Orthoptics is a discipline in eye healthcare specialising in the assessment, diagnosis and non-surgical management of eye disorders.



Orthoptists were traditionally involved in the management of patients with eye movement disorders and specifically with strabismus (squint), double vision and amblyopia (lazy eye). Over the last several decades orthoptists have expanded their role and not only specialise in eye movement disorders but are also involved in the care of patients with eye disease such as cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic eye disease, age related macular degeneration,  systemic or neurological vision disorders and low vision.

Orthoptics is essential to promoting better quality of life in both adults and children with vision problems.

Orthoptists are eye health professionals who care for patients with eye disorders.

Through a unique set of skills, orthoptists play a crucial role in the detection, diagnosis and management of eye diseases in both adults and children.

Orthoptists specialise in a variety of areas including:

* Children’s vision / Paediatrics
* Eye movement disorders
* Low vision care / Rehabilitation
* General eye disease
* Cataract care
* Retinal disorders
* Neurological vision disorders
* Laser eye surgery and corneal conditions
* Driver vision
* Sports vision
* Clinical Research
* Education

Where do orthoptists work?

Orthoptists work in a range of settings, including hospitals, private practices, low vision and rehabilitation settings, community health areas, clinical research centres, universities and within the ophthalmic sales industry. Orthoptists may work independently, in conjunction with ophthalmologists or in a variety of multidisciplinary teams.

There is a strong demand for orthoptists in Australia and overseas. To learn more about orthoptic training programs in Australia, visit our [Career in Orthoptics](http://www.orthoptics.org.au/about-orthoptics/a-career-in-orthoptics/) page or [Find an orthoptist](http://www.orthoptics.org.au/find-an-orthoptist/) in your area.

How does orthoptics differ from other eye health professions?

With speciality university training, orthoptists possess a unique and versatile set of skills in eye health; depending on the setting, orthoptists may be responsible for a variety of eye health practices.

As an example, an orthoptist may be primarily responsible for the pre- and post-operative care of patients with cataracts. This involves undertaking a number of investigations to determine the patient’s potential vision, surgical requirements including the optical lens to be inserted in the eye during surgery and the prescribing of glasses.

To perform these investigations, orthoptists are highly trained in using specialised technology to detect and measure the progression of eye disease – these include instruments such as ultrasonography machines, (A-scans, B-scans and pachymmeters), topogrophers (Ocular Coherence Tomographer (OCT), Orbscans) and retinal cameras.

Orthoptists may also prescribe management programs for those with conditions such as refractive error (need for glasses), double vision, neurological disorders and ocular motility disorders, as well as aiding in the rehabilitation of impaired vision.

In contrast, an optometrist is a primary care practitioner who examines eyes, gives advice on visual problems, and prescribes and fits glasses or contact lenses. If eye disease is detected, an optometrist will generally refer patients to a specialist for further management.

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who has undertaken additional specialist training in the diagnosis and management of disorders of the eye and visual system. Ophthalmologists can prescribe medication and perform surgical procedures in the management of eye disease. Often, an orthoptist and ophthalmologist will work collaboratively together in investigating and managing diseases of the eye.

https://www.orthoptics.org.au/about-orthoptics/what-is-orthoptics/