

TENNIS EYEWEAR

Sunglasses to Help Your Game

By Chris Nicholson

Summer sun means warm days filled with tennis outdoors—where the game was meant to be played.

However, that same sun's glare can cause considerable eye discomfort or, worse, can make you miss a shot. And that's just the immediate effect. Long-term unprotected exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays can lead to cataracts, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Therefore, a good pair of sunglasses designed for sports use should be mandatory equipment for every player.



Adidas: The Shield — \$110

If your head's feeling heavy, block that fatigue with The Shield; one of the lightest models tested, these frames feel like almost nothing. Additionally, this model allows you to see all with its sans-rim design and transparent arms, allowing for a virtually unblocked field of view.



Rudy Project: Noyz Golf/Tennis — \$175

Rudy Project's Noyz model comes with interchangeable lenses, including the Golf/Tennis 100 and Racing Red (for enhancing depth perception). Add that to the adjustable temple tips and nose piece, and the result is glasses you can customize to almost any head shape.



©CHRIS NICHOLSON

Oakley: Enduring — \$180

One of the few sunglass models engineered specifically for women, Oakley's Enduring frames are optimized for the female face and include two different-sized nose pieces for a more customized fit. The sleek design features feminine curves and colors along with high-performance details for serious competition.



©CHRIS NICHOLSON

Ray-Ban: TECH — \$199

Ray-Ban's Tech line of sunglasses use carbon fiber and a resin composite to create frames that are lightweight and durable. They're easy to wear while zipping around court, but won't fall apart under the hardy playing conditions of tennis.



Tifosi: Tyrant — \$60

Designed to track a ball in flight, the GT lenses on Tifosi's Tyrant brighten the scene and increase contrast. They make flying tennis balls look sharper. Moreover, the open-frame construction offers a nearly obstruction-free view. The cumulative effect? You'll feel like you see better.



Nike: Skylon Ace — \$99

Nike's Skylon Ace is designed for maximum stability. The "cam-action" hinges lock into place, the ventilated nose bridge reduces slipping and the arms' tread pattern grips your head while you run and dart about court.



Bolle: Kicker — \$110

Bolle's CompetiVision lenses are designed to aid the tennis player by muting every color of the spectrum besides tennis-ball yellow. The result? Eyesight so sharp, you'll feel like you're cheating. Use only if your intent is to win big.



Maui Jim: Little Beach — \$299

Maui Jim's Little Beach titanium sunglasses are about as light as you can find, but their frames are strong and remarkably flexible. Moreover, their unique hingeless design allows for a less obstructed view and a head-hugging fit. Check them out with the high-contrast Maui Rose lenses designed for fast-action sports.



©BIGSTOCKPHOTOS.COM

The New Threat to Eyes

For years, common knowledge has dictated protecting the eyes from invisible ultraviolet light. But recently optics researchers have been eyeing a bigger concern: long-term exposure to blue and violet light, otherwise known as "high energy visible" (HEV) light.

A study published in 2008 proved what some experts had long suspected: HEV rays cause more damage than UV rays. While prolonged exposure to the latter can lead to cataracts, prolonged exposure to the former can lead to even more severe problems, such as macular degeneration and melanoma of the retina.

But don't worry, help is already here, courtesy of Dr. Jim Gallas, physicist and CEO of Photoprotective Technologies in San Antonio, Texas. Gallas has been working for two decades on eyewear lenses that filter HEV light—using lab-made melanin, a protective chemical that occurs naturally in our bodies—while still allowing the wearer to perceive a nearly normal color balance. The result? Eyeglasses that not only protect you from retinal damage, but also increase your visual acuity by reducing glare.

Gallas' melanin lens technology is available from only select manufacturers. For more information, visit www.melaninproducts.com and www.melaninlenses.com. —C.N.