



# What's the Difference? Between a Registered Dietitian and a Nutritionist

Task	Registered Dietitian	Nutritionist
Board-certified food and nutrition expert.	Yes	Maybe. Some states do not regulate the term nutritionist and therefore, anyone could call themselves a nutritionist - It is recommended to check your states regulations of the title.
Educated in the science of food, nutrition, and the impact on human health.	Yes	In some states, an individual must obtain certain qualifications before calling oneself a nutritionist.
From training, able to provide evidence-based Medical Nutrition Therapy and nutrition counseling to meet individual needs.	Yes	No
Qualified to practice in hospitals, outpatient clinics, research institutions, communities, and more.	Yes	No
Must meet criteria from governing bodies (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and the Commission on Dietetic Registration).	Yes. To earn the credentials Registered Dietitian (RD)/ Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN), the individual must obtain qualifications.	Maybe. Some states do not regulate the stand-alone term nutritionist and therefore, anyone could call themselves a nutritionist - It is recommended to check your states regulations of the title.
Holds an undergraduate science degree, having completed courses in biology, microbiology, organic and inorganic chemistry (in 2024, a masters degree will be required) in which the individual will complete courses in biology, microbiology, organic and inorganic chemistry.	Yes	Not necessarily.
Can manage nutrition across a span of health conditions.	Yes	No

The titles Registered Dietitian (RD) and Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) mean the same thing.

### Resources:

[Check your states regulations of the title](#)

[Every Registered Dietitian Is a Nutritionist, but Not Every Nutritionist is a Registered Dietitian](#)

[Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#)

[Commission on Dietetic Registration](#)