



Putting new lenses in to old spectacle frames

I am often met with incredulity when I offer to reglaze (put new lenses into) an existing spectacle frame. Many of my customers have, for years, been sold new frames each time they need a new prescription and if they ask to use existing frames, have been told that it is cheaper to replace them, or that it is not possible to use them.

There are very few valid reasons why a frame cannot be used but there are reasons for it being a risk. If the frame is metal it is easier to put new lenses in because it only involves undoing a screw and re-tightening it to replace the lens. However, if the joint is misaligned in anyway then it is likely that the joint may spring open at a later date, stripping the screw thread at the same time. Any misalignment of the frames lens housing will make it impossible for the lens to be cut accurately to fit the frame edge, making it likely to be ill fitting and prone to popping out.

Plastic frames are slightly more of a risk because for most plastics, the frame has to be heated and stretched to form a tight fit around the lens. If the frame has been over stretched to fit a larger than necessary lens, it narrows the groove into which the lens edge fits, making it impossible for the new lens to stay in place. Also plastics are more prone to being aged by exposure to UV light. This results in them becoming brittle and susceptible to cracking during the heating and stretching process, when a new lens is inserted.

Inspection of the frame by a trained and experienced eye can give a reasonable idea of whether it is suitable for reglazing. These days frames are not kept for as long as they were years ago because we all like to ring the changes with our eyewear styles. Therefore it is not often that I am presented with a frame that I have to decline putting new lenses in. If a customer is very keen to use a frame that I feel may be a problem, then I will advise that there is a risk of it breaking during or shortly after glazing and give the customer the choice to proceed. In these days of consumerism and waste, why not consider recycling your spectacle frames, if not by using it yourself, then by donating it to one of the many charities that use old glasses to give sight to those around the world, who do not have access to eyecare. At Ringlands Optics, I support Vision Aid Overseas.

If you have found this article interesting and have questions regarding it, then please do get in touch either for a chat by phone, or please feel free to email me.

Debra Watts F.B.D.O.

Ringlands Optics

Tel: 01264 333 092

Mobile: 07764 455 333

Email: ringlandsoptics@live.co.uk

Web: www.ringlandsoptics.co.uk