NEWS LESSON

Smart Glasses: A Useful Tool or a Privacy Problem?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would you notice if someone nearby was wearing a camera?
2. Would smart glasses make a conversation more comfortable or less?
3. Where would you most want people to put recording devices away?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**microphones**	☐	A	the person who has something on their body
2	**ordinary**	☐	B	not able to hear, or not able to hear well
3	**blind**	☐	C	normal, not special or different
4	**deaf**	☐	D	not able to see
5	**wearer**	☐	E	the power to do what you want
6	**ban**	☐	F	a serious talk where people give different opinions
7	**debate**	☐	G	equipment that picks up sound so it can be heard or recorded
8	**freedom**	☐	H	an official rule that says you must not do something

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

Smart glasses can help people with disabilities, but some people worry about secret recording. Australia is debating new rules.

1 Imagine putting on glasses that can read a menu aloud, tell you what is in front of you or turn someone's speech into words on a small screen. These glasses already exist. Smart glasses contain technology such as cameras, microphones and artificial intelligence. They look like ordinary glasses, but some can record videos or give information without the wearer taking out a phone.

2 For people with disabilities, the technology can be extremely useful. Chris Edwards, an Australian man who is blind, uses smart glasses to read recipes, check household equipment and find his way around with his guide dog. Matt Henderson, who has been deaf since birth, uses glasses that show written words during meetings. Both say the devices help them live more independently.

3 But other people are worried. Some smart glasses can record video without everyone nearby noticing. Someone might be filmed at school, at work or in a changing room without knowing about it. Cheap devices may also have security problems, leaving recordings or personal information open to hackers. That means private moments could end up in the wrong hands, and once a video is online, it is very hard to take it back. These concerns have led to calls for stronger rules in Australia.

4 In 2026, the Australian Greens proposed a temporary ban on importing certain camera-equipped smart glasses. The proposal included exceptions for devices used to help people with disabilities. The national government said it was not planning its own import ban, although it was looking at changes to privacy law. The proposal was part of a political debate, not a ban that had already come into force.

5 People on both sides have important concerns. Everyone should be able to know when they are being recorded, but a person who needs smart glasses to read or communicate should not lose access to them. Better security, clearer recording lights and rules against secret filming could help. The difficult question is how to stop harmful uses of technology without taking away the freedom it gives other people.

Sources: Australian Greens. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Smart glasses are more expensive in Australia than elsewhere. T F NG
2. Chris Edwards uses smart glasses to read recipes and find his way around. T F NG
3. The Greens' proposal included exceptions for disability devices. T F NG
4. Australia has already banned imports of camera-equipped smart glasses. T F NG
5. Matt Henderson uses glasses that show written words during meetings. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

exceptions	footage	hackers	independently	permanent	security	temporary

1. My grandmother is old, but she still lives _____ in her own flat.
2. Criminal _____ sometimes break into online accounts and steal private photos.
3. The road will be closed for a _____ period of two weeks while workers repair it.
4. The rule applies to everyone, but there are a few _____ for young children.
5. Good online _____ means using a strong password and updating your phone.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. She _____ her glasses on the train yesterday. (LEAVE)
2. Someone might _____ at school or at work without knowing about it. (FILM)
3. Matt Henderson _____ deaf since birth. (BE)
4. In 2026, the Australian Greens _____ a temporary ban on certain glasses. (PROPOSE)
5. Chris Edwards, who is blind, _____ smart glasses to read recipes. (USE)

7 Language focus: linking words

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Linking words join ideas. Use because for a reason, so for a result, however for a difference and also to add an idea.

also	although	because	however	if	so	unless

1. Many users bought smart glasses _____ they wanted information without holding a phone.
2. A cheap device may have weak security, _____ hackers could see the recordings.
3. Smart glasses are useful. _____ , some people feel unsafe near them.
4. The glasses can read signs aloud. They can _____ translate speech.
5. People will feel safer _____ the glasses show a clear light when they record.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Should a visible recording light be enough to make filming strangers acceptable?
2. What rule would let useful smart glasses coexist with privacy?
3. Would your answer change if the glasses helped someone see or hear?

9 Role-play: glasses in the cafe

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the cafe manager

A customer is wearing smart glasses with a camera. Two other customers have complained. Politely ask what the glasses do. Decide if the customer can keep them on, and say why.

Student B · the customer

You wear smart glasses to read the menu and signs because your eyesight is poor. You aren't recording anyone. Explain this calmly and suggest a way to make people feel comfortable.

Useful phrases

Excuse me, could I ask about your glasses?

I'm not recording anyone, I promise.

Some customers aren't comfortable with cameras.

I'd be happy to show you how they work.

Could we find a compromise?

That's fair, I'll make sure the light is visible.

Afterwards, tell the class: did the manager and the customer agree, and was the solution fair to everyone?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 G · 2 C · 3 D · 4 B · 5 A · 6 H · 7 F · 8 E

4 True, false or not given

1 NG · 2 T · 3 T · 4 F · 5 T

5 Vocabulary

1 independently · 2 hackers · 3 temporary · 4 exceptions · 5 security

6 Verb forms

1 left · 2 be filmed · 3 has been · 4 proposed · 5 uses

7 Language focus

1 because · 2 so · 3 However · 4 also · 5 if

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