

SCHOOLS 2 SKILLS

PAINTER & DECORATOR—CAREER OVERVIEW

Painting and decorating is a finishing trade, so from contemporary finishes to old world charm, a **painter and decorator** is responsible for the colour and tone of a room, house or larger project. Painters and decorators use a wide range of paints, varnishes, wallpaper and other finishes to protect, maintain and decorate interior and exterior surfaces of domestic, commercial and industrial buildings and other structures.

What might a painter and decorator's working day look like?

Each day can be different depending on the job, and you may be involved in:

- + Stripping and cleaning the surface to be painted
- + Filling any holes and cracks before priming
- + Mixing paint to the exact colour shade required before brushing or rolling onto the surface
- + Cleaning brushes, rollers and other equipment

As a painter and decorator you must be able to:

- + Estimate the quantity of materials required by measuring surfaces or reviewing a work order
- + Remove old coatings with solvents, heat, sanding, wire brushing, or water and sand blasting
- + Prepare surfaces by cleaning, filling nail holes and cracks and sanding rough spots before applying undercoats
- + Match specified colours by using pre-mixed paints or mixing colour pigment, oil and thinning and drying additives
- + Use brushes, rollers or spray guns to apply liquid coatings such as paint, stain or varnish to surfaces of wood, metal, brick, concrete, plaster, stucco or stone
- + Sandblast and apply industrial coatings
- + Apply finishes that are sponged, ragged and layered
- + Apply paper or natural and synthetic fabric wall coverings or fireproof and fire retardant coatings

To be a successful painter and decorator you should:

- + Have an appreciation of shape and colour
- + Be interested in trends in décor and design
- + Have a careful, methodical and patient approach to work
- + Have good practical ability and manual dexterity
- + Have an awareness of safety issues, especially for working at heights
- + Have the ability to work as part of a team

Where does a painter and decorator work?

Depending on the job, a painter and decorator can be working inside on interiors of homes and commercial buildings, or outside on the external painting of homes, buildings or even industrial structures such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

What can the future hold?

If you're ambitious and willing to work hard, there are no limits to where a career as a painter and decorator can take you. You can work as a sub-contractor or even start your own company. Many business owners, supervisors and senior managers in the construction industry started their careers as tradespeople.

Fantastic! How do I get started?

To become a tradesperson and get a trade certificate you'll need to complete an **apprenticeship**. For further information about gaining an apprenticeship, search Apprenticentre or call 13 19 54 or contact MPA Skills on (08) 9471 6600 or mpaskills.com.au

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