## What is visual perception?

Being able to read this text seems like a simple process. We look at the letters, and are able to make sense of the words. It seems simple, but it's actually an extremely complex process that uses a number of brain structures specialized in visual perception and the different sub-components of vision.

**Perception is being able to interpret the information that your different senses receive from your surroundings.** This ability to interpret information depends on your particular cognitive processes and prior knowledge. Visual perception could be defined as the ability to interpret the information that our eyes receive. The result of this information being interpreted and received by the brain is what we call visual perception, vision, or sight. Visual perception is a process that starts in our eyes:

* **Photo-reception**: The light rays reach our pupils and activate the receptor cells in the retina.
* **Transmission and basic processing**: The signals made by these cells are transmitted through the optic nerve toward the brain. It first goes through the optic chiasma (where the optic nerves cross, making the information received from the right field of vision go to the left hemisphere, and information received from the left field of vision go to the right hemisphere), and is then relayed to the lateral geniculate nucleus of the thalamus.
* **Finally, the visual information that our eyes receive is sent to the visual cortex in the occipital lobe.**

When you take a look at your desk, your brain identifies everything on it with just a glance, allowing you to quickly respond to it. Knowing this helps you understand how important it is to have good visual perception and how it plays a big role in your daily life.

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