

# SPORTS VISION

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Visual Skills Performance:

- If the eyes relay inaccurate information, performance may suffer
- Often we focus on technique – but it's what we see
- Woodward – critical non essentials
- Enhancing vision skills can give the needed edge
- When you have a skill you are not good at you enhance other skills
- There are always strengths and weaknesses in visual skills

Visual skills training:

- Muscles in eyes weak
- 80% of information is visual
- Elite players not good at a lot of skills
- Basic errors on pitch may be down to vision

What is good vision?

- If there is a target you can be more successful
- Players don't have skill to hit target
- Development of peripheral vision

N.B.

- Tackle bag on back for jumping
- Hoops provide target
- Lots of balls

The value of visual skills is seldom acknowledged. More time in training is spent on the acquisition of:

- Physical skills
- Technical skills
- Tactical skills

Players need to go to 'visual gym'

"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee. Your hands can't hit what your eyes can't see"  
(Mohammed Ali)

Eyesight – what you see

Players that have 20/20 do not necessarily have good visual skills.

Eyesight is what you see – visual is how you use what you see.

"Nothing happens in sports until the eyes instruct your body what to do" (Sherylle Calder, 2005)

Bradman:

Make target smaller – you have to focus on one

This is visual training

N.B.

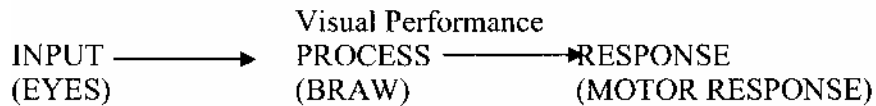
- Small ball
- Eggs

Seaman – Chipped twice v Brazil/Arsenal: Why?

- Judgement of depth?
- Eye/Body co-ordination?
- Speed of response?
- Error of judgement?

Has Seaman a depth problem as his error affected the team.

Need to train the visual.



1) Visual Awareness Training (All 3) – improved 12 of 22 skills

Input Skills:

- Training drill – Peripheral awareness  
- Eye speed (Done in time: Performance Criteria)

Programmes development – Concentration Skills Training

- Need to move up a level
- Images on screen (1)
- Change background colour
- Improve players ability to concentrate
- Arrows on screen (2)

Work with kickers and lineout throwers → Visual under pressure  
Video games – good for hand eye – but bad because focus on centre of screen

Process:

- SVT Board – hand/eye/speed
- Eye-hand co-ordination trainer

Danny Grewcock: “vision work has not only improved my hand eye co-ordination but also my decision making”.

Response:

- Player who has poor depth perception – makes poor decisions

Relevance to sports?

Visual fitness?

- Selected responses are highly successful
- Has time on ball
- Reacts fast but unhurried
- Has smooth and efficient movement

- Better spatial awareness
- Reaction of eye/hand co-ordination
- Improved hand skills
- Improved kicking skills
- Timing skills
- Improved eye movement skills

Judgement of depth key area?

Symptoms:

- Poor balance and concentration
- Inconsistent play
- Slow to react

Coaches:


- Woodward -- improved skills

Visual basic of batting:

Coaches perceptions

- Working with high balls
- Coaching integration – work with coaches

Eye dominance (ASSESSING EYE DOMINANCE)

- Dominant eye responds faster than non dominant
- Left wing....left eye dominant.....best info from left side, but if right eye dominant then – Take Word 
- Eyes muscles
- Visual: sport and position specific
- Eye sees and body responds
- Slow eye movement inhibit performance
- Eyes lead body follows
- Visual stress affects performance
- Blood sugar levels affect vision/ dehydration same

Training:

- Know strength and weakness of players
- Eyethink training
- Visual reaction time delay
- Visual stress skills
- Visual decision making drills

For all of the above, there is a visual component to warm up.  
Work on non dominant eye/put patch on but lose depth.

N.B: Eyethink web site – [www.eyethinksport.com](http://www.eyethinksport.com)  
scalder@mweb.co.za

**Matt Dawson:**

- Accuracy of pass trained
- Passed to Wilkinson
- Eye scanning
- Peripheral vision
- Visual decision making

**Vision skills are trainable:**

- Flash up pictures – where was the space
- Paint black spot on ball – smaller target/more accurate
- Visual training for coaches
- Balance problem – eyes working to get you balanced, not on decision making
- Play across sports to develop other skills visually

❖ **Assessment of player**

- 1) Best shot
  - 2)
  - 3)
  - 4)
- ] Optometrist

- ✓ Floodlights
- ✓ If you see better you perform better
- ✓ Different coloured balls (orange hard to see)
- ✓ Testing program – hand eye/visual speed/depth
- ✓ Keep training off field – or you lose it
- ✓ Climbing/playing – develop visual skills through play

**Drills:**

- Eyes shut to open
  - Using coloured balls – players call colour
  - Add in distractions – balance ball
  - Using colour cards or moves
  - Using coloured balls – specific task with colour of ball
  - Add in movement – Tactical
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- Eye speed – visual training
  - Working with glasses
  - Standing behind player and throwing ball
  - Close eyes and open on signal