

# Painting and decorating

## Business start-up guide

### Painting and decorating industry overview

Businesses in the painting and decorating industry paint, decorate or wallpaper houses or other structures. The painting and decorating industry provides clean, attractive and protective finishes to buildings and structures through the application of paints, sealants, industrial coatings and wall coverings.

Contractors are generally small-scale businesses that operate in a narrow geographic market or provide specialist painting and coating services.

Growth in Australia's infrastructure markets has supported demand for painting services. A key area of industry activity is in the maintenance and repair market, with a lot of repair work funded by property insurance funds.

Starting or buying a painting and decorating business involves many essential steps. Legally, you must ensure that you apply for and receive the correct licences.

This guide explains how to start a painting and decorating business in Queensland. It will help you understand the challenges and opportunities of entering the painting and decorating industry so you can make good business decisions.

### Getting into the painting and decorating industry

Before you start a painting and decorating business in Queensland, you need to understand how the industry works, what things you need to consider in your planning, and the legal requirements you must meet.

### Finding a competitive edge in Queensland's painting and decorating industry

Though competition is mainly price driven in Queensland's painting and decorating industry, quality, range of services and advertising reach are also important factors that can give you a competitive edge.

Pricing your services competitively is particularly important in the housing market, as homeowners often consider doing the work themselves. Offering a competitive price and specialised services, techniques and products can give your business a competitive edge.

Reputation is also important in this industry and providing quality work and excellent customer service can help you find repeat business and referrals through word-of-mouth advertising.

Marketing your business, particularly online, can also give you a competitive edge, as it can help you generate work and stay ahead of your competition.

### Key success factors for a painting and decorating business

To start a successful painting and decorating business, you need to:

- tender for work
- be able to change the market you operate in if necessary (e.g. commercial, new builds, renovations)
- have a good reputation
- find a loyal customer base
- quickly adopt new technology.

## Painting and decorating industry entry barriers

While there is some external competition in the industry, which comes from facilities management firms that offer a wide range of maintenance services, entry barriers in the painting and decorating industry are low. This is because it is possible to enter as a small business with little experience, no qualifications and a small capital outlay.

Formal qualifications are not strictly necessary but industry contractors are usually qualified.

The relative ease of entry and exit in this industry means it's competitive throughout the phases of the construction cycle.

(Source IBISWorld, March 2012)

## Painting and decorating industry requirements

When starting a painting and decorating business you may need to satisfy the following requirements.

### Companies operating as trade contractors where project value exceeds \$3300 (including GST)

To operate as a company and work as a trade contractor on a project where work value exceeds \$3300 (including GST), you may need a Contractor Licence - Trade Contractors (Company) from the [Queensland Building Services Authority](#). A company doing building work must employ a nominated supervisor who is licensed in the same class of work as the company. This licence cannot be transferred.

### Trade contractors working on projects where value exceeds \$3300 (including GST)

If you are a trade contractor and work on a project where work value exceeds \$3300 (including GST), you may need a Contractor Licence - Trade Contractors from the [Queensland Building Services Authority](#). Applicants must meet technical and managerial qualifications as well as experience and financial requirements. This licence cannot be transferred.

## Registering building or construction industry employees for long service leave

To employ eligible workers in the building and construction industry, you may need to complete an Employee Registration Application from [QLearn](#).

## Recognising tradesperson status

If you want to be recognised as a tradesperson without a formal apprenticeship, or you want your overseas apprenticeship recognised, you may need a Certificate of Recognition from the [Department of Education, Training and Employment](#), which costs \$400 and is recognised across Australia. This is not required for occupations covered by the *Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act 1944*.

## Storing flammable and combustible liquids

To store flammable and combustible liquids, you may need a Licence to Store Flammable and Combustible Liquids from [Work Health and Safety Queensland](#). This licence may be required to store flammable or combustible liquids when over certain minimum prescribed levels on your premises.

## Advertising as an unlicensed contractor

Unlicensed contractors are required to state the value (under \$3300) of work they are entitled to carry out without a licence in their advertisements for building work. The maximum penalty for an unlicensed contractor who fails to make such a statement in an advertisement is \$10,000. If an advertisement by an unlicensed person does not refer to any sort of building work, no statements are needed. For more information, contact the [Queensland Building Services Authority](#).

## Legislation that may apply to your business

- *Building and Construction Industry Payments Act 2004*
- *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000*
- *Fair Trading Act 1989*
- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991*
- Queensland Building Services Authority Regulations 1992
- *Subcontractors' Charges Act 1974*
- *Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000*



- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

To access copies of legislation, visit [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au).

## Useful industry contacts

### **Business Support Unit**

For more information on licences, regulations, market research, business planning and other support services phone 13 25 23 or visit [business.qld.gov.au](http://business.qld.gov.au)

### **Australian Paint Manufacturers' Federation**

Visit [www.apmf.asn.au](http://www.apmf.asn.au)

### **Design Institute of Australia**

Phone 1300 888 056

Visit [www.dia.org.au](http://www.dia.org.au)

### **Master Painters Australia**

Phone 1300 660 056

Visit [www.mpa.org.au](http://www.mpa.org.au)

### **The Master Painters' Association**

Phone (03) 9813 5922

Visit [www.mpav.com.au](http://www.mpav.com.au)

