

## Is My Dog Going Blind?

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As our canine companions age, there is concern about them developing deafness and blindness.

Changes such as blindness and deafness in dogs may go un-noticed in their early development because the canine species is heavily reliant on their noses and sensory hairs to feed information about their environment into their brain.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to assess a dog's hearing ability. They can't exactly nod when they hear a tone in their right ear. Often, owners notice that their dog continues sleeping when they walk into a room, or their pet develops selective hearing. Isn't it funny that they can't hear you calling for them to come inside, but they appear right away when it's dinner-time.

Blindness is much easier to assess during routine physical exams. The bluish-gray appearance of a pet's eyes is not always cause for concern but should be checked by your veterinarian if it is noticed. Many older pets develop hardening of the lens called nuclear or lenticular sclerosis. Vision is not diminished with nuclear sclerosis as it is with a cataract. By looking into the eye using a pen light, the veterinarian can differentiate between a cataract and nuclear sclerosis.

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