The back of the eye is made up of light-sensitive cells called photoreceptors. There are two types of photoreceptors – rods and cones. However, there is one spot in the eye where there are none of these cells; that is where the optic nerve attaches to the eye. The optic nerve connects the eye to the brain and carries all the images we see to the brain. The optic nerve connecting to the back of the eye causes us to have a blind spot in our vision.

Why don’t we notice the blind spot? There are two reasons. The first is the opposite eye compensates for the missing information and fills it in. This is because when we have both eyes open, the visual fields from each eye overlap and fill in the info for the opposite eye.

The other reason is that the brain will guess and fill in the missing information, even if you have one eye closed. It does this by using whatever colors are near the blind spot to fill in that space. Wild, right!? The next time you are at your optometrist, ask your eye doctor to tell you more about the optic nerve. Here are a few suggestions to get started:

- What’s the diameter of the optic nerve?
- How many nerves make up the optic nerve?
- Can you show me a picture of my retina and optic nerve?

In collaboration with the AOA

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American Optometric Association
Try this activity to find your blind sport and see if you can get the image to disappear right in front of you.

1. With your right hand, cover your right eye.
2. Stare at the image on the right (curly hair) with your left eye open.
3. You can still see the image on the left (straight hair) at this point.
4. While staring at the image on the right (curly hair), SLOWLY move your face toward the images.
5. As long as you’re moving very slowly, the image on the left (straight hair) will disappear. This is your blind spot.