

Probiotic vs Prebiotic Comparison Checklist

Use this one-page checklist when you want the simplest category distinction before a product label starts blending probiotics, prebiotics, or synbiotics together.

Start Here

- Does the label name a live strain or talk about live cultures?
- Does the label name a substrate such as inulin, FOS, GOS, or chicory-root fiber?
- Is the product trying to do both at once?
- Has a fermentable add-in made you bloated before?

Fast Sort

If the main clue is...	You are probably looking at...
live strains, CFU count, culture language	a probiotic-first question
inulin, FOS, GOS, chicory-root fiber, resistant starch	a prebiotic-first question
both live strains and substrates together	a synbiotic-style question
worsening bloating from 'gut-friendly' products	a symptom or tolerance problem first

Final Reminder

Probiotics are about live microbes. Prebiotics are about substrates. If a label is doing more than that, the next step is usually a broader or more specific page rather than more guesswork.