

Managing VR Discomfort

What Is Cybersickness?

Cybersickness refers to discomfort some people experience when using VR headsets. Symptoms may include:

- Nausea or queasiness
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Headache or eye strain
- Sweating or feeling warm
- General discomfort

This happens because your eyes perceive movement while your body remains still, creating a sensory mismatch. It's completely normal, and most people's symptoms decrease significantly with practice. The following strategies can help reduce or prevent these symptoms.

Before Your VR Session

- **Get adequate sleep** the night before (7-8 hours)
- **Eat a light meal** 1-2 hours before your session—avoid heavy or greasy foods
- **Stay hydrated** by drinking water throughout the day
- **Avoid alcohol** for 24 hours before VR use
- **Wear corrective lenses** if you need them (glasses or contacts)
- **Reschedule** if you're feeling ill, have a migraine, or are extremely tired

During Your VR Session

Headset Adjustment

- **Ensure proper fit:** The headset should feel snug but not tight. You should not see light leaking around the edges or feel excessive pressure.
VIDEO: [How to Fit Headset](#)
- **Lens Adjustment:** If it feels like your eyes are moving inward or outward to view objects, adjust the lenses themselves to match your pupillary distance

Movement Strategies

- **Teleport:** Aim with your controller and push the thumb stick forward to jump to new locations rather than using smooth walking. This significantly reduces discomfort
- **Snap Turn:** Move thumb sticks left or right to rotate in quick increments instead of turning your head
- **Turn your whole body:** When looking around, physically rotate your body rather than just moving your eyes or just turning your head
- **Move slowly and deliberately:** Avoid rapid head movements, especially during your first few sessions
- **Focus on the center of your view:** Look at objects in the middle of the screen rather than using peripheral vision

Environmental Adjustments

- **STAY SEATED:** Sit down during your first sessions for better stability
- **STAY COOL:** Remove jackets, wear short sleeves, minimize layers
- **STAY SHORT:** Start with 10-15 minute sessions and gradually increase duration as you build tolerance

When to Stop

Remove the headset immediately if you experience:

- Nausea or feeling like you might vomit
- Significant dizziness or loss of balance
- Excessive sweating or feeling very warm
- Severe eye strain or headache
- Any other significant discomfort

Stopping your session when you feel unwell is the right decision.

After Your VR Session

- **Sit quietly for 2-3 minutes:** Allow your system to readjust before standing up
- **Focus on a stationary object:** Look at something still (like a wall poster) for about a minute to help recalibrate your visual system
- **Drink water:** Hydration aids recovery
- **Get fresh air:** Step outside or near a window if possible

Building Tolerance Over Time

Research shows that most people's cybersickness symptoms decrease significantly with repeated exposure.

- First sessions are shorter and simpler (10-15 minutes)
- Sessions are spaced 1-2 days apart to allow adaptation
- Complexity increases gradually as you gain experience
- Even 2-3 practice sessions can produce noticeable improvement

If Symptoms Persist

While most students experience reduced symptoms with practice, some individuals may continue to have difficulty with VR simulations.

If you have tried multiple sessions using these strategies and still experience significant cybersickness that prevents you from completing VR simulations, please reach out to me directly.

We can discuss:

- Additional strategies tailored to your specific symptoms
- Modified VR parameters (shorter sessions, different settings)
- Alternative simulation options that meet the same learning objectives

Your ability to successfully complete this program does not depend on VR tolerance. Alternative accommodations are available to ensure you can meet all learning outcomes.
