



Painting

Scouts BSA · Trades

Name

Started

Completed

Painting is about more than color. It's about preparing surfaces, choosing the right materials, and doing a clean, lasting job. You'll learn skills you can use around the house and maybe even on a service project.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/painting/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

- ☐ **1** Explain the safety steps to follow when getting surfaces ready and when putting on paint or other coatings

Tip: Learn the safety steps for sanding, scraping, and using solvents, like wearing eye protection and keeping air moving.

2 Coatings and paints

Tips for this section: Visit a paint store and ask staff to show you the different types and what each one is for.

Example for this section: Bring two labels to your counselor and compare them: a water-based latex for an interior wall (easy cleanup, low odor) and an oil-based enamel or exterior stain for trim or a deck (tougher, but needs solvent cleanup and more ventilation).

- ☐ **2a** Explain three ways a coating can make a surface better

- ☐ **2b** Explain how oil-based, acrylic-based, and water-based paints differ

- ☐ **2c** Explain where you would use varnish, wood stain, flat paint, and enamel paint, and why sheen matters

- ☐ **2d** Tell why each of those finishes is the best choice for its use

- ☐ **3** With projects your counselor approves in advance, prepare and paint two different surfaces using patching or caulk and the right primers and topcoats (ideas: a wall, door, furniture, concrete, porch rail, or fence)

Tip: Help with a real job at home, like a fence board or a piece of furniture, with a parent's okay.

Example: One wood surface: fill nail holes in an old shelf with wood filler, sand, wipe the dust, prime, then two thin coats. One metal surface: scrape rust off a garden chair with a wire brush, wipe it down, use a metal primer, then topcoat. Take before and after photos.

- ☐ **4** Pick harmonizing colors with the Painting pamphlet's color wheel, then prepare and paint an item in those colors

Tip: Look at a color wheel and pick colors that look good together before painting a small item like a birdhouse.

Example: Paint a birdhouse with an analogous scheme like blue, blue-green, and green, or a complementary pair like blue walls with orange trim. Explain why you chose those colors from the color wheel.

- ☐ **5** Show how to properly use, clean, maintain, and store painting equipment

Tip: Clean your brushes right after painting and store them so they'll be ready next time.

Example: For latex, wash brushes and rollers in warm soapy water until the water runs clear, spin or shake out the water, and hang brushes so the bristles keep their shape. Seal cans tightly and store them above freezing.

- ☐ **6** Explain why ladder safety, personal hygiene, and personal protective equipment matter when painting

Tip: Practice setting up a ladder safely with an adult, and learn what gear to wear when painting.

- ☐ **7** Explain some environmental and health concerns with stripping paint, applying paint, and getting rid of old paint

Tip: Find out how to dispose of leftover paint safely in your area.

Example: Explain why old homes may have lead paint, why VOCs from some paints matter indoors, and how your area takes leftover paint, such as a household hazardous waste day or a paint recycling drop-off.

8 Careers or hobbies: Choose 1 of 2

Tips for this section: Talk with a professional painter about their work, or explore painting as a hobby.

- ☐ **8a** Research one career related to painting: training and education, costs, job outlook, pay, duties, and advancement. With a parent's or guardian's permission, you may search online or at a library, interview a professional, or visit a workplace. Discuss what you found and what makes it interesting with your counselor

- ☐ **8b** Research how painting skills could become a hobby or part of a healthy lifestyle, including training, costs, and groups that support it. Discuss with your counselor the short- and long-term goals you might set