

Training & Tools for Independence

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If you work with individuals who are blind or have low vision, this session will provide information essential to their independence and quality of life. Blindness and vision impairment can make learning and performing many tasks more challenging. Guide Dogs NT staff customise programs to maximise a client's independence based on each person's individual situation, needs, and goals. Assessment and training are provided in the client's home or in environments relevant to their specific situation.

Losing vision does not mean giving up favourite activities, but it does mean applying new ways of doing them. Is it difficult for the person to read newspapers and price tags, set dials, or manage glare? Is it difficult for them to walk around safely and independently within their home or community? At Guide Dogs NT, we teach people with low vision or blindness how to do things in new ways. They may learn different ways to read, write, move safely in and around their home and community, or learn new strategies to complete tasks at home.

There are low vision aids and devices to help with daily activities. **Optical low vision aids** use magnifying lenses to make objects look larger and easier to see. Non-optical devices help with everyday tasks such as talking watches or large-print materials. Electronic devices include audio or electronic books and Smartphones and tablets which allow changing font size, adjusting lighting or using voice commands.

There are also useful low vision techniques that help. Increasing the amount of light in the house, reducing glare inside and outside, creating more contrast and using bold felt tip markers are just a few of the techniques we demonstrate to clients with low vision.

Individuals with blindness or low vision need quality vision rehabilitation to go hand-in-hand with quality medical intervention.