

VISION AND MOTOR SKILLS: SCREENING CHECKLIST

The Vision–Motor Connection

Vision and motor development are deeply intertwined. When visual input isn't clear, stable, or well-integrated with movement, a child may struggle with writing, coordination, attention, and everyday tasks, even if they have "20/20" eyesight. This checklist helps screen for red flags in children ages 4–12 where vision may be impacting motor skills. Use it as part of an OT, PT, or educational screening process, or when deciding whether to refer for a developmental vision evaluation.

Screening Checklist

Mark each item as **Yes**, **Sometimes**, or **No**. Red flags often appear in clusters.

Visual–Motor Red Flags

- ☐ Child reverses letters or numbers beyond age 7
- ☐ Writing is poorly spaced, misaligned, or inconsistent in size
- ☐ Has difficulty copying from the board or a book
- ☐ Shows poor endurance for coloring or writing tasks
- ☐ Tires quickly during fine motor work
- ☐ Struggles to coordinate scissors, pencil, or tools
- ☐ Avoids or dislikes drawing, crafts, or handwriting

Eye–Body Coordination Red Flags

- ☐ Appears clumsy or uncoordinated despite normal strength
- ☐ Difficulty catching, kicking, or aiming a ball
- ☐ Trouble with skipping, hopping, or riding a bike
- ☐ Often bumps into furniture or people
- ☐ Relies heavily on watching feet or hands during movement
- ☐ Poor balance or postural control during gross motor activities

Visual Behavior Red Flags

- ☐ Frequently loses place while reading or copying
- ☐ Tilts head or closes one eye to see
- ☐ Complains of headaches, eye strain, or blurry vision
- ☐ Rubs eyes, squints, or shows eye fatigue during close work
- ☐ Becomes easily frustrated or inattentive during visual tasks

What if Several Boxes are Checked?

If multiple red flags appear, especially in combination, it may indicate the child is struggling with **visual efficiency** (tracking, focusing, eye teaming) or **visual processing**. These challenges often mimic or overlap with ADHD, learning difficulties, or motor delays. Consider referring the child for a **developmental vision evaluation** by an optometrist trained in functional or behavioral optometry.

Next Steps

Early recognition leads to early support. A collaborative approach between therapists, educators, and vision professionals can help uncover the root of the issue and open the door to meaningful progress.