that they are individual, exclusive, fashionable items. Or are they?

In reality “designer glasses” are mass-produced for the mass markets.

It’s big business.

There are 2 huge eyewear manufacturers that own the licences for most of the big designer brands that you know. The designer brands themselves don’t make the glasses frames – they simply allow the eyewear manufacturer to use their brand names, for a fee.

A large percentage of these frames are made in the same factories and are therefore made by the same people. They differentiate them by stamping a different logo and brand name on the side so they can charge a premium for it. Then they distribute it all across the world.

These companies have one thing in mind; to make and sell hundreds of thousands of their frames. They have to recoup the large license fee that they paid to the designer fashion house. They often rely on the brand name to sell the frames, rather than the style and quality.

- They want each frame to fit onto as many faces as possible, so they usually come in a standard one-size-fits-all. People with a more petite (or larger) head size often end up with badly fitting frames.
- They are not interested in making designs for the individual who wants something different from the masses. They are only interested in predictable and safe shapes and styles.

Have you noticed, if you look on the shelves of most Opticians, most of the frames look the same in terms of shape and style and colour? Now you know why!

You probably haven’t heard of the worlds’ largest eyewear company.

They are huge – their market capitalisation is approximately 46 billion Euros. To put this in perspective, Marks and Spencer have a market cap of about 2 billion Pounds. They license, manufacture and distribute eyewear under designer brand names. This one company makes over 80% of the worlds’ major eyewear brands. More than 500 Million people wear their products.

Continued overleaf...

On the other hand there is a growing number of independent eyewear design companies who have a passion and flair for their craft.

These companies only design and make eyewear – that's what they specialise in. They aren't known for making handbags or shoes or clothing because they don't.

They are the ones who produce cutting-edge, high quality eyewear, pushing the boundaries of style, using different materials and manufacturing techniques helping to keep the industry moving forward.

They are successful because they design with the individual in mind. They make smaller numbers of high quality, original, hand-made frames. Frames that are different, that maybe won't suit everybody, in different sizes, not just a one-size-fits-all. There is much less of their product on the market. You can only find these frames in the best independent opticians who are in the know. And the end result is the customer gets a frame that is unique and much more exclusive. A frame they're not going to see for sale in all of the high street Opticians. And they're very unlikely to bump into other people in the street wearing the same frame; so you get that sense of individuality that we all deserve.

At The Village Optician we have many exclusive frames from some of the best independent eyewear producers in the world. These are brands you will not recognise as they only make glasses frames. All of them have a story to tell.

If the designer brand on the side of your glasses is important to you, that's fine. You will still find some branded frames you recognise at The Village Optician. We carefully select which of these brands we will work with based on the quality and design of their frames. We don't work with brands that rely too much on the name to sell their product - the quality has to be right, and the styles have to be exciting.

My Top Designer Glasses Tip

The quality and style of your glasses will say far more about you than any designer name on the side ever will.



Chapter 3

**WHAT YOUR
GLASSES SAY
ABOUT YOU**



Have you ever been in the situation where you have a work meeting, perhaps someone has come to pitch to you to provide you with a service or product.

They are smartly dressed in a business suit and seem very knowledgeable, but then they take a tatty, twisted, battered old pair of glasses out of their briefcase (you'll know exactly the "look" of glasses I'm talking about).

Suddenly they don't look like the professional person they claim to be. Their glasses don't fit with the smart business look they were trying to portray.

It's amazing what your glasses can say about you, especially when it's the wrong message.

Whether we like it or not, we all make these assessments about how people present themselves, from the clothes they wear, to what type of glasses they are wearing. Your glasses can send out lots of messages on this sub-conscious level, and unfortunately people will and do make judgements about you based on your eyewear.

This all sounds very shallow and superficial. We were all taught "not to judge a book by its cover" but unfortunately that's how our brains work. It's an evolutionary response to try to figure out threat or danger and therefore trust. People are constantly noticing little things (appearance and body language) and their brain is quickly sorting all this information and the end result is a gut feeling about you. And if the message is incongruous – tatty glasses with a smart suit and shoes – our brains will alert us something is wrong.

The film and television industry use eyewear to bring characters to life.

In many cases they use eyewear to get a certain type of person across. Eyewear works very well for this and has a big impact on how someone is perceived. Think about this next time you are watching anything from a police drama to comedy sitcom.

I like to dress appropriately for what I'm doing in both professional and social settings.

I have glasses I wear for work, different glasses for at home with the kids and different glasses for going out socially. For example, my work glasses look great with a suit or jacket, but don't look quite right with jeans and trainers, whereas my dressed down glasses don't look quite right with my workwear. (They are all amazing glasses, of course, just different styles and looks).

So here are two things to consider:

- Have a look in the mirror and ask yourself “What do my glasses say about me?”
- Do they look worn out and shabby, making you appear shabby too, or do they look stylish and different, giving you a look of sophistication? Do they simply look plain and dare I say boring even though that isn't really you?

Don't choose glasses that don't reflect who you are. This may well not be your fault, Opticians on the high street aren't really set up to help you with this. Unfortunately some places will have staff who make the right noises for whichever frame you pick off the display to try on, even if it isn't the right one for you. Staying with safe and colourless styles may be holding you back from portraying the image you want.

Don't be afraid of trying something new.

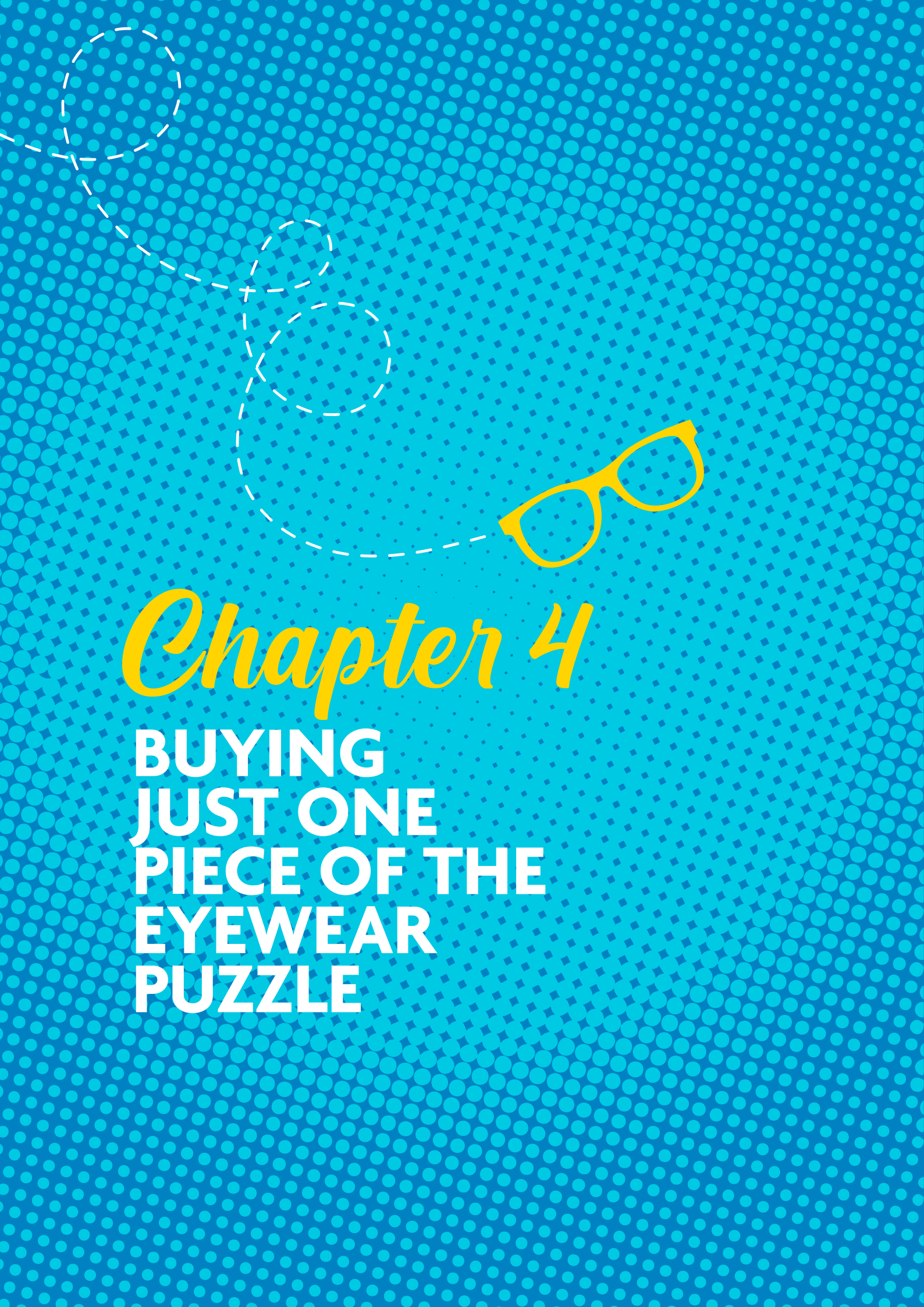
Let people see that little flash of your personality, and your eyewear is a great place to start. Your eyewear can enhance your style and become one of the best features of your look. It can have an amazing effect on your overall style and the way you feel.

At The Village Optician we can help you with this.

Our Style Consultation will help you find your style personality, and guide you through different frame choices and looks. The aim is to find you glasses that you enjoy and reflect who you are and are excited to wear. We won't just leave you stood looking at a wall of frames to choose them yourself. We aren't trying to change anyone, we just want to bring out your best version.

My Top Tip

Always consider having more than one pair of glasses so you can change your look for different occasions. After all, you don't just have one pair of shoes for every occasion or look – you don't wear your work shoes in the gym.



Chapter 4

**BUYING
JUST ONE
PIECE OF THE
EYEWEAR
PUZZLE**

Did I already mention I have more than one pair of glasses?

Truth be told I have so many pairs of glasses that I could wear a different pair everyday for at least a week (plus a few pairs of polarised prescription sunglasses). But then I am an Optician who loves his glasses.

I'm not suggesting everyone should have as many pairs of glasses as me, but extra, spare, or task specific glasses can be really useful.

Take a moment to think about how many pairs of shoes you have.

You maybe have a pair or two for work, maybe a few casual pairs, some trainers and other specific sports shoes for any number of different sports you may do. Then you might have a pair of wellies and some walking boots, flipflops and sandals for the summer. Ok I think you probably get the picture. Now think about how many pairs of glasses you have. Do you wear the same pair all day every day for 2 to 3 years?

A recent survey of glasses wearers in the UK showed that 38% have one pair of glasses compared to only 5% having just one pair of shoes. 8% have more than 3 pairs of glasses compared to 33% who have 3 or more pairs of shoes.

The eyewear puzzle is about looking at your lifestyle, your individual needs and requirements and making sure you have the glasses to cover all bases.

In reality you don't need 10 pairs of glasses, but 2 or 3 pairs of different glasses that all have a specific role or purpose would suit most people's needs. (Just like your different footwear does).

This gives you an eyewear wardrobe, to pick out different eyewear suitable for your activities that day.

Here are a few example to think about;

- Glasses for everyday use – for a lot of people this is their one pair of glasses.
- Glasses for special occasions where you need to “dress up”
- Glasses for meeting clients - don't turn up in your trainers!

- Glasses for working at the computer
- Driving glasses
- Sunglasses
- Old glasses for doing the garden or DIY
- Spare glasses for travel

The list could go on and on.

By the way, varifocals do not do everything! We have many clients who have varifocals as their main pair, but they also have a second pair for computer work which has made their work life far easier.

If you rely on one pair of glasses for all your vision needs, you could face some of the following problems;

What happens if you lose, break or damage your glasses? Are you stuck without them? Can you see to drive? What will you do if they can't be fixed in the Opticians there and then?

Eyestrain and visual fatigue from wearing general glasses for a specific task where you would get clearer vision from task-specific glasses. The computer and eyestrain can go hand in hand, but you can get computer specific glasses which will alleviate this.

At The Village Optician we want to know all about you and your glasses. You may already have pieces of the puzzle you didn't know existed.

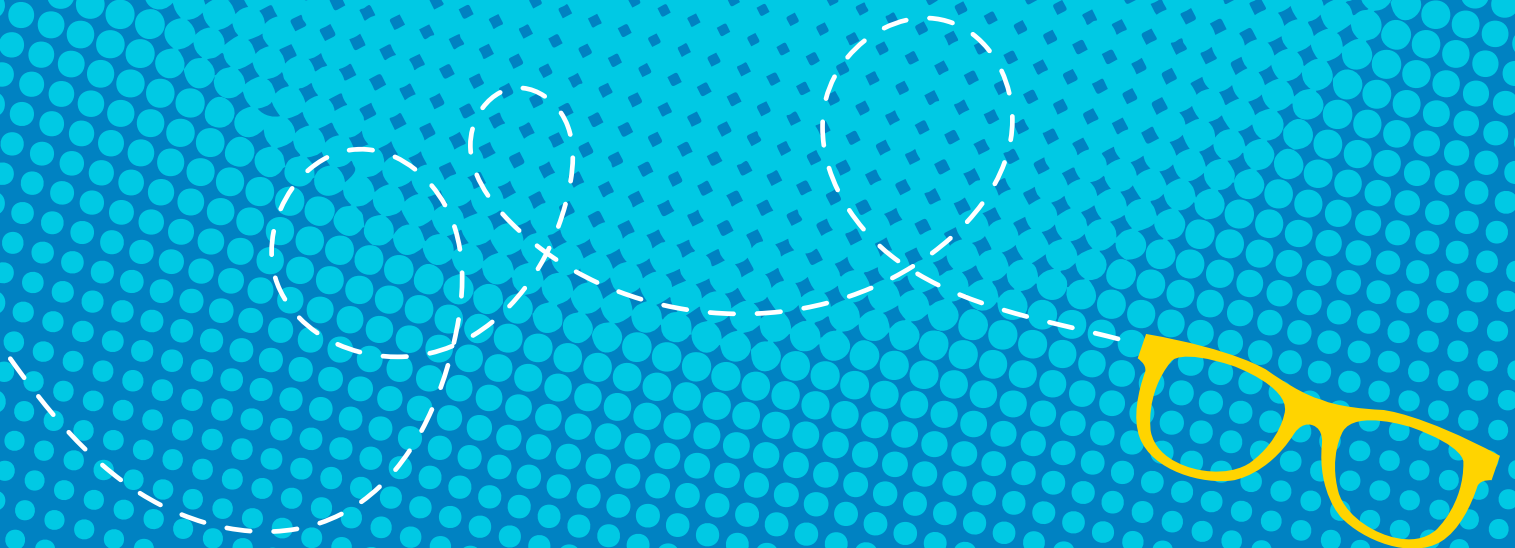
My Top Tip

Look for an Optician who will take the time to get to know your specific needs.

They will make recommendations based on what's important to you. They can help you prioritize what you really need so you can make an informed choice about any addition eyewear you may need.

Chapter 5

GETTING THE RIGHT ADVICE



We are all guilty of being attracted to the new shiny feature when we are buying things. That can be the latest smart phone, tablet computer and even a car. We like nothing more than a cool new feature that may really have no benefit to us at all!

Rather than buying a feature you need to understand what the benefit will be to you and this is very true when buying glasses.

You need the advice of someone who knows what they are talking about, an expert. If an optician can't explain to you what the benefit to you is then you should look for an optician that can.

Here's an example; your current glasses may have thick heavy scratched lenses, the sides may have turned a little green where they rub on your skin. They just feel too heavy to be on your face all day and it's time for a change.

"We recommend a titanium frame with high index lenses, with an anti-reflection coating."

Now that could be great advice – but how do you know? They haven't explained what that means to you, how it benefits you and therefore your experience with the new eyewear. How do you know whether or not to take this advice?

Here is the same advice but given using the benefits to you rather than naming features.

"We can make your glasses much more comfortable to wear; firstly we can use thinner, lighter lenses and we can use frame materials that are much lighter and stronger but won't tarnish and go green as easily. The highest quality lenses we use have no reflections in them, giving you clearer vision and they are also guaranteed against scratches."

Which pair of glasses would you want to buy?

A true eyewear professional will be able to explain the feature, and therefore, the benefit of that feature of every frame and lens combination they offer you to meet your individual requirements.

How many times have you heard "No"?

We hear a lot of negatives from people about what they can and can't have in terms of their glasses. Yes, there are limitations but sometimes the answer depends on who you are asking. Unfortunately many of the high street opticians are working to volumes of

people, so things that are a little more complicated or may need a little more time or thought are just overlooked. You need somewhere that can give you time and has access to different lens suppliers and manufacturers. Many of the staff in high street opticians won't know about the latest developments in lens technology and it's not their fault. The lenses they use are set by head office so that sort of information will never get to them. They will always give you a "No" because they don't know any differently.

Here are a few of the common negatives we come across;

You believe you can't get used to varifocals because you tried them before years ago and didn't get on with them.

You've been told your face is so petite that you can only really have children's glasses because they don't have any adult glasses to fit them.

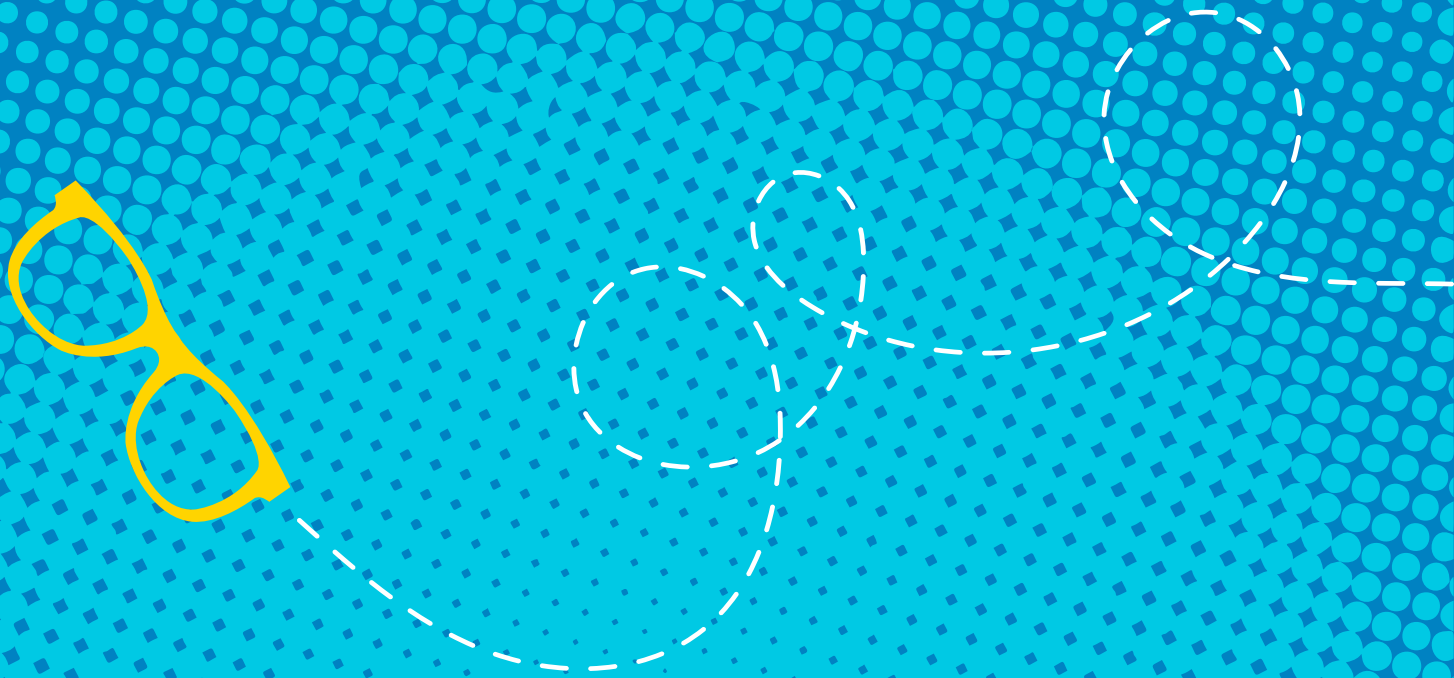
You've been told that you can only wear a certain type of frame.

It's such a shame that people are getting poor advice because when glasses are done right, they can be such a positive thing for a person. And when they're done wrong people can become self-conscious. It's preventable if you find the right person to trust that has the expertise to create the right solution for you.

At The Village Optician we want to know about your old glasses and your experiences with glasses. This can really help build a picture of what it is you really want and need from your eyewear. We can then give you different options to fulfil those needs, explaining what the benefit to you will be for each.

My Top Tip

Many high street opticians are limited in what they can do for you, yes there are limitations but those limitations can vary depending on who's doing the work. Think about finding an optician that displays a much more positive attitude rather than the instant "computer says no" type of customer service.



Chapter 6

**MAKING A
DECISION PURELY
BASED ON PRICE**



The price can be an important factor in your eyewear purchase. Price, for most of us, does become a consideration. The old adage “you get what you pay for” is just as true today as it ever has been (if not more so). There are now so many cut price options in the optical market; online sales, “bucket shops” (you know the out of town places in industrial units), and the high street offers. Our industry doesn’t help itself by perpetuating the myth that good quality eyecare and eyewear can be provided for little or no cost. Such a position is false, damaging and unsustainable. If you are offered a buy one get one free, how much do you think the first pair is really worth?

When it comes to price comparison it is almost impossible to make an informed decision as you won’t be comparing like with like.

The large high street chains have a limited range of “own brand” lenses which is controlled by their head office so the lens supplier is hidden. A good independent optician has access to the newest and best lenses on the market, they don’t hide who supplies them. Remember when I said not all opticians are the same – well, not all opticians glasses are the same. There are quality differences in frames and in lenses, just like in any market. The problem is you can’t see the difference between a good quality lens compared to a poor quality lens (unless you know exactly what you are looking for) – a lens looks like any other lens. But let me tell you, there is a whole world of difference between a basic cheap varifocal lens and a new award winning top of the range varifocal for example.

What is value?

Value is a very subjective concept. One persons great value might not be another persons’ idea of value. I always remember the day when one of my clients said to me, “If I pay £365 for a pair of glasses, that’s great value – I wear them every day. If I keep them a year, it costs me £1 a day to see and look great. If I don’t change them for 2 years that’s 50p a day. Who wouldn’t pay 50p a day to see?”.

Good value isn’t the lowest price.

It’s not simply a case of comparing the price of a physical product. What about the service, the environment, how you are treated and the expertise of the staff? To a lot of people, maybe yourself included, this adds value to the whole process.

You should consider a great pair of glasses as an investment in yourself, in your vision and general wellbeing. Not only will an investment into a good pair of glasses provide

you with the best vision possible, they will make you look good and feel good which makes us feel happy!

Us glasses wearers owe it to ourselves to have at least one great pair of glasses and a great pair of shoes, as chances are we’ll always be wearing one or the other, or both!

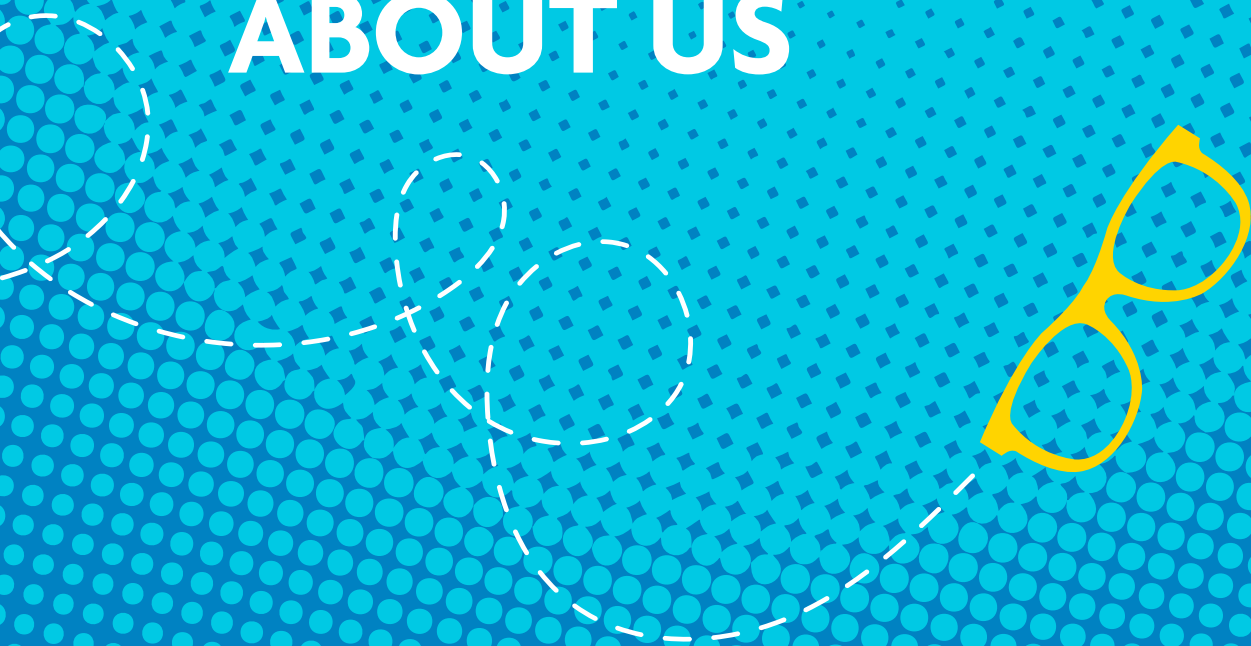
At The Village Optician we choose to provide the highest quality spectacle lenses and frames. Our premium lenses are guaranteed against scratches and our best-selling varifocal won the award for lens product of the year when it was released in 2018. We have high quality hand made frames, produced from biodegradable cotton acetate, from titanium, and even wood.

My Top Tip

Purchasing your eyewear from the same opticians that tested your eyes makes the whole process much easier and hassle free. If there are any issues you know exactly who to go to, and the best opticians will go the extra mile to make sure you aren’t just happy with your new glasses but delighted with them.

Chapter 7

ABOUT US



Having read this far, if you feel that what we do is a good fit for you and your needs, you will probably want to know a little bit about us here at Village Optician. We want to know who we are dealing with when we're looking for new people to work with too!

Myself and Stephen, my brother, are both fully qualified Optometrists. We did the usual thing after gaining our qualifications, and worked for some of the big chain high street Opticians.

You see the main problem we saw with these chains was that everything was set up and focused on them, the Opticians, rather than you, the client. They wanted maximum numbers of people through the door, often allowing only 15 to 20 minutes each. We both had the feeling that we weren't able to give our clients the best service due to the time constraints. Sometimes I'd catch myself having a bit of a chat with a client and realise that I'd taken up half of their allocated time before even starting to check their eyes. Over time, given the volumes required of us, we both realised that the chats with clients had stopped, avoided even. How could we possibly find out what eyewear would benefit you most if we don't have time to find out about your situation?

The Village Optician was formed way back in 2003 when we decided that we wanted to do things a little differently from the big chains.

Over the years we have evolved into what you now see as The Village Optician. We are truly independent, we don't have a faceless head-office telling us what lenses to use or which frames to stock. These are OUR choices. This means that YOU get the best available. We have better eyewear than ever before, we are experts in digital lens technology (in fact I've written a book about varifocals).

Award winning

A highlight for us was when we won the 2019 Optician of the Year at The Independent Retail Awards North East. We were nominated by our clients so it was a very nice surprise to get the call to let us know we were shortlisted – and even nicer to win!

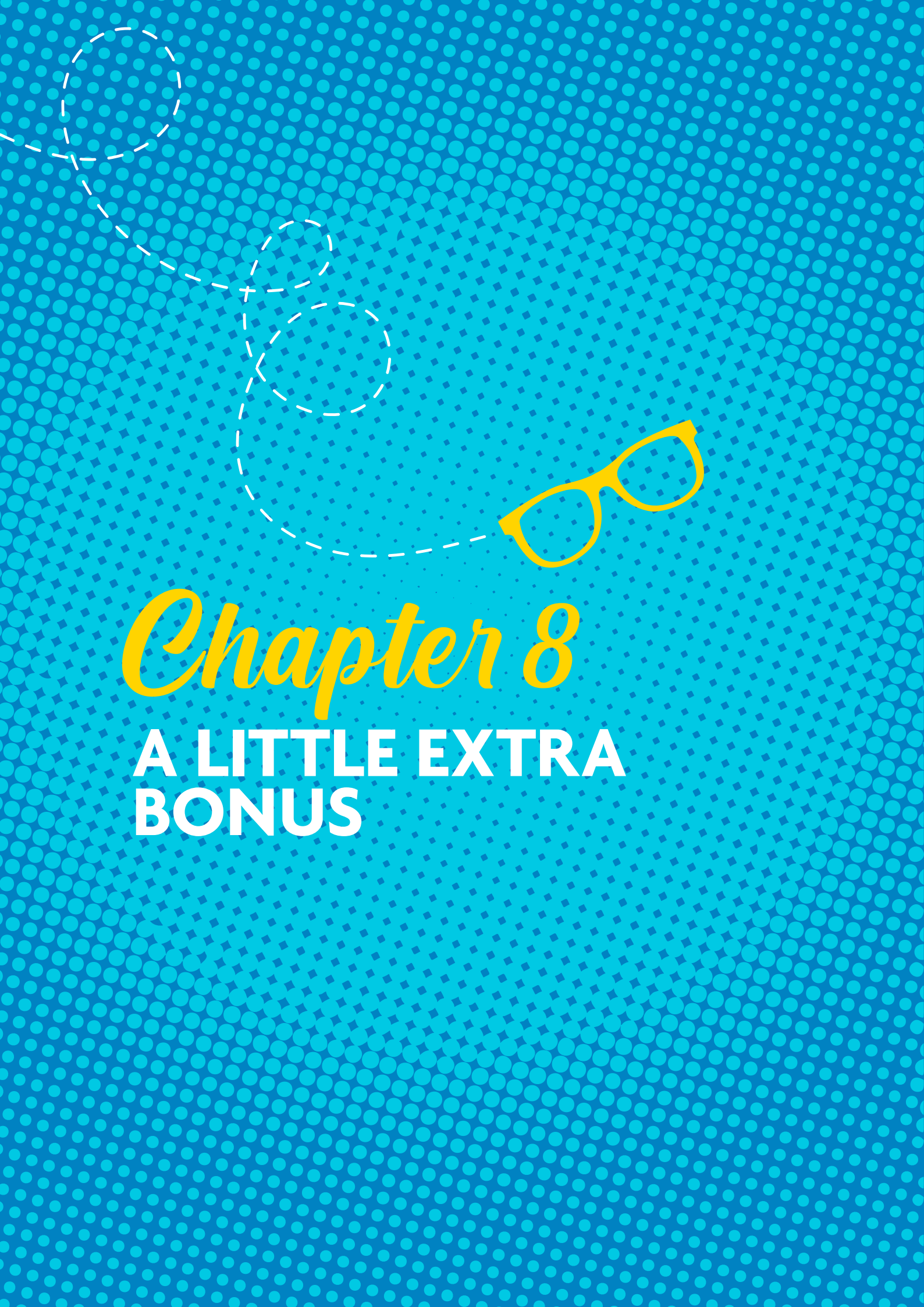
Of course, none of this could have happened without our team of dedicated people, passionate about eyewear, helping clients find their #ExceptionalEyewear every day.

In fact you could say we've all become eyewear geeks.

The vision we can give you with the latest lens technology and the choice of high quality glasses has never been so good as it is now!



**THE
ENGLISH
INDEPENDENT
RETAIL
AWARDS 2019
NORTH EAST**
Opticians of the Year
An event by Creative Oceanic



Chapter 8

**A LITTLE EXTRA
BONUS**

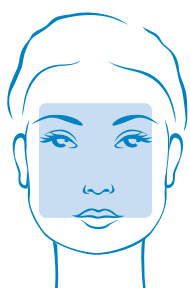
As a bonus I thought I would share with you a little insight into some of the ‘rules’ regarding eyewear and face shapes to give you some idea of what you should be looking for.

The old eyewear rules are basically as follows:

- If you have a round face you should have square frames
- If you have a long face you should wear round frames
- If you have a square face you should not wear angular frames.

Now this doesn't give us the full picture, as we are all usually a mix of shapes, but we will have an overall dominant face type. With experience, we can suggest many more frame options than the rules suggest. Think of them as guidelines rather than “rules”.

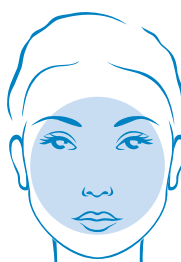
Lets' look at some ideas for different “dominant” face shapes and which eyewear styles to go for.



Overall Square

The forehead width and the face length will be in roughly equal proportions squaring off the face shape. The square face usually has a strong jawline, the width will stay fairly equal all the way down the face.

Eyewear – Classic square or angular frames will accentuate the strong, square jawline if that is the look that people want. It will make the eyewear and shape stand out. If you want to slim down the face and make it look longer to lose the “squareness” we can follow the old rules more closely – use round or oval shapes, the frame curves will soften the face shape.



Round

A round face will have the widest point at the cheekbones, with the width and the length being similar. Those with a round face will have softer angles, and a curved jawline.

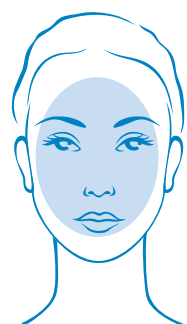
Eyewear – The old rules are your friends here; angles and square frames help to create contrast on a round face. We try not to choose styles that accentuate this face shape, so a square style will add angles the even out proportions.



Heart

The heart shaped face is characterised by wider forehead, possibly high cheekbones and a slimmer lower half of the face narrowing down to a pointed chin. The good news for those with a heart shaped face they are spoilt for choice when it comes to eyewear shapes.

Eyewear – Rounded frames can contrast the angles of a heart shaped face, and bottom-heavy styles can widen the lower half of the face to provide balance. You should therefore avoid half rim frames as the top-heavy nature will only accentuate the wider forehead and narrow chin.



Oval

Oval face shapes are typically longer than they are wide and don't have any sharp angles, think a classic egg shape. The forehead and jaw will be slightly rounded with the cheekbones making the widest part of the face. If you have an oval face shape you are also spoilt for choice – just about every frame works.

Eyewear – If you want something that will accentuate the well-balanced oval shape, choose a frame that is as wide as the cheekbones. Round, rectangular and rimless will all work.

“Well, that's it! These insights into different shapes should help you find eyewear that suits you, that you feel good wearing - but remember there are other considerations to finding the perfect eyewear, and expert advice is always the best way to do it. Good luck finding your **#ExceptionalEyewear.**”

What

OUR CLIENTS SAY



“ Can’t recommend The Village Optician enough! My whole family, including myself use this opticians and the service they provide is second to none. Nothing is too much trouble and there is always a friendly face to greet you. My little girl absolutely loves going here, not only are they super helpful in finding the perfect pair of glasses for her they interact with her, often asking how school is etc. It’s so welcoming for both adults and children, when we visit the optician it’s a struggle to get my little girl to leave. She loves to play opticians while in there and the staff are more than happy for her to do so. All in all this place is an excellent opticians. Thank you for being great.”

Nicola P

“ We have used Village Optician for a few years now. Having tried the usual High St opticians previously, we find them very professional, friendly, nothing is too much trouble, and they take time to explain any issues. It is refreshing not to be rushed and feel pressured into buying new spectacles at every visit.”

The H Family

“ I have used The Village Optician for the first time and have been very impressed with the service I have received. I felt the eye test was very thorough and choosing new frames was easy as their range is extensive. Very professional and friendly service from start to finish. I highly recommend this opticians.”

Angela M

“ First class service and examination. I would highly recommend anyone to use this optician. Stephen was extremely professional, thorough and explained everything to me. Also the front office team were outstanding and very kind.

This will be my regular optometrist from now on.

Also the service is great value for money.”

Carl R

“ Brilliant company - thank you for my fabulous glasses :)”

Lucy C

“ Was made to feel so welcome from walking in the door to leaving as a very happy lady. The staff were so helpful and the optician explained everything you needed to know and I received a text within 2 days saying my glasses were ready. We should all try and support our local businesses.”

Tracey R

“ I’ve been attending The Village Optician since I was little and couldn’t recommend more highly. They have very prompt communication regarding appointment availability, contact lens delivery and due check ups. I’ve visited a number of their sites and always welcomed with a friendly face. Great, realistic advice and an array of modern, on-trend glasses at an affordable price. Great job guys!”

Chloe B

“ The staff were very friendly and nice.”

Beryl M

“ I visited the Village opticians recently and today collected my new glasses. From the first meeting with the staff to collecting my glasses what a fantastic experience everyone has been so friendly and helpful. I explained I had a problem getting a frame to fit correctly, they told me it wouldn’t be a problem they could sort it. This is the first time I have gone to collect glasses and have them fit first time also the lens they recommended are great. I saw the reviews on line before I visited this opticians and can say I agree with their comments. Your eyesight is precious and this opticians go the extra mile to make sure you receive the best treatment.”

Margaret P



VILLAGE OPTICIAN
EXCEPTIONAL EYEWEAR

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