

See, look at or watch? ☆☆☆

(☆☆ = Basic ☆☆☆ = Intermediate ☆☆☆☆ = Advanced)

Grammar Bite

(read this)

Look at and watch are closely related; see is different:

(For **look at** and **watch**, see GB 63).



Jacob can see the lion, but he's not looking at it.

(His eyes are on the antelope, who is not moving)



Now he's watching the lion

(It's moving in for the kill)

If your eyes are open, you **see** things.

We often use *can* with see:

Can you see all right? I can't see much. Yes, I can see well.

If you fix your eyes on something still, you **look at** it.

If you fix your eyes on something moving about, you **watch** it.

Advanced ☆☆☆

See, in the sense of "use the eyes", is a STATIVE verb, so we usually use it in SIMPLE tenses.

We find the *-ing* form (*seeing*) in sentences like these:

The Bride glows with pleasure at seeing herself in the mirror.

Seeing you here was quite a surprise.

Worksheet

(do this)

Insert the right form of one of these words in each blank:

look at see watch

1 I _____ Hussein at the movies yesterday.

2 He _____ the two boys as they ran across the road.

3 The boss _____ her work briefly, and congratulated her.

4 Can you _____ that truck in the distance?

look at see watch

5 She _____ her blouse and saw it was torn.

6 "Can you answer the phone?" "I'm trying _____ my favourite TV programme!"

7 I can't _____ properly, I've lost my glasses.

8 "_____ your shoes, they're muddy!"

look at see watch

9 He spent an hour _____ the girls play netball.

10 "I _____ the papers; they're in order."

11 New offers coming up every day, so _____ this space!

12 I (can) _____ two girls over there.

For **look at** and **watch** only, see GB 63

For **Look at (me)** and **look (good)**, see GB 65

For the three meanings of **see**, see GB 66

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