

Opticians

SOC: 29-2081 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$46,560 Median Salary	79,900 Employment	+3.0% Growth Rate
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■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: High school diploma

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.
This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■ Work-Life Balance

9.5/10 - Excellent work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

■ Top Skills Required

Business skills, Communication skills, Customer-service skills, Decision-making skills, Detail oriented, Dexterity

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Opticians help patients **select, fit, and adjust eyeglasses, contact lenses, and other vision-correcting devices**. They interpret prescriptions from optometrists or ophthalmologists, ensure proper lens alignment, and educate clients on eyewear care. Their work is critical in vision care, optical retail, and healthcare support.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy healthcare, technical precision, and working directly with clients.

What Do Opticians Do?

These professionals assist patients with vision correction by preparing and fitting lenses and frames to meet prescriptions and comfort needs.

Common responsibilities include:

- Reading and interpreting prescriptions from eye care professionals
- Measuring patients for eyeglasses, lenses, and frames
- Adjusting and repairing eyeglasses for proper fit
- Educating patients on lens care, usage, and safety
- Assisting with frame selection based on style, comfort, and prescription needs
- Maintaining accurate records of prescriptions, orders, and fittings
- Collaborating with optometrists, ophthalmologists, and lab technicians

Key Areas of Opticianry

Opticians may focus on specific products, techniques, or client needs:

- **Eyeglass Fitting and Adjustment:** Ensuring lenses and frames fit comfortably and accurately
- **Contact Lens Fitting:** Assisting clients in selecting and wearing contact lenses safely
- **Lens Selection and Preparation:** Working with optical labs to produce correct lenses
- **Customer Consultation:** Advising on eyewear styles, lens types, and eye health care
- **Repair and Maintenance:** Fixing or adjusting eyeglasses for optimal vision and comfort

Skills and Abilities Needed

Opticians combine technical, customer service, and problem-solving skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal training and certification:

- **High School Diploma (minimum):** Basic math, science, and communication skills
- **Postsecondary Training or Associate Degree:** Programs in opticianry or optical technology
- **Apprenticeship or On-the-Job Training:** Hands-on experience in fitting, adjustment, and optical procedures
- **Licensure or Certification:** Required in most states to practice as a dispensing or licensed optician
- **Continuing Education:** Staying current on optical technology, lens materials, and eye care practices

Where Do Opticians Work?

They are employed in organizations providing vision care and eyewear services:

- Optical Retail Stores
- Optometrist and Ophthalmologist Offices
- Hospitals and Clinics
- Eyewear Manufacturing and Labs

- Specialty Vision Care Facilities

Work environments include optical shops, clinics, laboratories, and healthcare facilities.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires precision, attention to detail, and strong customer service skills. Opticians must ensure accurate lens fitting, proper frame alignment, and patient satisfaction.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy working with people and providing healthcare support
- Are detail-oriented and technically skilled
- Have manual dexterity and precision
- Can communicate effectively with clients and eye care professionals
- Want a career contributing to vision health and quality of life

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in math, biology, and optics
- Volunteer or intern in optical stores, clinics, or labs
- Develop skills in measurement, adjustment, and customer service
- Explore accredited opticianry training or associate programs
- Gain hands-on experience with lenses, frames, and optical instruments

Opticians provide essential vision care by fitting, adjusting, and maintaining eyewear, ensuring patients achieve optimal sight and comfort.