



# BLIND BABIES FOUNDATION (BBF)

Serving children with visual impairments and their families since 1949

Pediatric Visual Diagnosis Fact Sheet™

---

## EYE SPECIALISTS



### **OPHTHALMOLOGIST (M.D.)**

Performs surgery. Diagnoses and treats eye diseases. Tests for visual acuity and visual field. Prescribes glasses, low vision aids (magnifiers) and medication.

#### **Training:**

- 4 years college
- 4 years medical school
- 1 year internship
- 3 years residency

12 years total  
(1 additional year for pediatric specialty)

### **OPTOMETRIST (O.D.)**

Prescribes glasses, low vision aids (magnifiers) and teaches patients how to use them. Some may do low vision exams and provide vision training activities. Some states allow diagnosis and prescription.

#### **Training:**

- 4 years college
- 3-4 years optometry school

7-8 years total

### **OPTICIAN**

Grinds and fits lenses prescribed by ophthalmologist or optometrist.

**Training:**

- 1 year of optical courses
- 2 years apprenticeship under certified optician

3 years total

**OCULARIST**

Designs and fits artificial eyes (prostheses) and scleral shells.

**Training:**

- Requires board certification.
- Candidate takes exam through the National Examining Board of Ocularists. Exam is taken every 6 years for recertification.

\*Material Adapted from Insite Manual, Ski Hi Institute

Article is used courtesy of Blind Babies Foundation.

**Main BBF Office:**

Blind Babies Foundation  
5016 Mission St.  
San Francisco, CA 94112  
Website: <http://blindbabies.org>