

Alternative Access: Eye-Gaze Frame



What is it?

Eye gaze frames are assistive technology tools used to help individuals with complex physical disabilities communicate using their eyes. These frames typically consist of a transparent board with a grid of symbols, pictures, or words. The user selects items on the grid by looking at them, and a communication partner interprets the user's gaze to determine their choice. Eye gaze frames are particularly beneficial for individuals with conditions like cerebral palsy, where motor control is limited but eye movement remains intact.

Why use it?

Eye gaze frames are vital for individuals with severe physical disabilities who cannot speak or use their hands for communication. They allow users to convey needs, thoughts, and emotions through eye movements, which are often preserved despite impaired motor functions. By facilitating non-verbal communication, eye gaze frames empower individuals to engage more fully in social, educational, and daily activities, enhancing their autonomy and quality of life. Moreover, they are low-tech, easy to set up, and can be personalized to meet each user's unique communication needs.

How to use it?

To use an eye gaze frame for AAC, start by selecting or creating a transparent frame with a grid containing symbols, pictures, or words relevant to the user's communication needs. Position the frame at eye level, ensuring it is within a comfortable viewing distance for the user. The user then looks at the desired item on the grid, and a communication partner observes and interprets their gaze direction to identify the selected item. Consistent practice and familiarization with the grid layout are crucial for both the user and the partner to improve accuracy and speed in communication. Regularly update and customize the grid content to reflect the user's changing needs and preferences, ensuring the tool remains relevant and effective in facilitating communication.

