

Optometrists

SOC: 29-1041 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$134,830

Median Salary

47,800

Employment

+8.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Doctoral

■ 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

9.2/10 - 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

Decision-making skills, Communication skills, Compassion, Detail oriented

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Optometrists examine, diagnose, and treat **vision problems and eye diseases**. They prescribe corrective lenses, detect eye conditions, and provide guidance on eye health. Their work is critical in healthcare, vision correction, and preventive care.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy healthcare, patient interaction, and problem-solving in vision care.

What Do Optometrists Do?

These professionals evaluate patients' visual acuity, eye health, and overall ocular function to recommend treatments and corrective measures.

Common responsibilities include:

- Conducting eye exams and vision tests
- Diagnosing eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataracts, or retinal disorders
- Prescribing eyeglasses, contact lenses, or vision therapy
- Advising patients on eye health, preventive care, and lifestyle adjustments
- Monitoring patient progress and adjusting treatments as needed
- Maintaining patient records and documentation
- Collaborating with ophthalmologists, opticians, and other healthcare providers

Key Areas of Optometry

Optometrists may focus on specific patient populations or types of care:

- Vision Correction: Prescribing glasses or contact lenses for refractive errors
- Ocular Disease Management: Detecting and managing eye diseases
- Pediatric Optometry: Providing vision care for children
- Geriatric Eye Care: Addressing age-related vision changes
- Preventive and Educational Services: Advising on eye health, ergonomics, and lifestyle adjustments

Skills and Abilities Needed

Optometrists combine medical knowledge, technical expertise, and patient care skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires advanced education and clinical training:

- Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) Degree: Accredited professional program
- Clinical Internship or Residency: Hands-on training in diverse vision care settings
- Licensure: Required to practice as an optometrist in all states
- Continuing Education: Maintaining licensure and staying current on vision care techniques
- Specialty Certification (optional): Areas such as pediatric, geriatric, or ocular disease management

Where Do Optometrists Work?

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

- Private Practice Offices
- Hospitals and Eye Clinics
- Retail Vision Centers
- Schools or Occupational Health Programs

- Research or Academic Institutions

Work environments include examination rooms, clinics, hospitals, and educational or research facilities.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires advanced medical knowledge, precision, and strong interpersonal skills. Optometrists must accurately diagnose vision problems, prescribe corrective measures, and educate patients on eye health.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy healthcare and vision care
- Are detail-oriented and analytical
- Have strong communication and patient interaction skills
- Are committed to improving patients' quality of life
- Want a career focused on diagnosing and treating eye conditions

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics
- Volunteer or intern in optometry clinics or healthcare settings
- Develop observation, problem-solving, and communication skills
- Research accredited Doctor of Optometry programs
- Gain experience in vision care, patient interaction, and clinical observation

Optometrists provide essential eye care by diagnosing vision problems, prescribing corrective measures, and promoting overall ocular health.

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Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/optometrists.htm>