



Painters apply coatings and paint to interior and exterior building surfaces. Their work often involves changing job sites, exposure to chemicals, and physical and ergonomic demands.

Much of a painter's work is performed at heights. Inspect ladders daily, set them up correctly, and use them safely. Make sure scaffolding is installed properly by a qualified person. Never use makeshift ladders or scaffolds that could fail, causing a fall. Know when fall protection is required and how to use it correctly.

Read the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) to understand the chemicals in the paints and surface preparation materials you use. Even water-based or "green" products may still contain hazardous ingredients. Good ventilation helps protect you from paint fumes. Spray booths, fans, open doors, and windows can help bring fresh air into the workspace.

Choose and wear the proper personal protective equipment. Goggles or safety glasses protect your eyes from splashes during mixing and application. Gloves and coveralls help protect your skin from chemical exposure. A respirator may be needed to protect against dust, spray paint droplets, and fumes from paints and solvents.

Surface preparation, such as sanding and cleaning, can expose you to dust and other hazards. Be trained to recognize building hazards such as asbestos, mold, and lead. Make sure qualified workers remove or clean up these materials before they are disturbed and become airborne. Practice good hygiene by washing up during and after work. Keep work clothes and shoes separate from your family's belongings to help prevent cross-contamination at home.

Painting is physically demanding, so maintain your health and fitness. Use the right tools for the task. Select tool handles that are long enough to prevent overreaching. Handles should be soft, non-slip, and comfortable to hold. Try different tools until you find the best fit.

Painting often involves repetitive motion and awkward positions. Rotate tasks throughout the day and take rest breaks to reduce fatigue. Use proper lifting techniques to protect your back. Wear comfortable work boots with non-slip soles that support your feet during long periods of standing.

Whether indoors or outdoors, painting job sites can expose workers to hot and cold weather year-round. Dress in light layers that protect you from both sun and cold. Maintain good housekeeping to prevent slips, trips, and falls. When working alone, secure the job site by locking doors and letting others know your location and expected work duration.