



LIVE YOUR PASSION

**What does it
take to become a
Panelbeater?**



Panelbeaters, or collision repair technicians repair or replace body parts of cars, trucks or other vehicles that have been damaged. They repair damage to metal, fibreglass and plastic vehicle bodywork and prepare estimates for repairs. They remove damaged panels from the vehicle, which may involve unbolting or cutting. In some cases dents are hammered out, while in others, panels need to be replaced. If the vehicle is badly damaged it may need to be pulled back into shape using an auto robot. The panelbeater needs to fill any gaps, then file, ground and sand them to a smooth finish. Any other parts that have been removed, such as locks or handles, are replaced.

Skills and Knowledge

A panelbeater needs to be able to read and understand measurements and specifications; have a good understanding of metals, vehicle body parts and mechanics; and be able to work with hand tools and machines. They need to be enthusiastic about cars and enjoy practical and manual work. It is important that they have full use of hands and fingers, good vision and be physically able. They also need to stay abreast of the latest methods and technology in the industry, and be proficient with a wide range of tools such as oxy-acetylene cutting equipment, hammers to remove dents and electric welding equipment.

Training

Training programmes typically cover both theoretical and practical components. Many apprentice trainees enter into formal training contracts with an employer, where they spend most of their time working and learning practical skills on the job, while also undertaking structured training. However, this occupation tends to be one where the learning doesn't really ever end, and experienced panelbeaters continue to learn new methods and aspects of the trade, as the need arises.

Working Conditions

A panelbeater would normally work in a workshop for a crash repairer, service station, or car dealer. Being a panelbeater is physically demanding. Strength, stamina, and an ability to work in a variety of environments are all assets you'll need before you decide to pick up a planishing hammer. The work environment tends to be noisy and dusty. Things

can get dirty, as you might spend a lot of time sanding off body parts. Since they often share workshop space with spraypainters, the work environment can also be fummy. They usually work regular business hours.

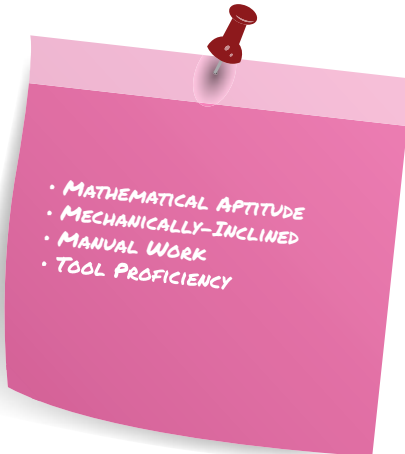
Job Prospects

Most panel beaters begin their careers as trainees before progressing to become senior panel technicians after approximately five years. After this point, an individual may progress to become a body shop manager or advisor, which is a role concerned with supervising. Though better paid, this role is usually less hands-on in terms of bodywork repair. Another related option is coach-building where you can manufacture and assemble the frames and parts for cars and commercial vehicles such as buses, vans, trucks, caravans and motor homes.

You too can live your passion and become a Panelbeater. If you are good at problem solving, patient, accurate and have an eye for detail, you are a good candidate.

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- REPLACE + REPAIR BODYWORK BACK TO FACTORY STATE
 - CHASSIS STRAIGHTENING
 - FITTING OF PARTS

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- TRAINING COURSE
 - APPRENTICESHIP
 - LIFELONG LEARNING

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- MATHEMATICAL APTITUDE
 - MECHANICALLY-INCLINED
 - MANUAL WORK
 - TOOL PROFICIENCY

With God on my side, I can do it and one day open the doors to my own workshop. With him, anything is possible.

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- PHYSICALLY DEMANDING
 - VARIETY OF ENVIRONMENTS
 - DUSTY + NOISY WORK
 - REGULAR HOURS

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- MORE VEHICLES
 - GOOD PROSPECTS
 - SELF-EMPLOYMENT
 - SEVERAL RELATED TRADES