

Painter (Construction) Apprenticeship

Did you know?*

- Employment prospects for painters should be excellent due to the large numbers of workers who leave the occupation for other jobs; paperhangers will face very limited opportunities.
- Most workers learn informally on the job as helpers, but some experts recommend completion of an apprenticeship program.
- About 42 percent of painters and paperhangers are self-employed.
- The Painter and Decorator apprenticeship is a 4-year program

*Statistics retrieved from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

What Does a Painter Do?

Painters apply paint, stain, and coatings to walls, buildings, bridges, and other structures.

Tasks:

- Cover surfaces with dropcloths or masking tape and paper to protect surfaces during painting.
- Fill cracks, holes, or joints with caulk, putty, plaster, or other fillers, using caulking guns or putty knives.
- Apply primers or sealers to prepare new surfaces, such as bare wood or metal, for finish coats.
- Apply paint, stain, varnish, enamel, or other finishes to equipment, buildings, bridges, or other structures, using brushes, spray guns, or rollers.
- Calculate amounts of required materials and estimate costs, based on surface measurements or work orders.
- Read work orders or receive instructions from supervisors or homeowners to determine work requirements.
- Erect scaffolding or swing gates, or set up ladders, to work above ground level.
- Remove fixtures such as pictures, door knobs, lamps, or electric switch covers prior to painting.
- Wash and treat surfaces with oil, turpentine, mildew remover, or other preparations, and sand rough spots to ensure that finishes will adhere properly.
- Mix and match colors of paint, stain, or varnish with oil or thinning and drying additives to obtain desired colors and consistencies.

What Are the Working Conditions?

Painters held about 390,500 jobs in 2010, of which 29 percent were employed in the painting and wall covering contractors industry. About 53 percent were self-employed.

Because painters apply finishes to a wide variety of structures—from bridges to the interiors and exteriors of buildings—they may work both indoors and out. Painting requires a lot of climbing, bending, kneeling, and stretching. Industrial painters typically work outdoors in dry, warm weather. Those who paint bridges or building infrastructure may be exposed to extreme heights and uncomfortable positions; some painters work suspended with ropes or cables.

How is the Training Structured?

- 4 year training program
- 8,000 hours on-the-job training
- 144 hours of related instruction per year
- Individual program requirements may vary by sponsor

What are the Application Requirements?

- Applicants must be at least 18 years of age
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Physically able to perform trade
- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation

What Skills Should I Possess?

- **Building and Construction**- Knowledge of materials, methods, and the tools involved in the construction or repair of houses, buildings, and commercial construction.
- **Mathematics**- Knowledge of arithmetic, basic algebra, and their applications.
- **Communication**- Oral and written with an emphasis on understanding verbal instructions in English, written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- **Vision**- Be able to distinguish color.
- **Dependability**- Job requires being reliable, responsible, dependable, and on time.
- **Extent Flexibility**- The ability to bend, stretch, twist, or reach with your body, arms, and/or legs.
- **Arm-Hand Steadiness**- The ability to keep your hand and arm steady while moving your arm or while holding your arm and hand in one position.
- **Inductive Reasoning**- The ability to combine pieces of information from a work schedule to complete a job timely within quality standards.
- **Initiative**- Job requires a willingness to take on responsibilities and challenges.
- **Trunk Strength**- The ability to use your abdominal and lower back muscles to support part of the body repeatedly or continuously over time without 'giving out' or fatiguing.
- **Wrist-Finger Speed**- The ability to make fast, simple, repeated movements of the fingers, hands, and wrists.

Additional Resources

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics maintains information on all occupations. For more information on the Construction Electrician trade in the United States, visit:

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/construction-and-extraction/painters-construction-and-maintenance.htm#tab-1>

Who to Contact in Mississippi

For more information on becoming a Painter contact MCEF at 601-605-2989.