

Painter and Decorator

Painters and decorators apply paint, wallcoverings and other finishes to interior and exterior surfaces of buildings and other structures.

In general, painters and decorators:

- Estimate the quantity of materials required by measuring surfaces or reviewing a work order
- Remove the old coating by stripping it with solvents, heat, sanding, wire brushing, or water and sand blasting
- Prepare the surface for covering by cleaning it, filling nail holes and cracks, and sanding rough spots
- Apply an undercoat primer or sealer before painting, or apply “sizing” before wallpapering
- Match specified colours by using premixed paints, or mixing colour and 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
- Be aware of continual product changes

Working Conditions

Painters and decorators try to arrange their work so they will be outdoors in late spring, summer and early fall, and indoors in the late fall and winter. They must stand for long periods of time, often doing work with their arms raised over their heads. There is some risk of injury from falling off ladders, scaffolds or swing stages, and from working with hazardous chemicals such as paint thinners and removers.

Skills and Abilities

People who enjoy working in this occupation tend to prefer work that involves variety, creativity, and recognition for their special skills.



To be successful in their trade, painters and decorators need:

- Good colour sense
- Manual dexterity
- The ability to lift up to 25 kilograms
- The ability to work at heights
- The strength required to move heavy ladders or set up scaffolding
- A desire to do a precise and thorough job

Employment and Advancement

Painters and decorators are employed by contractors involved in new construction, repair, alteration or remodelling work, or by organizations that own or manage large buildings such as apartment complexes or schools. Many painters and decorators are self-employed. Although there is indoor painting to do in the winter, the work is seasonal to some extent. Employment prospects are also affected by economic conditions, particularly conditions in the construction industry.

Journeyman wage rates vary, but generally range from **\$16 to \$30 an hour plus benefits**.

Experienced painters and decorators may advance to supervisory positions with painting and decorating contractors, or set up their own small businesses.

Working in Alberta

To work as a Painter and Decorator in Alberta, a person must:

- Be a registered apprentice, an Alberta-certified journeyman, hold a valid recognized credential , OR
- Work for an employer who is satisfied that the worker has the skills and knowledge expected of a certified journeyman, OR
- Be self-employed

Painters and decorators learn their skills by registering with Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training to participate in apprenticeship training. Upon successful completion, they are awarded the Alberta Journeyman Certificate.

A painter and decorator who holds a valid trade certificate from Alberta or from another Canadian province or territory may apply to write the Interprovincial Exam and, if successful, be granted a Red Seal under the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program. The Red Seal is recognized throughout most of Canada.



A painter and decorator who holds a valid recognized credential that does not have a Red Seal may apply for:

- an Alberta trade certificate under the Qualification Certificate Program
- an Alberta Equivalency document under the Equivalency Program.

Painters and decorators who:

- Hold a credential that is not recognized or is no longer valid in an Alberta-designated trade, OR
- Can demonstrate their experience, skills and knowledge in an Alberta-designated trade, and meet the standards and requirements established by the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board may be eligible to apply for trade certification under the Qualification Certificate Program

Individuals possessing a valid Alberta Journeyman Certificate, an Alberta Qualification Certificate, an Alberta Occupational Certificate, or a valid recognized credential are eligible to receive a Blue Seal business credential after completing the necessary requirements.

Apprenticeship Training

The term of apprenticeship for a painter and decorator is 3 years (three 12-month periods) including a minimum of 1300 hours of on-the-job training and 8 weeks of technical training each year.

- An applicant who previously completed courses of study or work experience related to the Painter and Decorator trade or holds a related journeyman certificate and has the employer's recommendation, may qualify for credit that could reduce the term of apprenticeship. (see Accreditation Information for a list of accredited courses)
- A person who has previous training or work experience in the trade and wants to determine their level of skill and knowledge for entry or advanced standing in an apprenticeship program may apply for a Prior Learning Assessment.
- A high school student can become an apprentice and gain credits toward apprenticeship training and a high school diploma at the same time under the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP).



To learn the skills required of a Painter and Decorator in Alberta and be issued an Alberta Journeyman Certificate, a person must:

- Satisfy the entrance requirements or pass the entrance exam (see Entrance Level Competencies, Exam Counselling Sheet, Entrance Exam Study Guide, and Entrance Exam Support Materials List)
- Find a suitable employer who is willing to hire and train an apprentice

Most employers prefer to hire high school graduates and may select apprentices from among their current employees.

- With their employer, complete the Apprenticeship Application and Contract and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above
- Complete the required on-the-job training
 - during on-the-job training, apprentice painter and decorators earn at least 55 percent of the journeyperson wage rate in their place of employment in the first year, 75 percent in the second, and 85 percent in the third year.
- Complete the required technical training each year
- Enroll in technical training
 - select an educational institution that offers training for Painter and Decorator apprentices, and a time to attend training
 - determine requirements for enrolling at the selected institution, and forward completed enrollment form to the selected institution
- Review books and materials required for training
- Successfully complete all required exams

Review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating

- Apprentices may attempt the Interprovincial Exam in the final period of their apprenticeship training and, if successful, be granted a Red Seal.

Review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating

- When apprentices attend technical training, they are required to pay the applicable tuition fee and purchase course supplies.
- Grants, scholarships and other financial assistance may be available. For more information see Financial Assistance or contact an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office.



Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program

To qualify for a Red Seal, a person must:

- Hold a valid trade certificate in a trade that participates in the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program:
- An Alberta trade certificate or completion of apprenticeship certificate, OR
- A journeyperson or completion of apprenticeship certificate issued by another Canadian province or territory
- For applications based on Alberta certificates
 - complete the Interprovincial (Red Seal) Examination Application - Alberta Certified (no application fee is required)
 - submit the application to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- For applications based on non-Alberta certificates
 - complete the Qualification Certificate – Recognized Credential Application
 - submit the application to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
 - pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application form
 - Prepare for the exam review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
 - review available resource materials
- Successfully complete the required exam

Equivalency Program

To qualify for an Equivalency document *based on a recognized credential*, a person must:

- Have a valid recognized credential that does not have an Interprovincial Standards Red Seal
- Complete the Equivalency Application and deliver it in person to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office. Government issued photo identification is required.
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above

A person who holds a valid recognized credential, as described above, does not require an Alberta Equivalency document to work in the trade in Alberta. However, some employers may require Alberta documentation as proof that the holder is allowed to work in the trade or that the holder's credential is recognized.



Qualification Certificate Program

To qualify for a Qualification Certificate *based on a recognized credential*, a person must:

- Hold a valid recognized credential that does not have an Interprovincial Standards Red Seal
- Complete the Qualification Certificate – Recognized Credential Application and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office.
- Pay the non-refundable application fee as identified on the application noted above
- Prepare for the exam(s)
 - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
 - review available resource materials
- Successfully complete the required exam(s)

To qualify for an Alberta Qualification Certificate *based on work experience*, a person must:

- Have at least 5,850 hours and 54 months of 'hands-on' work experience as a painter and decorator

Time spent on supervisory or foreman duties, counter work, heading the tool crib, or on a training course is NOT counted as 'hands-on' work experience.

- Complete the Qualification Certificate - Work Experience Application (and review the Application Guide) and submit it to an Apprenticeship and Industry Training Office
- Pay the non-refundable fees as identified on the application noted above

This application fee covers the review of the application, the assessment and confirmation of the applicant's work experience hours/months, the administration of the applicant's demonstration of competency, and one attempt at the Qualification Certificate theory examination. The Qualification Certificate practical examination requires a separate fee as identified on the application noted above.

- Prepare for the exam(s)
 - review the Apprenticeship and Industry Training Policy on Cheating
 - review available resource materials
- Successfully complete the required exam(s)

