

655 Beach Street
San Francisco, CA
94109-1336

www.geteyesmart.org
E-MAIL | eyesmart@aao.org
PHONE | 415.447.0213



Who should I see to get my annual eye examination, an ophthalmologist or an optometrist?

An ophthalmologist is an Eye M.D., either a medical doctor or a doctor of osteopathic medicine (D.O.). Eye M.D.s have finished at least four years of college, at least four years of medical school, and at least four years of additional postgraduate training after medical school. An optometrist has had college education and then an O.D. (doctor of optometry) degree granted after four years of study in an optometry college, but an optometrist has not attended a medical school nor has he or she received postgraduate medical training. (Be careful not to confuse the D.O. and O.D. degrees.) If you have no visual complaints and are in good general health, either an optometrist or an ophthalmologist could be a good choice. If you have medical problems, or if you are at risk for, suspect or have been told that you have an eye disease, examination by an [ophthalmologist](#) may be a better choice.

This article reprinted with permission from the American Academy of Ophthalmology's EyeSmart™ campaign (www.geteyesmart.org).