

Sign Writer



Alternate title Sign Industry Worker

Description Signwriters design, manufacture and paint signs for displays, buildings, hoardings, boats, vehicles and structures. Sign manufacture consists of the design, manufacture and installation of all facets of internal and external advertising

Signwriters work both indoors and outdoors, and spend some time on ladders or scaffolding. They may be required to work in confined spaces and they may need to use toxic substances. With the move towards computerised manufacture of signs, computing skills are becoming more important.

Typical duties

- talk to clients to find out their requirements, and provide miniature colour sketches if required;
- select suitable materials for signs such as timber, plastic, metal or glass;
- prepare surfaces (by filling any holes, sanding and cleaning), and then mix the oil paint, enamel, plastic paint, poster colour or varnish;
- sketch letters or draw with a template (pattern), paint the background if required, and then paint the sign;
- create two-dimensional or three-dimensional lettering and graphics, using computer-operated machinery;
- design wall murals, screen prints, gold-leaf work and custom-vehicle art.

Personal requirements

- interest and ability in drawing and design;
- willing to work at heights;
- good eyesight and colour vision;
- good at spelling.

Qualification ➤ Certificate III in Signage

Entry pathway Entry to this occupation may be by way of an apprenticeship. Although no minimum educational standard is required for entry into apprenticeships, most people entering this trade have undertaken Year 11 or higher. Apprentices must be employed before enrolling at a TAFE college for trade classes.



Pre-apprenticeship courses are also available in some States. Entry into these courses has no specific educational requirements but you will need to possess an artistic ability and may be required to sit an aptitude test and/or interview.

Job prospects

Signwriters are employed in small signwriting and sign production firms, large organisations which produce a wide range of signs, and Federal and State Government departments. Many are self-employed. Signwriters work mainly in the city and suburbs, though opportunities exist in large country centres. It is possible to gain promotion to supervisory positions, and TAFE instructor positions.

Factors affecting the demand for signwriters include the level of activity in the retail, real estate and manufacturing industries, the number of new business and projects requiring signage, and the advertising and signage budgets of companies and government departments.

Related Jobs

- Body Artist
- Engraver
- Graphic Designer
- Industrial Spray Painter
- Painter and Decorator
- Screen Printer/Stencil Preparer

Further information

- Australian Sign & Graphics Association [www.signs.org.au/]
- Group Training Australia [www.gtaltd.com.au/]

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