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Painter and decorator

Painters and decorators use a range of materials to keep walls and other surfaces smooth, protected and hygienic both inside buildings and outside.

This page has information on the role of painters and decorators in the NHS, including entry requirements and skills needed.

Working life

It is important that NHS buildings are well-decorated and in good repair. Hospitals, clinics and headquarters buildings are expected to be safe and pleasant places for patients, staff and visitors.



As a painter/painter and decorator, you could be

- removing old or damaged paintwork or wallpaper
- repairing surfaces to be painted such as walls, window frames, fences etc
- plastering small areas
- estimating how much paint or wallpaper is needed

- preparing surfaces
- wallpapering and painting

You may work on existing buildings or on newly-constructed buildings. You could be redecorating small areas or working on large projects.



Who will I work with?

For small repairs, you may work alone. On larger projects you'll work in a team, alongside other estates team staff such as tilers [1], plumbers [2], bricklayers [3] and carpenters [4]. You may have to travel between sites in an NHS vehicle or your own van.

When painters are working in a building, there may be staff and patients there, but painters do not have direct contact with patients.

Painters may work for painting and decorating companies or building contractors who provide services to the NHS.

Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements. Employers usually expect a qualification in painting and decorating, such as an NVQ, certificate or diploma. They may also expect some experience of construction work. Employers may ask for qualifications and/or experience in other related areas such as plastering or tiling.

Although painters often join the NHS fully qualified and experienced, it may be possible to train in painting and decorating. Employers usually ask for GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and maths.

You could be redecorating small areas or working on large projects.

Employers may ask for a driving licence.

Skills needed

Painters need to be

- interested in design and colour
- methodical
- able to work quickly and accurately

- physically fit for lifting, standing, bending, etc
- willing to work at heights, indoors and outside
- health and safety aware
- able to work alone or in a team
- practical skills
- good manual (hand) skills
- organisational skills

Training and development

When you start as a trainee painter and decorator, your training will include

- health and safety
- how to use the tools and equipment
- all aspects of painting and decorating

You will be expected to study for qualifications such as NVQs and may be offered an apprenticeship. You may also be encouraged to become multi-skilled by training in, for example, painting and decorating or plumbing.

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Pay and conditions

Estates staff working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) [5] pay system. As an estates support worker, you would typically start on AfC [6] band 2. As a qualified painter you will typically start on AfC [6] band 3. With further training and experience, you could apply for more senior positions at bands 4 and above.

Painters in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. The job may involve early starts and weekend working.

Terms and conditions will usually be different for painters working outside of the NHS.

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Where the role can lead

With experience, you could become a team leader, supervising the work of others. With further experience, you could become a manager, responsible for the maintenance and repairs service for a hospital, area or trust.

There may be opportunities to move into other estates services roles [7].

Some painters become self-employed by setting up a business, either on their own or with one or more colleagues.

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Job market and vacancies

Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [8]. Some advertise on their own websites. You can find a list of NHS organisations on NHS Choices [9].

If you're applying for a role either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work.

Find out more about NHS values. [10]

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Further information

- Construction Industry Training Board [11]
- Painting and Decorating Association [12]

Other roles that may interest you

- Estates technician [13]
- Plumber [14]
- Gardeners and grounds staff [15]
- Tiler [16]

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Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/tiler>
[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/plumber>
[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/bricklayer>
[4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services/carpenterjoiner>
[5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
[6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC> [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-services> [8] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>
[9] <http://www.nhs.uk/aboutnhs/howthenhsworks/authoritiesandtrusts/Pages/Authoritiesandtrusts.aspx>
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[12] <http://www.paintingdecoratingassociation.co.uk> [13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/estates-technician>
[14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/plumber> [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/gardeners-and-grounds-staff>
[16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/estates-services/tiler>