



Comparing your laser eye surgery options

This is a general guide to the various types of laser eye surgery available – the end visual result is the same for all three procedures.

	PRK (also called ASLA)	LASIK	SMILE*
Age range	18–55	18–55	18–55
Approved for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-sightedness Short-sightedness Astigmatism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-sightedness Short-sightedness Astigmatism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-sightedness Astigmatism
Prescription range	+2 to -8 (stable for 12 months)	+4 to -10 (stable for 12 months)	-3 to -10 (stable for 12 months)
Invasiveness	Relatively non-invasive surface treatment	Requires creation of a corneal flap	Requires lasered corneal lenticule to be removed
Discomfort during healing	Mild/moderate in early healing	Very little	Very little
Initial visual recovery (return to normal activities)	Slower than LASIK and SMILE (at least 1 week of downtime)	Very quick (usually overnight)	Slower than LASIK (within a few days)
Complete visual stabilisation	Up to 12 months	3–6 months	3–6 months
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lowest-risk option No corneal flap Suitable for thinner or irregular corneas 'No touch' PRK also available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fastest initial visual recovery Quick return to normal activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No corneal flap More suitable than LASIK for higher refractive errors and drier eyes Fastest return to contact sports (around day 5)
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slowest recovery of all procedures At least 1 week before return to driving/ work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not suitable for thin or steep corneas or chronic dry eyes At least 1 month wait to resume contact sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not approved to treat long-sightedness Slightly longer initial visual recovery than LASIK

An initial assessment is required to determine which is the most appropriate procedure for you. This involves comprehensive testing and measurement of your eyes, as well as an in-depth discussion with a vision correction surgeon about your visual goals and lifestyle considerations, realistic visual outcome, potential risks, recovery period and costs.

*SMILE® is currently available in NSW only. SMILE® is a registered trademark of Carl Zeiss Meditec. All medical and surgical procedures have potential benefits and risks. Check with your ophthalmologist before proceeding.

References 1. Lawless M. Refractive Laser Surgery: Who's Interested Now? *mivision* 2019;141:33–37. 2. <https://visioneyeinstitute.com.au/services/laser-eye-surgery/> (accessed online Apr 2019).

Book a laser consultation or order an info pack at: visioneyeinstitute.com.au/services/laser-eye-surgery/

