

# WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN OPTOMETRIST, OPHTHALMOLOGIST, AND OPTICIAN?



## OPTOMETRIST

An optometrist is a primary health care professional that specializes in eye care and visual health. Optometrists evaluate vision and eye health. They detect, diagnose, and manage vision, eye injuries, diseases, and visual disorders. They prescribe eyeglasses and contact lenses, deliver low vision care, conduct vision therapy, and may provide pre- and post-operative care.



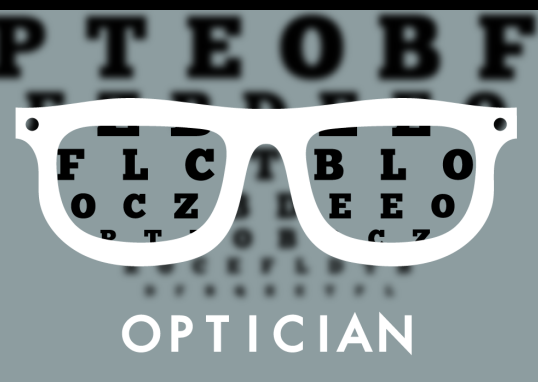
*Optometrists earn a Doctor of Optometry (OD) degree from a four year college of optometry program.*

## OPHTHALMOLOGIST

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who specializes in eye and vision care. Ophthalmologists are licensed to provide surgical and medical care of the eye. They can perform eye exams, identify and treat eye disease, prescribe medications, and conduct ocular surgery.



*Ophthalmologists earn a medical degree (MD) after 4 years at a medical school and 4 years of residency training.*



## OPTICIAN

An optician is a professional who fits, grinds, and sells lenses and dispenses glasses to help correct eyesight.



*Opticians follow state licensing and certification requirements and often complete a 1-2 year degree certification program.*



New England  
College of Optometry

**CENTER FOR EYE CARE**

[www.necoeyecare.org](http://www.necoeyecare.org)