

SPARE YOUR SIGHT: *Using Shades for Protection and Style*

2016 UV PROTECTION **MEMBER REPORT**



THE **VISION**COUNCIL

The Vision Council's *VisionWatch* market research report is an ongoing study of a statistically balanced sample of 110,000 U.S. residents, designed to be representative of the U.S. population 18 years of age and older. The structure of the sample is controlled to produce an unweighted composition that is as close as possible to the desired final mix. Both demographic weights and psychographic weights are applied to assure that the final sample is statistically stable and representative.

A short, 14-item questionnaire specific to sunglass usage was appended to the December 2015 *VisionWatch* questionnaire. Except where noted, the results and tabulations contained in this report are based on a total sample of 10,279 US adults. The *VisionWatch* database was used to generate a series of detailed cross-tabulations to highlight demographic differences between segments of the US population.

This report is a variation on the 2016 consumer media-targeted report for UV protection.

The consumer report, ***Spare Your Sight: Using Shades for Protection and Style***, focuses on the serious eye risks from exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays to create news inquiries and story angles related to UV protection and the use of sunwear for the consumer press.

Designed specifically for members of the optical industry, this report focuses on the statistical findings from the *VisionWatch* data in order to inform readers about consumer perceptions of UV protection and the use of sunglasses, and knowledge of the many sunwear option available in today's market.

This report was produced by The Vision Council's market research team. The information in this report is used by the marketing and communications team at The Vision Council to produce our unique publication UV Protection Campaign. This research publication is a detailed resource provided to members of The Vision Council for in-depth information regarding sunglass usage.



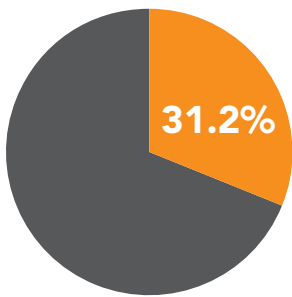
The Vision Council's 2016 UV Protection Member Report

The Vision Council's 2016 UV Protection Survey, an annual VisionWatch market research study, repeats a survey first conducted in 2013 regarding consumer sunglass usage and concerns regarding UV exposure. Participants were asked about how often and when they wear sunglasses, and if they have experienced any symptoms known to be caused by UV exposure. A total of 10,279 submissions were gathered from the 14-question survey.

UV Exposure and Sunwear: A Need for Education

The passive relationship that Americans have with their UV-protective eyewear is cause for concern. More than one-third of adults have experienced symptoms due to prolonged UV exposure. Despite these high numbers, many only wear sunglasses when they are outside for two or more hours (39%), even though damage can start in as little as 15 minutes, and **26.9% don't typically wear sunglasses at all when outside.**

26.9% of respondents don't typically wear sunglasses at all when outside



While many consumers are leaving their eyes exposed, **nearly one-third of respondents wear sunglasses every time they go outside (31.2%)**. Those who wear plano sunglasses every time they go outside are most likely to be women, reside in higher income households (\$60K+), and live in the Mountain-Pacific region of the U.S. Men, respondents over age 55, and those from lower income households were more likely to not wear sunglasses when they go outside.

Shades by Generation: Protecting the Eyes of the Next Generation

Kids, busy with playing outdoors and team sports, generally receive three times the annual sun exposure of adults, spending the equivalent of approximately 55 days a year exposed to the sun.

For the 3,451 of respondents who have children under the age of 18 living at home, the majority said that their child or children wear sunglasses "sometimes" (36%). **Only 8.2% indicated that their children wear sunglasses "always" when outside;** a stark difference from the percentage of adults reporting the same (31.2%).

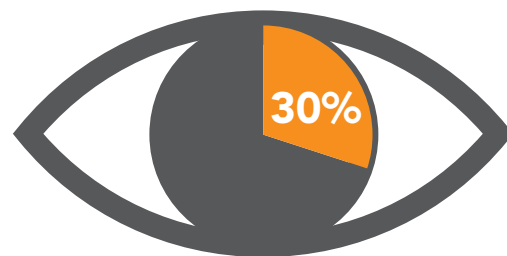
Teens and young adults are also considered an at-risk age group for sun damage to the eye because the older they get, the less likely they are to use UV protection. Those in their 20's are least likely to wear sunglasses every time they go outside, compared to all other age groups.



The Underestimated Danger

When asked if respondents had experienced certain symptoms after prolonged UV exposure, the most common symptom reported was irritation to the eye (16%) followed by trouble seeing (13.5%). Most respondents, however, stated that they do not experience any symptoms (65.6%). Sixty-three respondents (0.6%) have experienced cancer on or around the eye due to UV exposure.

Almost 30% of the US adult population indicated they are concerned with vision loss.



With regard to concerns of potential eye issues from UV exposure, **almost 30% of the US adult population indicated they are concerned with vision loss.** This response was common among women, adults over 55 years of age, and respondents owning multiple pairs of sunglasses. The second biggest concern, identified by 18.2% of respondents, is skin cancer. Younger adults, adults with managed vision care (MVC), and those from higher income households were likely to say that they are worried about skin cancer from UV exposure, whereas **24.6% of Americans reported that they have no concerns about UV exposure to their eyes.**

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of Americans reported that they have no concerns about UV exposure to their eyes

Fashion and Function

While many Americans (73.2%) wear sunglasses while driving a car, many common activities have consumers leaving their eyes exposed. Only 49% wear their sunglasses while walking, and 44.8% wear them while at the beach. Even more worrisome, the majority forego UV-protective eyewear when doing yard work with only 24.6% wearing sunglasses, and even fewer protecting their eyes while on a boat (17%), watching a sporting event (14.4%) and/or while playing a sport (6%).

Additionally, priorities driving purchases appear to be skewed. 64.7% of sunglass users label comfort or fit as very important to consider when buying sunglasses, followed by 54% who prioritize affordability, with UV protection listed as very important by only 44% of sunglass purchasers. Women, sunglass users over the age of 55, sunglass users from higher income households, and people planning to buy plano sunglasses in the near future were likely to cite UV protection as the most important attribute for purchasing sunglasses.

LESS LIKELY TO WEAR SUNGLASSES

MORE LIKELY TO WEAR SUNGLASSES



OVER
55



About The Vision Council's UV Protection Campaign

The Vision Council has been working to increase sunglass and other protective eyewear purchases by promoting the importance of ultraviolet (UV) protection to consumers in a variety of ways, while also providing the optical industry at large with the information needed to effectively educate consumers about effects of UV exposure and the need for UV-protective eyewear. Public relations, special events and consumer media reports are used to generate awareness and drive purchase intent.



National Sunglasses Day, an initiative of The Vision Council, is a commemorative date held annually on June 27 celebrating the importance of wearing UV-protective sunwear. In an effort to increase the use of UV protective eyewear, The Vision Council utilizes National Sunglasses Day as a launching point for its yearly UV campaign. Through a dedicated website, media briefings, collateral for our members, and a consumer health and fashion campaign, The Vision Council garnered over 61 million impressions for National Sunglass Day 2015, turning the holiday into a major nationwide initiative.

The annual consumer UV Protection Report has served these efforts to educate consumers against the serious eye risks from exposure to the sun's UV rays. The 2016 report, **Spare Your Sight: Using Shades for Protection and Style**. Can be found at thevisioncouncil.org/uv.

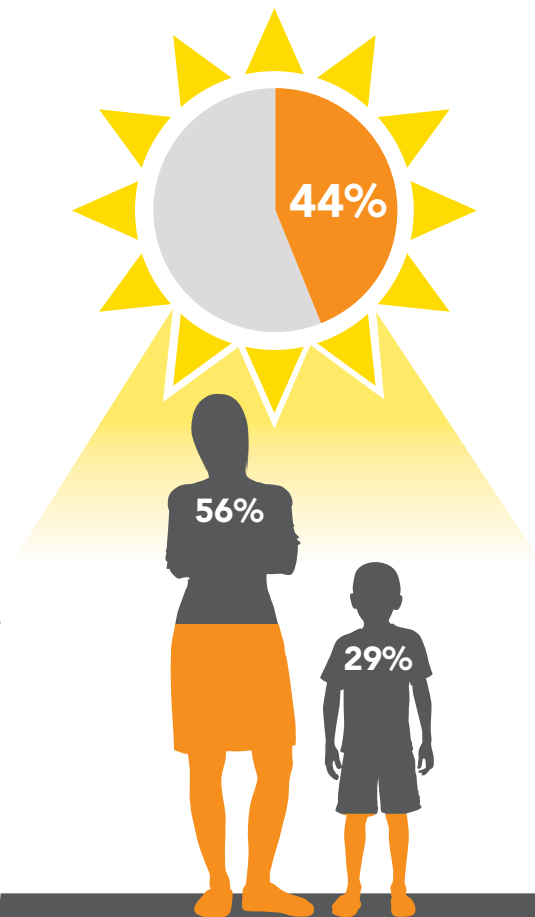
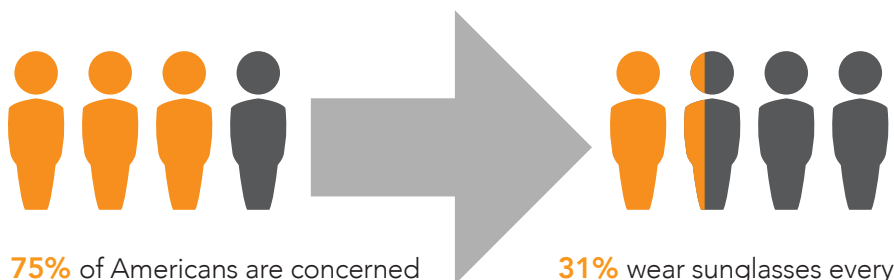
SPARE YOUR SIGHT:

Using Shades for Protection and Style

Only **44%** of sunglass purchasers listed UV protection as very important.



More than **1 in 3** adults have experienced symptoms from unprotected UV exposure.



Of the people who rarely or never wear sunglasses, **44%** don't own sunglasses.

Parents are more likely to wear shades (**56%**) than their children (**29%**)

USES

Americans are more likely to wear sunglasses while driving (**73.2%**) than while at the beach (**44.8%**).

Only **49.0%** of Americans are likely to wear their shades when walking outside.

Most Americans forego UV-protective eyewear when doing yard work, with only **24.6%** wearing sunglasses.

Even fewer protect their eyes while on a boat (**17.0%**), watching a sporting event (**14.4%**) and/or while playing a sport (**6.0%**).

EXCUSES

"I don't have them with me." – **28.4%**

"I forget to put them on." – **26.3%**

"I'm not outside long enough to put them on." – **17.4%**

"The sun doesn't bother my eyes." – **15.7%**

"I can't find my sunglasses when I need them." – **13.2%**



THE VISION COUNCIL

Learn more at thevisioncouncil.org/uv



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About The Vision Council: Championing better vision for better lives, The Vision Council positions its members for success by promoting growth in the vision care industry through education, advocacy, research, consumer outreach, strategic relationship building and industry forums. By sharing the latest in eyewear trends, advances in technology and advice from eyewear experts, The Vision Council serves as a resource to the public looking to learn more about options in eyeglasses and sunglasses. For more information, visit www.thevisioncouncil.org