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Winter wonderland

The coronavirus outbreak has affected lives and communities around the world, and the travel industry has been especially hard-hit. The lockdown **effectively cancelled 2020's summer holiday season**, meaning a getaway this winter will be the next best thing for many families

Going away in winter does offer some advantages. **Prices are generally lower than in summer**, resorts and attractions may be quieter, and a break from work could feel even more welcome when we're more fatigued. From skiing in Scotland to surfing in Cornwall, outdoor sporting opportunities are on our doorstep, while travelling abroad offers the chance to enjoy a change of scenery and potentially catch some rays. Also a crackling log fire and a well-stocked bar can make even a modest staycation feel indulgent, and there's something very satisfying about snow falling as you relax in an outdoor hot tub or browse a festive market.

It's important not to neglect your eyes while getting away from it all, and **winter holidays pose specific sight-related challenges**. Well-fitting sunglasses should fully protect your eyes, and we stock a range of frames suitable for all face shapes and sizes. **Ask one of our team to show you our collection.**

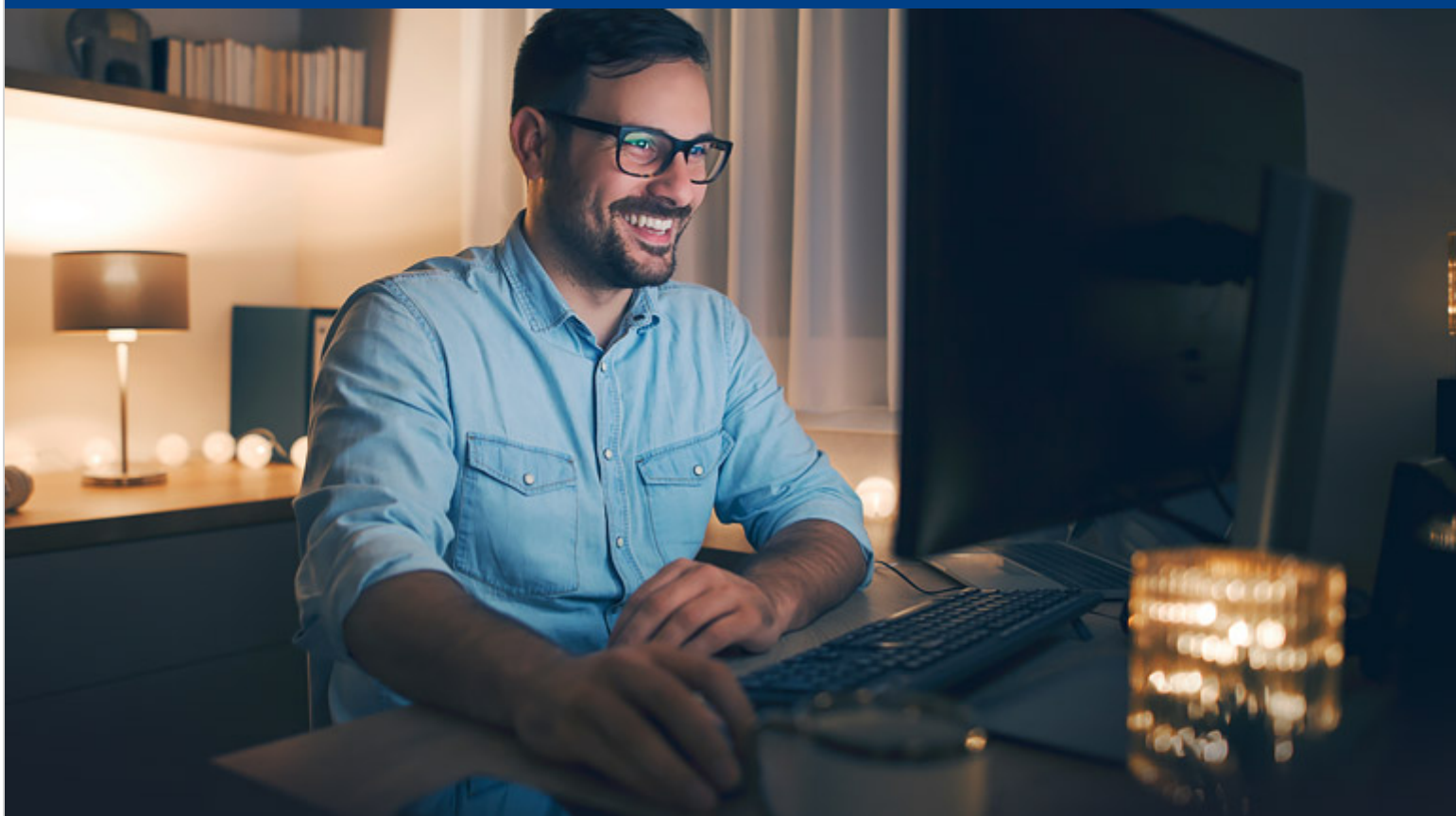
Activities like snowboarding and skiing may cause dazzle and glare, All the sunglasses in our practice provide 100% UV protection, while polarising lenses and anti-reflective coatings help prevent glare

Winter holidays involve moving between environments at different temperatures, which can cause glasses to fog up. Anti-mist coatings stop this condensation forming, while scratch-resistant coatings will help to avoid the eyestrain and headaches which may occur as our eyes try to focus through marks/scrapes. Imperfect vision can reduce everything from spatial awareness to endurance levels, so **replacing an old or worn pair of spectacles or sunglasses** is an important investment.



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The optimal home office

For millions of UK workers, 2020 will be the year when home working became part of their nine-to-five routine. In turn, this has underlined the **importance of having a proper workstation and optimal vision correction**, particularly if home working is here to stay...

If you spend hours staring at small on-screen fonts, you may need glasses suitable for comfortable all-day use. Bespoke office spectacles can include VDU-specific varifocals and enhanced reading glasses. We'll prescribe lenses that help your eyes quickly refocus between monitor, keyboard and paperwork. We can also help you choose frames which fully cover your eyes, **providing equally clear central and peripheral vision**. Anti-reflective coatings reduce screen glare, while effectively eliminating reflections from light sources.

Augment natural daylight with full-spectrum lamps, whose crisp white light is better for reading and writing than incandescent bulbs and their less effective yellowish light

Alongside well-fitting glasses, good lighting helps to minimise eyestrain and headaches. A bright computer monitor in gloomy surroundings makes it hard to focus on anything other than the screen, leading to sore eyes and premature tiredness. We stock bottles of eye drops, which are great for keeping eyes hydrated and comfortable, though regular breaks away from the monitor are important, too.

A standalone monitor is preferable to an integrated laptop to reduce craning your neck downwards, **lessening the risk of headaches and neck strain**. If you need to use a laptop, the use of a docking station (enabling you to connect a mouse and separate monitor) will help to improve your posture. Position the monitor at eye level, and use a padded office chair with lumbar support.



Speak to our optometrist about how you can work from home while enjoying clear and healthy vision



Practice makes perfect

As the world comes to terms with the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone is adapting to new ways of life. Many of us have had our first experiences of working from home in the last year, while opticians have also been working remotely to maximise patient safety and reduce the spread of infection. Alongside the safety protocols outlined on the front cover of this newsletter, we've been **expanding the level of remote services we offer to patients** who are vulnerable, or concerned about visiting public places.

The lockdown demonstrated that many of the services you used to receive in person can be replicated online or through the post. We can offer remote consultations to give advice on any eye related concerns you may have, advising on acute issues or general concerns. We can securely access your clinic records to review your current prescription, while monitoring any pre-existing health conditions. We're able to offer confidential advice over the phone, meaning you won't have to visit our practice.

Don't worry, our practice is fully compliant with the highest standards of hygiene recommended by health protection agencies

If you need replacement glasses/contact lenses, we may be able to provide these for you based on your most recent prescription. We will ask questions about your **overall health, vision and any requirements you may have**. These triage questions will enable us to resolve any problems as quickly as possible.

We may recommend the best course of action is to see an optometrist – for example, if you feel your level of vision has significantly changed since your last exam. You might notice small differences in the way we're now operating compared to previous visits. However, these changes have been introduced to keep you safe.