

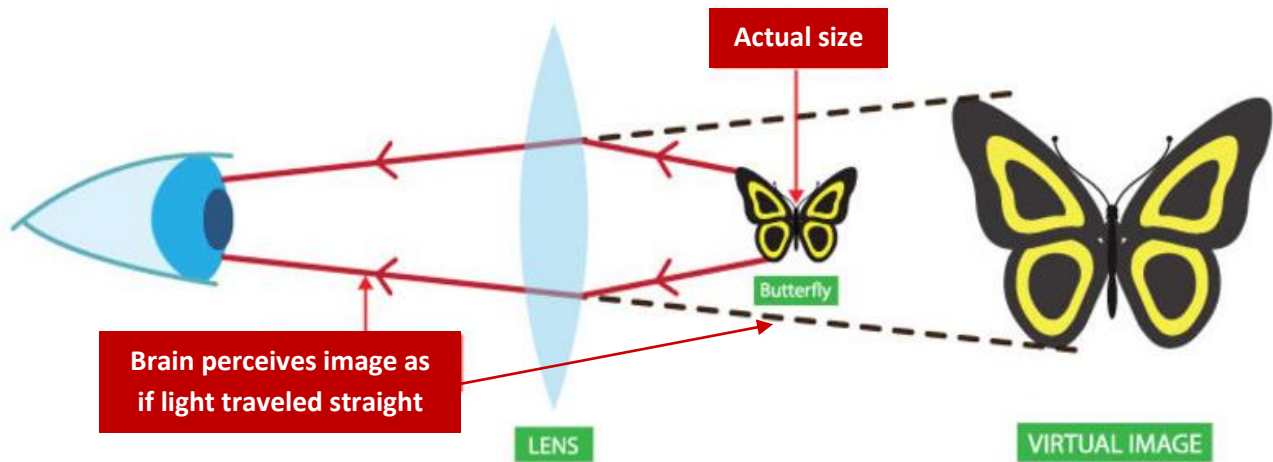
# Look a Little Closer

## Try It Out

Grab the magnifying glass and take a look at something really small. Find an ant. Look at the middle of a flower. Observe the pattern on a leaf. How do you think the magnifying glass make everything look bigger?

## What's going on?

A magnifying glass is a **convex** lens, which means that it is curved outward, much thicker in the middle than around its edges. Light travels more slowly through glass or plastic than it does through air. And when it travels from one into the other at an angle, it bends, or **refracts**. This allows your eye to perceive things as larger when you position them on the opposite side of the glass.



Seeing a butterfly through a magnifying glass. (Image: Synopsys)

## What's the big deal?

Convex lenses help our eyes see, and they are used in many different observational tools, such as microscopes and telescopes. We wouldn't know much about very small (or very far) things without them!

## Wonder While You Walk...

What is it about light that makes it bend when it crosses a boundary like that?  
How does it know which way to bend?



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