

Summary of Required Skills for the Apprentice/Trainee of the Year Competitions

Junior Level

Competitors at Junior level are usually beginning their painting and decorating training. Skills expected reflect introductory competence, safe working habits, and the ability to complete basic decorative tasks to a good standard.

Skills required:

- The ability to maintain a tidy and hazard-free workspace
 - Produce basic hand-painted decorative effects (e.g. borders, stencilling)
 - Cutt-in to lines
 - Achieve even roller/brush application
 - Follow instructions
 - Transfer measurements from drawing
 - Mark guidelines with spirit levels, chalk lines, and pencils
 - Complete tasks in a logical sequence
 - Time management at a beginner level
 - Produce clean work with attention to edges and finish
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Senior Level

Senior competitors are expected to have more advanced practical competence, problem-solving ability, accuracy, and finish quality. Skills reflect higher-level training and readiness for workplace standards.

Skills required:

- Produce sharp, clean edges by cutting in
 - Achieve a uniform finish with minimal defects
 - The correct application of water-based products
 - Apply complex hand-painted decorative effects (e.g. borders, stencilling)
 - Basic colour mixing and understanding finishes
 - Setting out decorative panels and geometric designs accurately
 - Reading more detailed specifications
 - Planning work sequences effectively
 - Clean, accurate, competition-level finish
 - Efficient work practices
 - Ability to work independently to tight time constraints
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Senior Plus Level

The Senior Plus Level is aimed at Level 3 Apprentices or full-time Diploma students who are typically nearing the completion of their advanced training.

Building on the core competencies of the Senior level, competitors at this stage are expected to demonstrate refined craft expertise, rigorous accuracy, autonomy, and the ability to execute sophisticated decorative specifications to an elite, industry-standard finish.

Skills required:

- Produce razor-sharp, flawless edges and clean junctions when cutting in
 - Achieve excellent, high opacity, uniform finishes across the design features with minimal defects
 - Advanced application techniques for both modern water-based and specialist finishes
 - Execute complex decorative effects, intricate multi-layer stencilling, and detailed border work
 - Accurate colour matching, custom tinting, and precise control of finish and sheen levels
 - Interpret and set out complex geometric designs or panel work from detailed drawings with minimal guidance
 - Advanced workflow and material application planning along with an understanding of critical path management
 - Consistently deliver high-calibre, competition-standard finishes under rigorous scrutiny
 - Highly efficient, professional work practices with meticulous workspace and hazard control
 - Complete complex, multi-phase designs independently within demanding time constraints
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