



THE ART OF  
**CHOOSING  
EYEWEAR**

FROM PRESCRIPTION TO PERSONAL STYLE



**NICOS ANTONIADES FBDO**

# INTRODUCTION

## THE OPTICAL GALLERY



Hello, I'm Nicos, the eldest of three brothers who together run The Optical Gallery in Twickenham. Before we explore the journey of selecting new glasses, I'd like to share a bit about our background to give you confidence in the guidance you're about to receive.

With over 20 years of experience as a qualified dispensing optician, and our family business flourishing for 28 years, I've encountered an extensive variety of faces, prescriptions, and personalities. Our dedication to merging fashion with optical care was recognised when we were **nominated for 'Best Fashion Practice of the Year'** at the *Optician Awards in 2023*, and shortlisted for **'Eyewear Retailer of the Year'** at the UK's premier optical event, *100% Optical in 2024*.

*FAVRSpecs.com*, a highly regarded optical website, hailed us as **'One of the best opticians in the world and in London'**. This recognition is a testament to our passion for customer service and our philosophy of transforming eyewear from a mere necessity to an accessory that reflects one's personality.

**Selecting the right glasses is an intimate and personal process;**

there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. Just as every individual is unique with their own style, personality, shape, and skin tone, so should be their eyewear. Consider how a tailored dress or suit

feels compared to one off the shelf, or how inappropriate it would be to wear high heels for running or trainers to a wedding. Though these might seem like everyday choices, they highlight the importance of suitability and personalisation – aspects that are often overlooked in eyewear selection, leading to dissatisfaction or reluctance in wearing glasses.

If you're serious about finding eyewear that truly represents you and enhances your vision, **I invite you to visit us for a personalised styling session. Even if you're not local, our online eyewear consultation can still provide you with the guidance you need.** But first, let's dive into some essential advice and questions that will help you understand what to look for in your next pair of glasses, and uncover the possibilities you might not yet be aware of.

*At the end of this book, I have a gift for you to help you on your eyewear journey with us!*



SUNGLASSES EYEGLASSES BRANDS FIND OPTICIANS BLOG

### The Optical Gallery

16 King Street | TW1 3SN Twickenham | United Kingdom | +44 20 8892 2800



The Optical Gallery near London, in Twickenham, stands as a testament to the fusion of optics, design, and creativity. As a family-run establishment, they've been awarded for their fashion-forward approach and dedication to independent eyewear brands. The Optical Gallery is not just an optician; it's a curated experience that combines professional service with a keen eye for fashion, making eyewear not just a necessity but an expression of individuality. Their innovative interior design and commitment to exclusive brands position them as a unique "eye gallery" in the optics world.

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# DECIPHERING YOUR PRESCRIPTION

## Chapter 1

Before we dive into the world of frame styles, it's crucial to grasp the essence of your prescription. While it might seem like just a series of numbers that correct your vision, your prescription unveils much more, guiding us towards the optimal frame style for both vision enhancement and aesthetic appeal. It may even indicate the need for multiple pairs of glasses tailored to different activities.

	SPHERE	CYL	AXIS	PRISM	ADD	INTER ADD
Right	+3.50	-1.00	97.0		2.50	1.75
Left	+3.00	-0.50	70.0		2.50	1.75

Your prescription comprises elements like sphere (SPH), cylinder (CYL) for astigmatism, axis, and possibly an 'Add' value, particularly relevant as we age, representing a boost for reading. Understanding these components can provide insights into your lifestyle and eyewear needs.

**Sphere (SPH):** Reflects the overall power of the lens needed to correct your vision, whether shortsighted or long-sighted.

- **Myopia (Short-sightedness):** Represented by a "-" in your prescription, indicating difficulty in seeing distant objects clearly.
- **Hyperopia (Long-sightedness):** Denoted by a "+", suggesting near objects might be blurry, while distance vision remains relatively unaffected.
- **Presbyopia:** This condition introduces the need for an additional reading correction, signifying changes in vision that affect both near and distant focus.

**Astigmatism (CYL):** Indicates an irregular curvature of your eye, requiring additional correction to rectify distorted vision.

**Axis:** Specifies the orientation of the astigmatism correction, measured in degrees from **0 to 180**.

**Add:** Commonly, opticians note a single 'Add' for near vision. However, **I advocate for two 'Adds' - one for close reading and another for intermediate distances, like computer use.** This distinction is vital in our digital age, where screen usage demands a different focal length than traditional reading.

*(It's important to remember that 'off-the-shelf' reading glasses might not cater to the nuanced needs of your prescription. The 'Add' value should complement your distance correction, akin to adjusting a camera's focus from afar to a closer range).*

As we approach the selection of your new glasses, it's crucial to **ensure your prescription is current and valid.** Prescriptions typically have a validity period, often ranging from 12 to 24 months, as determined by your optometrist based on the health and stability of your eyesight. This precaution ensures that your eyewear not only enhances your vision but also aligns with any changes in your eye health.

At The Optical Gallery, we offer **comprehensive eye examinations, dedicating 40 minutes** to each session. This allows us not only to assess your eye health thoroughly but also to understand your unique visual lifestyle. By doing so, **we can customise your vision solutions to fit your specific needs** and ensure that we provide the most appropriate recommendations.

# VISUAL LIFESTYLE AND EYEWEAR NEEDS

## Chapter 2



Understanding your prescription is the first step; next, we need to explore your expectations and visual lifestyle. By 'visual lifestyle,' **we're delving into the myriad ways you rely on your vision daily.** It might seem unusual to consider at first, but our eyes are integral to a diverse range of activities – **from driving and computer use to engaging in hobbies, sports, and general day-to-day tasks.** Much like selecting the right footwear for different occasions, there are specialised lenses tailored to various needs. **It's essential to pinpoint the scenarios most critical to you,** ensuring your eyewear makes your daily activities not only manageable but also enjoyable and fulfilling.

### Let's consider the broader context of your life

Such as your **work environment** and **personal style.** For instance, if your job demands a formal appearance, a brightly coloured frame might clash with your professional attire, even if it perfectly matches your off-duty personality. Similarly, a delicate frame might not withstand the rigors of high-impact sports you enjoy. Or perhaps you're someone who likes to coordinate your glasses with different outfits **(Yes, we have many clients that dress themselves from their eyewear down)** – the possibilities are endless. This might lead you to wonder about owning multiple pairs of glasses.



Indeed, many of our clients opt for several pairs to suit different facets of their lives. **Concerned about the cost?** It's a valid consideration. However, The Optical Gallery offers a wide price range of frames, along with **second-pair discounts** and **interest-free payment plans** to alleviate the burden of a lump-sum expense. Our goal is to ensure you have access to eyewear that not only meets your vision needs but also fits seamlessly into every aspect of your lifestyle.

## Let's delve into some additional terms worth considering in the realm of eyewear:

**Single Vision Lenses:** These lenses are designed with a **singular focus** in mind, catering to one specific type of vision correction - be it for **distance**, **intermediate** (*computer use*), or **near** (*reading*). Known for their simplicity, single vision lenses are a straightforward, cost-effective solution for many.



Whether you need clarity for driving, computer work, or immersing yourself in a good book, these lenses offer a broad field of vision with the sharpest clarity typically found at the centre.

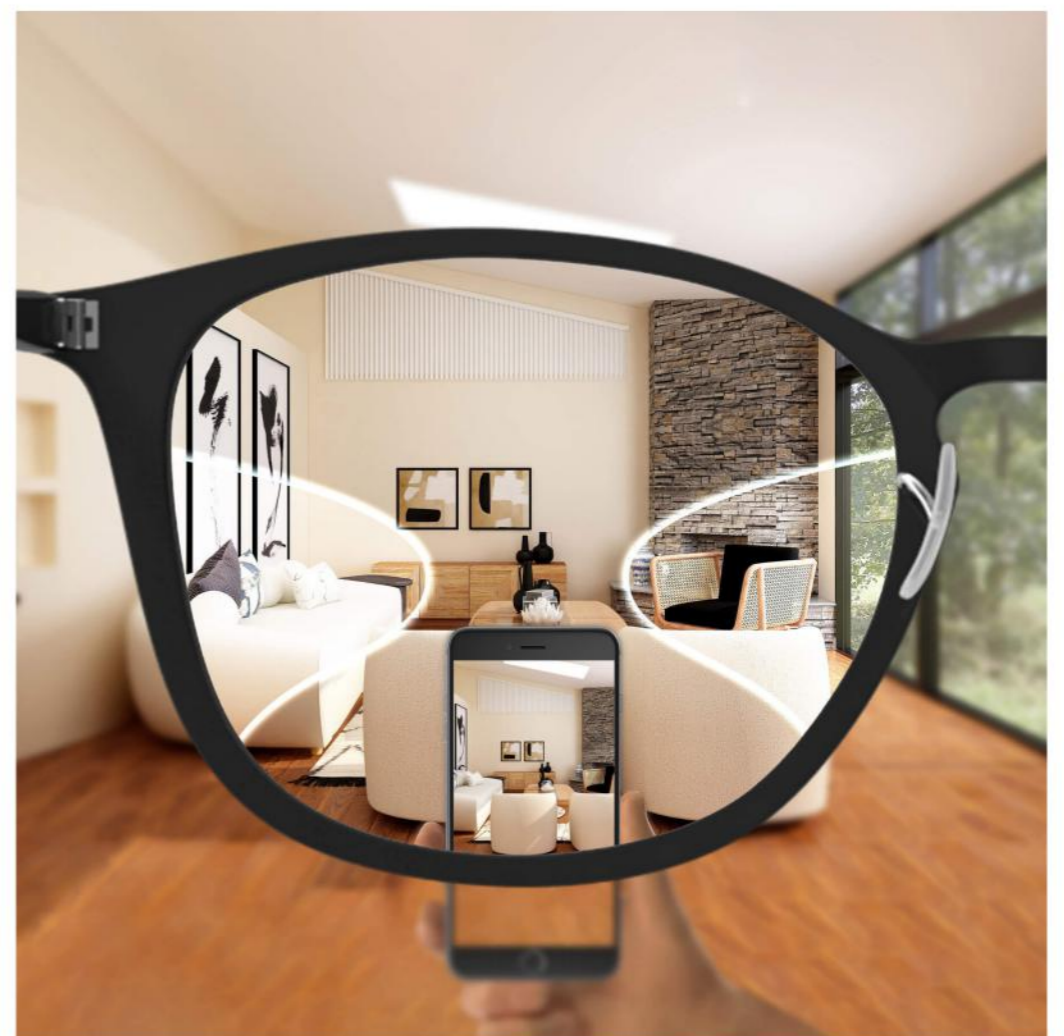
However, **advancements in lens technology** have brought us enhanced freeform single vision lenses. Crafted using state-of-the-art digital surfacing techniques, these lenses boast expanded clarity that extends right to the edges, ensuring **optimal vision across the entire lens surface**. In our digital-driven world, where our gaze often shifts

downwards to screens and devices, the innovation of **dual central optical zones** in these lenses is a game-changer. This design ensures that whether your eyes are focused straight ahead or lowered towards a device, you're always looking through the lens's clearest portion. The result? **Crisp vision** and **reduced eye strain**, keeping you comfortable and **fatigue-free** throughout the day.

**Varifocal, Progressive, or Multifocal Lenses:** These innovative lenses are designed to seamlessly accommodate near, intermediate, and distance vision all in one, making them an ideal choice for **everyday wear**. However, it's essential to understand that integrating three vision zones into a single lens involves certain compromises, particularly in the size of each viewing area.

While advancements in lens technology allow us to optimise the width of these zones for better peripheral vision, adjusting the depth, or vertical range, of each zone is more challenging. The positioning of varifocal lenses is crucial; they're aligned with your pupil when looking straight ahead for distance. As your gaze drops, you transition into the intermediate zone, and further down, into the reading area. This design necessitates adjusting your head posture to achieve the ideal focus for different tasks.

Consider prolonged computer use as an example: maintaining the necessary head angle to view through the intermediate zone can become uncomfortable, potentially



straining your neck. Similarly, activities like reading or watching TV in bed can prove challenging as you navigate the lens zones to find the right focus.

Despite these considerations, **varifocal lenses offer unparalleled versatility for general use**. They enable you to drive, stroll, watch TV, and perform a myriad of daily activities with ease. Quick glances at your phone, social interactions, or checking price tags in a store are all effortlessly manageable. However, for specific tasks, particularly those requiring extended focus in one vision zone, you may find limitations.

This brings us full circle to the importance of **aligning eyewear with your expectations and visual lifestyle**. Simply receiving a prescription for varifocal lenses and being sold a pair without considering your daily activities, such as an 8-hour computer-based job, can lead to frustration. This situation underscores the dispensing optician's role in understanding your unique needs and **guiding you through the best options** for your lifestyle.

**It's essential that you, as the client, are informed about the various specialised lenses available**, each designed for specific tasks. Whether during an in-store visit or an online consultation, **my team and I are committed to listening to your needs and exploring every possible solution** to ensure your eyewear not only meets but exceeds your expectations. The choice ultimately rests with you, but **being well-informed empowers you to make decisions** that best suit your vision and lifestyle needs.

There is so much more I could delve into regarding lens options, including **Photochromic lenses** that adapt to changing light conditions, various **tints such as pre-tints, graduated tints, polarised tints** and **sports-enhanced tints** for optimal performance, as well as **flash mirror coatings** that offer both style and glare reduction. We also have **blue light filters** crucial for

those spending significant time in front of screens, **anti-glare coatings** for clearer vision and reduced eye strain, drive coatings specifically designed for drivers, and options for **thinner, flatter lenses** for a sleeker profile. While I'm eager to explore each of these fascinating options in detail, revealing how they can transform your eyewear experience, we'll save some of these discussions for when you visit us. Rest assured, **the possibilities for customising your perfect pair of glasses are endless**, promising both exceptional fashion, individuality and functionality.



# BEYOND BRAND NAMES: THE CRAFT OF EYEWEAR

## Chapter 3

As we shift our focus to frames, it's enlightening to consider the origins of many 'Designer' eyewear options. A significant portion of these **branded frames are mass-produced** in large factories, licensed to use popular brand names as a primary selling point. This often results in a uniform appearance across different brands, distinguished only by the logo adorning the temples.

While a brand's logo can undoubtedly elevate a frame's perceived value, a closer examination might reveal that the materials and **designs don't always justify the premium price tag**. Essentially, purchasing such frames means paying for the privilege of showcasing a brand, contributing to their marketing efforts while gaining social acceptance through visible logos.

**These types of frames have one goal...to sell them in their millions to as many people as possible.**

Hence maybe the pushy sales techniques you may have experienced in the past at major chain company's, That's right, some of **these designer brands put pressure on the opticians to sell so many frames per year**.

However, **if you**, like me, **value authenticity, specialisation in craftsmanship** and **having your own style**, you'll appreciate that true eyewear artistry comes from those dedicated solely to creating spectacles. Authentic eyewear designers focus on every aspect of the creation process, from innovative design and wearer comfort to the quality of materials used, ensuring each piece stands out as a work of art, **not a mass-produced commodity**. These frames reflect the individuality of the wearer, crafted by experts who live and breathe eyewear design.

At The Optical Gallery, my brothers and I are committed to this ethos. **We travel the world, attending optical exhibitions to discover niche, independent eyewear brands** that align with our vision of providing unique, high-quality options



for our clients. We curate collections from lesser-known yet exceptional designers like; **Theo Eyewear, Cazal, Kuboraum, and Kirk & Kirk, Gotti Switzerland** and even take part in designing our frames. This passion for eyewear is reflected in every pair we select or create, ensuring our clients wear pieces that are as individual as they are. This dedication to finding and offering distinctive eyewear is what sets us apart, driven by our deep understanding of our clients' needs and desires.



# WE'RE NOT YOUR AVERAGE OPTICIAN

## Chapter 4

By now, you should be well-equipped with the foundational knowledge needed to embark on the journey of selecting your new eyewear. However, before we proceed, it's important to familiarise you with the **unique experience awaiting you** at The Optical Gallery.

Unlike the conventional optical stores cluttered with endless rows of indistinguishable frames, our boutique is curated to resemble an art gallery. Upon entering, you'll be greeted by a carefully chosen selection of frames, each displayed with the intention to highlight its unique features and craftsmanship. **Our approach is far from the typical, overwhelming browsing experience**; we aim to guide you thoughtfully through the selection process we call an **eyewear styling consultation**, taking into account not just the frames, but more importantly, who you are and what you need from your eyewear. Bearing this in mind, the next chapter's are my four essential considerations we believe will aid you in finding the perfect glasses that resonate with your style and requirements. Preparing yourself for when you decide to visit us.





tez mo  
1 review

★★★★★ 5 months ago

Got my incredibly stylish glasses from Optical Gallery and couldn't be more pleased! The staff was beyond lovely, at the consultation they considered my preferences and offered a range of frames and offered their professional opinion which helped me decide between 2 frames and I'm so glad they helped me with that choice. I'll definitely come back to them and recommend anyone to go!



Gavin Clarke  
1 review

★★★★★ a year ago

I discovered The Optical Gallery while shopping for new frames and having visited several opticians but been disappointed by their stock - I was after something a little bit different. They had an interesting selection and helped me narrow down my choice, based on some thoughtful consideration and careful weighing of options. They helped me pick a pair that really suited me. I love the glasses and the aftercare, when it came to adjusting the frames, was amazing. I can't recommend The Optical Gallery enough - personal and friendly service.



  
OPTICIAN  
AWARDS  
FINALIST  
2023



Mark Winter



★★★★★ 3 months ago

Mark Winter - SWAY Models, Founder;

We partnered with The Optical Gallery on several occasions, and from my own personal experience I have never witnessed a more forward thinking opticians, they really do have their fingers on the pulse regarding fashion, offering a much more refreshing approach to what can at times be viewed as very medical and mundane part of the industry. We have been using The Optical Gallery's styling services to help on our model test shoots and predict future trends. They have a very high level of professionalism and extremely knowledgeable, nothing is too 'difficult' for them to achieve, they go above and beyond, and we are proud to continually work with them.

Like Share



# EYEWEAR RETAILER OF THE YEAR 2024



**C** **carol dare**  
1 review  
★★★★★ 8 months ago

The service from start to finish is of the highest standards  
Staff are courteous, professional and genuinely interred in finding the best frames for you and your needs  
I won't go anywhere else and have already recommended the OG to my family  
Thank you everyone at the Twickenham shop

100%optical®  
**LOVE EYEWEAR AWARDS**  
24 February 2024

**We're shortlisted**

Recognised for our exceptional range, enjoyable approach, and community events, we are proud to be shortlisted for a 'Love Eyewear Award'.



**K** **Kimie Utsugi**  
1 review  
★★★★★ 2 months ago

I attended a very enjoyable Theo event, hoping to find a new, stylish pair of glasses. The stylist from Theo was excellent, personable and helpful. I was then able to refine my choice with Nic and discuss my prescription in detail. I am very pleased with my Cabochon choice and the expert, friendly service received. Nic could not have done more to ensure I was happy and I am pleased to be able to recommend him and the store without hesitation.



**C** **Catherine Stock**

★★★★★ a week ago

I walked into the store by chance, there was a Theo event on. I was greeted by Nicos, who let me try on some surprisingly colorful glasses. I fell in love with a pair of blue glasses.  
Thanks to Nicos for his advice and help, and thanks for the speedy delivery of my glasses, which I love and which match my personality.  
My children were seduced by this choice.  
I highly recommend this optician for anyone looking for glasses with character and impeccable service.

# TOP TIPS TO CHOOSING EYEWEAR

## Chapter 5

### 1. The Myth of Face Shape and Eyewear Compatibility:

The common belief that certain frame shapes are predestined for specific face shapes is more myth than mandate. In my two decades of experience, I've observed **clients transition** through a variety of frame styles, their **facial structures unchanged** but **their tastes evolving** with the tides of fashion. If we were strictly bound by these traditional rules, we might still find ourselves accessorising with pocket watches and corsets. **Your eyewear, often the first aspect of you that meets the observer's eye,** should broadcast your authentic self, not just adhere to a prescribed formula.

**Choosing frames based on the outdated notion of face shape compatibility can lead you into a repetitive cycle, limiting your expression and potentially leading to a sense of style stagnation.**



The world of eyewear is vast, filled with diverse shapes, colours, and designs, offering more than a simple science of shapes. **The true artistry in eyewear selection lies beyond mere facial contours,** residing in the personal touch and understanding brought to the table by experienced opticians.

### 2. The Art of Trying On: Don't say no



Imagine if every book were judged solely by its cover, or if every new song were skipped based on its opening note. Much like the unexpected joy found in these experiences, **the act of trying on a new frame can lead to delightful discoveries.** It's common for clients to initially resist a frame I've selected, only to find it becomes their favourite once they've given it a chance. **Our comfort zones, while familiar, can also confine us,** leading to a wardrobe of eyewear that never evolves.

Venturing into new styles can feel like learning a new language at first - unfamiliar and somewhat awkward. But with a little patience and experimentation, perhaps revisiting a frame after an initial trial or seeing it in a new light (or colour), the

perspective shifts. **A frame in a different hue isn't just a slight variation; it's a whole new opportunity** for expression. At The Optical Gallery, we understand this transformative power, which is why we offer each frame in multiple colour options, encouraging our clients to explore the spectrum of their personality. **More often than not, the piece once overlooked becomes the chosen one,** much to the wearer's surprise and delight.

### 3. Beware of opinions:

When embarking on the journey to find the perfect eyewear, bringing along a trusted companion can be incredibly valuable. Yet, **it's crucial to choose this person with care.** Opt for someone who not only knows you intimately but also possesses a discerning eye for eyewear fashion. This individual should be able to see beyond the familiar, embracing the possibility of you in something new and perhaps unexpected.

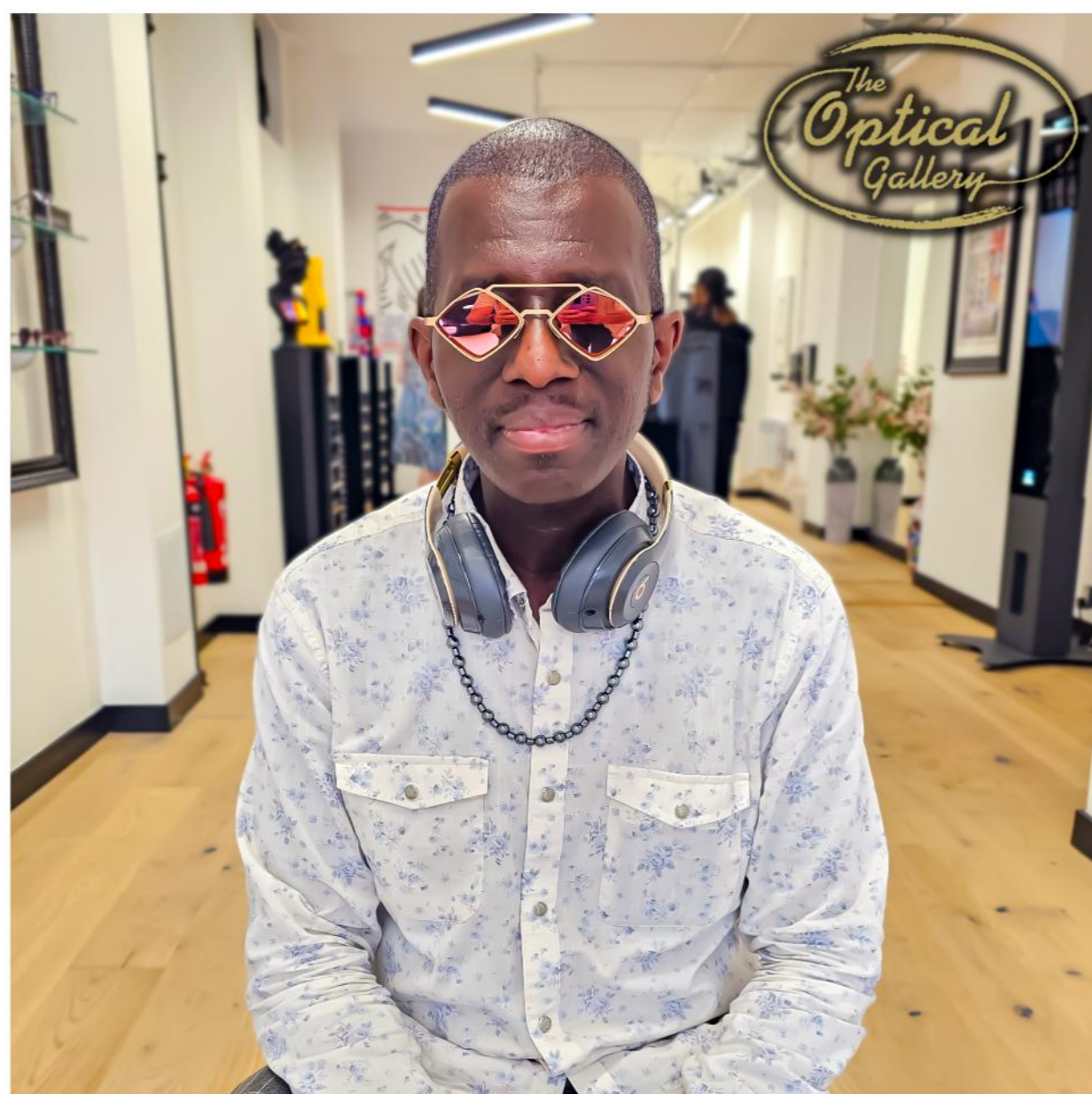
It's worth considering that even **well-meaning friends or family might inadvertently steer you away from a frame that's a perfect fit for you,** simply because it's different from what they're used to seeing you wear. Their lack of familiarity with eyewear trends and styling nuances could limit your exploration into new, potentially more flattering styles.

At The Optical Gallery, our professional accolades, including nominations for eyewear fashion, stand as a testament to our expertise. **We're here to guide you through this process** with a keen eye for what suits you best, blending our deep knowledge of current trends with a personalised understanding of your unique style.

Before you visit, give some thought to who might accompany you, if anyone, and how their presence will influence your choices. Remember, while it's beneficial to have a second opinion, **the final decision should resonate with your personal style and comfort.** With our team's expert guidance, backed by industry recognition, you can confidently explore a range of eyewear options, secure in the knowledge that you're in capable hands.



### 4. Curating Your Personal Eyewear Collection



Reflecting on our earlier conversation about visual lifestyles, it's clear that **our eyes play a crucial role in almost every aspect of our daily lives,** from navigating the commute to engaging in hobbies and fulfilling professional responsibilities. Given the diverse demands placed on our vision, it makes sense to consider eyewear not as a one-size-fits-all solution but as a tailored wardrobe that caters to the varied facets of your life.

**Imagine having a pair of glasses for every need:** polarized sunglasses for driving on sunny days, blue light filtering glasses for those long hours in front of the computer, and perhaps a stylish, statement pair for social outings. This concept of an **'eyewear wardrobe'** mirrors the way we curate our clothing—different outfits for different occasions, ensuring we're always at our best.

Investing in **multiple pairs of glasses allows** you the **flexibility** to meet the demands of your lifestyle **without compromise,** ensuring you're not only comfortable but also **projecting the right image,** no matter the setting. And with various offers and payment plans available, building your eyewear collection can be both practical and accessible.

Think of it as assembling a toolkit where each tool is chosen for its specific function and how it complements the rest of your ensemble. This approach encourages informed decisions about your eyewear, ensuring **each addition serves a purpose and reflects your personal style.**

# FINAL THOUGHTS

## Chapter 6

Optics, by its very nature, can often be perceived as a dry and clinical subject. Being deeply embedded in this field, my brothers and I understand this all too well. It's precisely why we made it our mission to transform what is often seen as a mundane necessity into an engaging and enjoyable experience.

**"At The Optical Gallery, we believe that holding the title of optician comes with a responsibility to excel medically, but there's another dimension that's frequently overlooked: becoming connoisseurs of eyewear in its entirety."**

For many, interactions with their optician are limited to routine eye exams, leading to a lackluster perception of the optician's role in their lives. However, **our clients at The Optical Gallery experience something entirely different.** Our passion for eyewear is matched only by our commitment to creating memorable experiences that attract aficionados from near and far. From **exclusive showcases** featuring the most innovative designers to **brand-centric events** and **client appreciation gatherings**, we're all about creating a **community** around our shared love for eyewear.

But for us, it's more than just numbers. As an independent business, **we focus on nurturing our existing community, expressing our gratitude** and ensuring their continued satisfaction. While awards and recognitions are gratifying, **our true measure of success is the happiness and loyalty of our clients.** Your endorsement and the style you exude in our eyewear are the cornerstones of our thriving business.



We're always looking to innovate and keep you informed. **Stay connected with us on social media** to be part of our vibrant community. Discover a gallery of our clients showcasing their latest frames on our **Instagram** and **Facebook pages**. Dive into our **YouTube channel** for an inside look at our travels to exhibitions, along with insightful tips on choosing the right lenses and frames. Plus, keep abreast of the latest trends by following our news blog on our website. **Join us as we explore the ever-evolving world of eyewear together.**

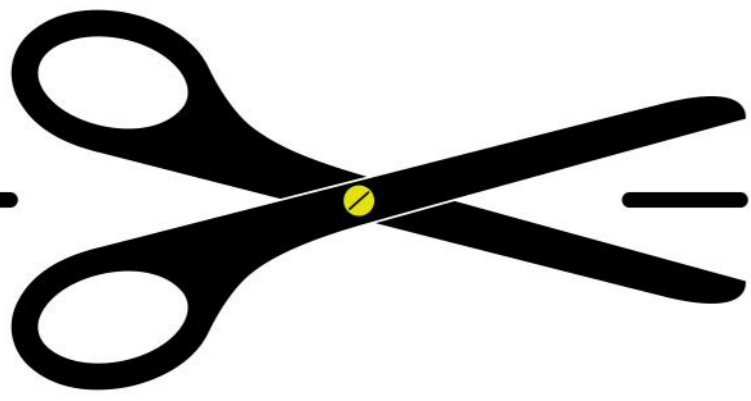
I hope this book has shed new light on the world of eyewear, showing you how it can enhance your life and make the selection process as enjoyable as shopping for your favourite accessories.

If you have any questions or need advice, my team and I are more than ready to assist.

And as a token of our appreciation, **we've included a special gift for you on the next page**, as you join us at The Optical Gallery.

We look forward to welcoming you soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Adam'.



# £25 off

## your next frame



Terms & conditions apply

(On presentation of this voucher)

## SERVICES

Online booking available

Eye Examination	39.00
Contact Lens New Fit/Trial	45.00
Contact Lens Examination	39.00
Eyewear Styling (Usually)	<del>59.00</del>
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### THE OPTICAL GALLERY TWICKENHAM BRANCH

16 KING STREET, TWICKENHAM  
TW1 3SN

020 8892 2800  
INFO@OPTICALGALLERY.CO.UK

### THE OPTICAL GALLERY CHESSINGTON BRANCH

340 HOOK ROAD, CHESSINGTON  
KT9 1NU

020 8391 0300  
INFO@OPTICALGALLERY.CO.UK

### THE OPTICAL GALLERY CHEAM VILLAGE BRANCH


31 THE BROADWAY, CHEAM,  
SM3 8BL

0207 155 1324  
EMAIL@ASHTONRILEYEYECARE.COM

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**"At The Optical Gallery, we believe that holding the title of optician comes with a responsibility to excel medically, but there's another dimension that's frequently overlooked: becoming connoisseurs of eyewear in its entirety."**

Discover the art of selecting the perfect eyewear with Nicos Antoniadis FBDO, the eldest of three brothers at the helm of the fashion award-nominated 'The Optical Gallery.' This book goes beyond the conventional, turning the task of finding new glasses into an engaging and seamless experience.

Leveraging over twenty years of expertise, Nicos offers insights into understanding your prescription, staying ahead of eyewear trends, and aligning your glasses with your lifestyle. Filled with real client photographs showcasing their stylish frames, this guide celebrates the fusion of fashion and vision like never before. Included are essential tips to consider when choosing your glasses, ensuring you're well-informed and confident in your selections. Whether you're a seasoned eyewear enthusiast or exploring options for the first time, this book is your gateway to eyewear that not only enhances your vision but also complements your individual style. Welcome to a fresh perspective on eyewear, where every choice is a reflection of your unique personality and aesthetic.