

Painting and Coating Workers

SOC: 51-9120 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

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| \$47,390 Median Salary | 174,300 Employment | +1.0% Growth Rate |
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■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: See Requirements (BLS)

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Medium Risk - 38.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.
This job has some routine elements but still requires human judgment and interaction.

■ Work-Life Balance

4.9/10 - Fair work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

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|--------------|--------|---------------|--------|
| Realistic | 8.4/10 | Investigative | 5.0/10 |
| Artistic | 3.8/10 | Social | 4.6/10 |
| Enterprising | 4.0/10 | Conventional | 8.0/10 |

■ Top Skills Required

Artistic ability, Color vision, Mechanical skills, Physical stamina, Physical strength

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Painting and Coating Workers apply paint, coatings, and finishes **to buildings, machinery, vehicles, and other surfaces**. They prepare surfaces, select appropriate materials, and ensure smooth, durable, and aesthetically pleasing results. Their work is critical in construction, manufacturing, and maintenance industries.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy hands-on work, attention to detail, and working with tools and materials.

What Do Painting and Coating Workers Do?

These workers prepare surfaces and apply coatings using brushes, rollers, sprayers, or specialized equipment.

Common responsibilities include:

- Preparing surfaces by cleaning, sanding, or priming
- Selecting appropriate paints, coatings, or protective finishes
- Applying paint or coatings evenly and accurately
- Mixing and matching colors according to specifications
- Operating spray guns, brushes, rollers, or powder-coating equipment
- Inspecting finished work for quality and durability
- Maintaining tools, equipment, and work areas
- Following safety procedures and protective measures

Key Areas of Painting and Coating Work

Workers may specialize in certain materials, surfaces, or methods:

- Residential and Commercial Painting: Applying coatings to homes, offices, and buildings
- Industrial and Manufacturing Coatings: Protecting machinery, metal, and fabricated products
- Surface Preparation and Finishing: Sanding, priming, and smoothing surfaces
- Specialty Coatings: Applying fireproofing, waterproofing, or protective layers
- Color Matching and Mixing: Ensuring consistent and precise finishes

Skills and Abilities Needed

Painting and coating workers combine technical skills with precision and physical ability.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires vocational training or on-the-job experience:

- High School Diploma or GED (minimum): Basic math, science, and technical knowledge
- Apprenticeship or Vocational Training: Hands-on experience in painting, coatings, or finishing techniques
- On-the-Job Training: Learning equipment operation, materials, and safety procedures
- Continuous Learning: Staying updated on coating materials, methods, and safety standards

Where Do Painting and Coating Workers Work?

They are employed in industries that produce, maintain, or renovate structures and products:

- Construction and Building Maintenance
- Manufacturing and Industrial Facilities
- Automotive, Aerospace, and Machinery Companies
- Residential and Commercial Renovation Services

- Specialty Coating and Finishing Companies

Work environments may include construction sites, factories, workshops, or outdoor locations.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires physical stamina, attention to detail, and knowledge of coatings. Workers must manage long hours, precise application, and sometimes hazardous materials while maintaining quality and safety standards.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy hands-on work and working with your hands
- Are detail-oriented and precise
- Can manage physical tasks in various environments
- Have an interest in construction, manufacturing, or finishing work
- Want a career that creates visible, high-quality results

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in industrial arts, painting, or construction
- Gain experience through internships, vocational programs, or apprenticeships
- Practice surface preparation, coating application, and color mixing
- Learn safety procedures and protective equipment usage
- Stay informed on new paints, coatings, and application technologies

Painting and coating workers provide essential finishes and protection for buildings, products, and machinery, ensuring durability, aesthetics, and safety.

*Generated by StartRight • Data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics & O*NET*

Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/production/painting-and-coating-workers.htm>