

Optometry/Ophthalmology Educational Training Comparison Chart

Degree/Qualifications	Optometrist (OD)	Ophthalmologist (MD)
	Optometry School	Medical School
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Years in length • Hours of coursework based on SUNY Optometry School are 623 hours of basic sciences. • Additional optometry lab and instruction based on SUNY Optometry School on ocular disease and management are 256 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 years in length • Average hours of coursework based on average across medical schools are 1,436 hours of basic sciences.
	Optometry Post Graduate Training	Ophthalmology Residency
Mandatory Post – Graduate Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no mandatory post graduate training. Less than 20% go on to an optional 1 year training program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional 4 years in training • Must complete 1 year of general medical or surgical internship. • Must complete 3 years of an ophthalmology residency training program. • 40% of ophthalmologists participate on a 1 or 2 year fellowship program. • Additional ophthalmology instruction and lab on ocular disease and management of a minimum 626 hours during residency.
Clinical Experience During Mandatory Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours of clinical experience based on SUNY Optometry School are 2,376 hours. • Optometrists have no minimum requirements for number of patient visits with ocular diseases or ocular surgical operative experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimate of an average 60 hours per week, with at least 17,280 hours for clinical experience. • Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education requirements: 3,000 outpatient visits; minimum operative numbers as primary surgeon and as assistant; experience in the entire spectrum of ophthalmic disease and ocular surgery.
Profession Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State licensure • Several national boards with highly variable standards. None qualify for membership in the American Board of Medical Specialties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State licensure • National board certification by the American Board of Ophthalmology, a member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties. • Recertification every 10 years for Ophthalmologists certified in 1992 or later.