

VANCOUVER PAINT CONTRACTORS

Exterior Painting

Exterior house painting for Metro Vancouver homes including siding, stucco, trim, fascia, and weather protection in Vancouver's marine climate

30 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

vancouverpaintcontractors.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

1. When is the best time of year to paint the exterior of my house in Vancouver?
2. How much does it cost to paint the exterior of a typical Vancouver home?
3. My cedar siding is peeling really badly after just a few years. What went wrong and how do I fix it?
4. Is it worth paying extra for premium exterior paint in Vancouver's rainy climate?
5. We need our stucco exterior repainted. Is there anything different about painting stucco compared to wood siding?
6. How do Vancouver painters handle rain delays during an exterior paint job?
7. What's the cost to just paint the trim, fascia, and soffits on my house without redoing the whole exterior?
8. How long should a good exterior paint job last on a house in the Vancouver area?
9. Should I paint my exterior myself or hire a professional painter in Vancouver?
10. Our exterior paint keeps growing mould and mildew on the north side. How do we deal with this in Vancouver?
11. We have an older cedar-sided home in North Vancouver and the wood is starting to look grey and weathered. Should we stain or paint it, and what's involved in prepping cedar that's been neglected for years?
12. Our house has Hardie board siding and the previous owners never repainted it. How is painting fibre cement different from painting regular wood siding?
13. There's some soft wood around our window frames and along the bottom of the siding. Do painters handle rot repair, or do we need a carpenter first before getting the house painted?
14. I keep hearing about elastomeric coatings for stucco homes. Is that worth the extra cost here in Vancouver, and how is it different from regular exterior paint?
15. We live in a three-storey home in East Vancouver and need the whole exterior painted. What should I know about scaffolding requirements and how much extra does the height add to the cost?
16. Our 1920s Craftsman home in Kitsilano might have lead paint under the current layers. What are the rules around lead paint removal in BC, and does that change how the painting job is done?
17. How do Vancouver painters deal with the rain? If I book an exterior painting job, what happens if it rains for two weeks straight in the middle of the project?

18. We want to paint our heritage home in Strathcona and we've heard there are restrictions on colour choices. Is that true, and how does heritage designation affect an exterior paint job?
19. The bottom two feet of our exterior siding keeps peeling no matter how many times we repaint. We're in a ground-level townhouse in Burnaby. What's going on and how do we fix it for good?
20. What's a reasonable price to repaint the exterior of a standard two-storey detached house in Surrey? I want to know what's fair so I don't get ripped off?
21. Our stucco has hairline cracks all over the exterior - should we just paint over them or do they need to be fixed first?
22. We bought a condo that was remediated after the leaky condo issues - when is it safe to paint the new exterior cladding?
23. How much does it cost to paint a garage door in Vancouver and is it worth doing or should I just replace it?
24. Can you actually paint vinyl siding? Our house in Burnaby has faded vinyl and we don't want to pay for full re-siding?
25. What's the best approach for painting the concrete foundation walls that are visible on our split-level home in North Vancouver?
26. We have an older aluminum siding home in East Vancouver - can it be painted and how long will it last?
27. How do rainscreen systems on newer Vancouver homes affect exterior painting and maintenance?
28. Our heritage home in New Westminster has multiple layers of old exterior paint that's cracking and peeling everywhere - what's involved in stripping it all off?
29. What exterior paint holds up best in Vancouver's rain? We're repainting our wood siding home in Coquitlam and want it to last?
30. Is it worth painting stucco on a 1990s building that went through leaky condo remediation or will the problems just come back?

Q1

When is the best time of year to paint the exterior of my house in Vancouver?

The ideal window for exterior house painting in Metro Vancouver is from mid-May through September, with June through August being the sweet spot. You need consecutive dry days with temperatures above 10°C for most exterior paints to cure properly, and Vancouver's marine climate makes spring and fall unpredictable with rain. Most professional painters in the Lower Mainland book up fast for summer, so it's smart to schedule by March or April.

That said, experienced Vancouver painters know how to work around our weather. Some use moisture-tolerant acrylic latex products that can handle slightly damp conditions, and they'll monitor Environment Canada forecasts closely. Early morning dew is common even in summer here, so crews typically start mid-morning once surfaces have dried.

Avoid scheduling exterior work from November through February entirely. Vancouver averages over 160 rainy days per year, and winter temperatures hover near the minimum cure threshold for most paints. Even if you get a dry spell in January, the high humidity and short daylight hours work against proper adhesion.

One often-overlooked factor is the orientation of your home. South-facing and west-facing walls dry faster and can sometimes be painted in late April or early October, while north-facing sides stay damp longer and really need peak summer conditions.

Start getting quotes from local painters in February or March so you can lock in your preferred summer dates before the rush hits.

Q2

How much does it cost to paint the exterior of a typical Vancouver home?

For a standard two-storey home in Metro Vancouver (roughly 2,000 to 2,500 square feet of paintable surface), you can expect to pay between \$6,500 and \$12,000 for a full exterior repaint. A smaller bungalow or rancher might come in at \$4,000 to \$7,000, while larger homes in areas like West Vancouver or the British Properties can run \$15,000 to \$25,000 or more depending on complexity.

Several factors affect pricing in our market. Homes with cedar siding typically cost more because the wood needs thorough prep work, especially if previous coats are peeling from moisture damage, which is extremely common in Vancouver's wet climate. Stucco homes tend to be somewhat less labour-intensive but may need crack repair before painting. Trim, fascia, soffits, and window frames add cost, particularly on heritage homes with detailed

millwork.

The price usually includes power washing, scraping loose paint, sanding, priming bare spots, caulking gaps, and two coats of quality exterior paint. Premium paints from Benjamin Moore or Sherwin-Williams add roughly \$500 to \$1,500 to the material cost compared to builder-grade products, but they last significantly longer in our rain-heavy environment.

Labour represents about 70 to 80 percent of the total cost. WorkSafeBC compliance, proper scaffolding, and insurance all factor into what legitimate contractors charge. Be cautious of quotes that come in dramatically below market rate, as corners are usually being cut on prep work or safety.

Get three detailed written quotes that break out materials and labour so you can compare them fairly.

Q3

My cedar siding is peeling really badly after just a few years. What went wrong and how do I fix it?

Premature peeling on cedar siding is one of the most common exterior painting problems in Metro Vancouver, and it almost always comes down to moisture. Our marine climate pushes moisture into wood from both sides: rain hits the exterior while interior humidity migrates outward through the walls. If the previous painter didn't address moisture management, even the best paint will fail within two to four years.

The most likely culprits are insufficient prep work before the last paint job, lack of a quality primer on bare cedar, painting over damp wood, or poor ventilation behind the siding. Cedar contains natural tannins and oils that can bleed through paint and break the bond if the wood wasn't properly primed with a stain-blocking primer first.

To fix it properly, a painter needs to scrape and sand all loose and peeling areas back to solid wood. Any areas with rot or soft spots should be replaced or consolidated with wood hardener. The bare cedar then needs a high-quality alkyd or shellac-based stain-blocking primer before two coats of 100 percent acrylic latex exterior paint. The acrylic latex is important for Vancouver because it stays flexible and breathes, allowing trapped moisture to escape rather than blistering.

You should also check that your bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans vent to the outside, not into the attic or wall cavities, and that your attic and wall assemblies have adequate vapour barriers as required by the BC Building Code.

Have a painter inspect the siding and identify the root moisture source before committing to a repaint, otherwise you'll be in the same situation in a few years.

Q4

Is it worth paying extra for premium exterior paint in Vancouver's rainy climate?

Absolutely, and Vancouver is one of the cities in Canada where the paint quality argument is most compelling. With over 1,200 millimetres of annual rainfall and constant exposure to moisture, cheap exterior paint simply doesn't hold up. The difference in longevity between a budget paint and a premium product can be five or more years, which makes the upfront cost well worth it.

Premium exterior paints from reputable manufacturers contain higher concentrations of acrylic resins and titanium dioxide, which means better adhesion, superior colour retention, and stronger resistance to mildew and moisture penetration. In Metro Vancouver's climate, mildew growth on exterior walls is a constant battle, particularly on north-facing surfaces that rarely see direct sun. Top-tier paints include built-in mildewcides that significantly slow this growth.

A quality exterior acrylic latex paint in the \$70 to \$90 per gallon range will typically last 10 to 15 years on properly prepared surfaces in Vancouver, while a \$35 to \$45 builder-grade product might start showing wear in four to six years. When you factor in the labour cost of repainting, which is the bulk of any exterior paint job, spending an extra \$500 to \$1,500 on premium materials saves you thousands over time.

Look for paints specifically rated for high-moisture and coastal environments. Some manufacturers offer products with rain-resistance technology that allows them to withstand light rain sooner after application, which is a genuine advantage during Vancouver's unpredictable summer weather.

Ask your painter which specific product and sheen they recommend for your siding type and exposure, and request to see the technical data sheet.

Q5

We need our stucco exterior repainted. Is there anything different about painting stucco compared to wood siding?

Painting stucco is quite different from wood siding, and there are specific considerations for Metro Vancouver's climate that your painter should be aware of. Stucco is a porous, cementitious surface that absorbs and holds moisture differently than wood, and our heavy rainfall makes proper preparation even more critical.

Before any paint goes on, stucco must be thoroughly cleaned with a pressure washer to remove dirt, mildew, and chalking from the old paint. Any cracks need to be repaired with elastomeric caulk or stucco patching compound. In

Vancouver, hairline cracks in stucco are extremely common due to settling and our seismic activity. Even small cracks allow water infiltration, which leads to bigger problems behind the wall.

For the paint itself, elastomeric coatings are the gold standard for stucco in wet climates like ours. These thick, rubber-like paints bridge small cracks and create a waterproof membrane while still allowing moisture vapour to escape from within the wall assembly. They cost more than standard acrylic latex but provide dramatically better protection against Vancouver's rain. Standard acrylic latex works fine on stucco in good condition, but it won't bridge existing cracks the way elastomeric coatings do.

Stucco also requires more paint per square foot than smooth siding because of its textured surface. A typical stucco home uses 20 to 30 percent more paint than the same sized home with smooth siding, so factor that into your budget.

Leaky condo issues in the Lower Mainland were often stucco-related, so ensure your painter checks for any signs of water damage behind the stucco before simply painting over it. Request an inspection of the substrate condition as part of the quoting process.

Q6

How do Vancouver painters handle rain delays during an exterior paint job?

Rain delays are a reality of exterior painting in Metro Vancouver, and any experienced local painter has a system for managing them. How a contractor handles weather interruptions tells you a lot about their professionalism and knowledge of our climate.

Reputable painters monitor weather forecasts from Environment Canada daily and plan their work around dry windows. Most require a minimum of 24 to 48 hours of dry weather after painting for proper curing, though some newer paint formulations can tolerate light moisture sooner. If rain is forecast, an experienced crew will either hold off on applying paint or focus on prep tasks like scraping, sanding, and caulking that aren't weather-sensitive.

Your contract should clearly address how rain delays are handled. Good painters don't charge extra for weather days since they're expected in Vancouver. However, your project timeline should have built-in flexibility. A job quoted at five working days might take seven to ten calendar days when you account for weather. If a painter quotes you a rigid completion date for exterior work in Vancouver without any weather contingency, that's a red flag.

If rain does hit wet paint, the severity of the damage depends on timing. Paint that's had several hours to set might be fine after drying out, but paint hit within the first hour or two usually needs to be sanded and recoated. A good

painter will inspect after rain and redo any compromised areas at no extra charge.

Some painters use portable tarps and temporary sheltering systems to protect freshly painted surfaces during unexpected showers, which can save time on multi-week projects.

Ask prospective painters specifically how they handle rain delays and what their weather policy looks like in writing before signing a contract.

Q7

What's the cost to just paint the trim, fascia, and soffits on my house without redoing the whole exterior?

Painting just the trim, fascia, and soffits is a popular option for Metro Vancouver homeowners who want to refresh their home's appearance without the full cost of a complete exterior repaint. For a typical two-storey home, expect to pay between \$2,500 and \$5,500 depending on the amount of trim, its condition, and accessibility.

Simpler homes with straightforward trim work and easy ladder access fall on the lower end, while homes with extensive decorative trim, multiple gable peaks, or difficult access points requiring scaffolding or lift equipment can push toward the higher range. Heritage homes in neighbourhoods like Kitsilano, Strathcona, or New Westminster with intricate Victorian millwork will cost significantly more due to the detail work involved.

The prep work is where most of the labour goes. Trim and fascia in Vancouver's climate take a beating from constant moisture exposure, so expect your painter to spend considerable time scraping, sanding, filling nail holes, and priming bare spots. Rotted fascia boards should be replaced before painting, which adds to the cost. Many painters can handle minor wood replacement, or they'll recommend a carpenter for larger sections.

Soffits are often aluminum or vinyl on newer homes and may not need painting, but older wooden soffits should be checked carefully for moisture damage and peeling. Ventilated soffits are critical for attic airflow, so make sure paint doesn't clog the vent perforations.

A trim-only paint job takes two to three days for most homes and is an excellent way to make your home look freshly painted at roughly a third of the cost of a full exterior job.

Get a painter to assess your trim condition in person so they can identify any rot or prep challenges before quoting.

Q8

How long should a good exterior paint job last on a house in the Vancouver area?

A professionally done exterior paint job in Metro Vancouver should last between 8 and 12 years on average, though the actual lifespan depends heavily on surface material, paint quality, prep work, and your home's specific exposure to the elements. Vancouver's marine climate is harder on exterior paint than drier regions of Canada, so you should set realistic expectations.

Wood siding, particularly cedar, typically sees paint lasting 7 to 10 years in our climate. The constant moisture cycling of rain, dew, and humidity stresses paint films more than in drier areas. South and west-facing walls get more UV exposure and may show wear sooner, while north-facing walls stay damper and are more prone to mildew staining even if the paint itself is intact.

Stucco surfaces hold paint somewhat longer, often 10 to 15 years with quality products, because the surface itself is more dimensionally stable than wood. Fibre cement siding like HardiePlank holds paint the longest, often 12 to 15 years, because it doesn't expand and contract with moisture the way wood does.

The quality of the preparation is the single biggest factor in paint longevity. A paint job where surfaces were properly cleaned, scraped, sanded, primed, and received two full coats will outlast a single-coat job over dirty surfaces by years. This is especially true in Vancouver where any shortcut in moisture management will show up quickly.

Regular maintenance extends paint life considerably. Washing your exterior walls annually with a garden hose to remove dirt and mildew, and touching up any chips or cracks promptly, can add two to three years before a full repaint is needed.

Schedule a visual inspection of your exterior paint every spring to catch early signs of failure before they spread.

Q9

Should I paint my exterior myself or hire a professional painter in Vancouver?

While DIY exterior painting can save money, there are compelling reasons to hire a professional in Metro Vancouver specifically. Our climate creates challenges that make exterior painting more complex than it might seem, and mistakes are costly to fix.

The biggest risk with DIY exterior painting here is timing and moisture management. Professional painters understand exactly how long surfaces need to dry after rain, what humidity levels are acceptable for different products, and how to read Vancouver's rapidly changing weather patterns. Applying paint to a surface that feels dry but still holds moisture in our climate is one of the most common DIY mistakes, and it leads to peeling within a year or two.

Safety is another serious consideration. Any work above a single storey involves ladders and potentially scaffolding. WorkSafeBC has strict regulations around fall protection for professionals, and those rules exist because falls from height are genuinely dangerous. A professional crew has the proper equipment, training, and insurance coverage.

Cost comparison is worth doing honestly. A DIY exterior paint job on a two-storey home might cost \$1,500 to \$3,000 in materials and equipment rental. A professional job runs \$6,500 to \$12,000 but includes thorough prep work, proper primers, two coats of premium paint, and typically some form of warranty. If your DIY job fails in three years and you need to hire a professional anyway, you've spent more total and lived with a deteriorating exterior in between.

Where DIY makes sense is smaller, accessible projects like painting a garden shed, a single-storey accent wall, front door, or deck railing where the stakes are lower and the work is safely reachable.

If you're considering DIY for budget reasons, ask a few painters if they offer a labour-only option where you supply the paint to bring the cost down.

Q10**Our exterior paint keeps growing mould and mildew on the north side. How do we deal with this in Vancouver?**

Mould and mildew growth on north-facing exterior walls is extremely common throughout Metro Vancouver. The combination of limited direct sunlight, persistent moisture, and our mild winter temperatures creates ideal conditions for biological growth. It's not necessarily a sign of paint failure, but it does need to be addressed properly.

The first step is cleaning the existing growth. A solution of one part household bleach to three parts water, applied with a garden sprayer and scrubbed with a soft brush, will kill surface mildew effectively. Let it sit for 15 to 20 minutes before rinsing thoroughly. For larger areas, a professional soft wash using a low-pressure sprayer with a commercial mildewcide solution is safer for the paint than high-pressure washing, which can damage siding and drive water behind the clapboards.

Once clean, assess whether the paint itself is still in good condition. If it's just surface mildew on intact paint, a thorough cleaning followed by a coat of mildew-resistant paint may be all you need. If the paint is failing, you'll want a full prep and repaint using a premium exterior paint with high mildewcide content. Some manufacturers offer products specifically formulated for Pacific Northwest conditions.

Long-term prevention involves reducing moisture retention on the affected wall. Trim back any trees or shrubs that block airflow and sunlight from reaching the wall. Ensure gutters and downspouts are directing water away from the foundation and not splashing back onto the siding. Check that the ground slopes away from the wall so water drains rather than pooling.

In some cases, improving attic ventilation or adding exhaust fans that vent properly to the exterior can reduce the moisture migrating through the wall from inside the home.

Consider scheduling an annual spring cleaning of the north-facing walls as part of your regular home maintenance routine to prevent buildup from becoming a larger problem.

Q11**We have an older cedar-sided home in North Vancouver and the wood is starting to look grey and weathered. Should we stain or paint it, and what's involved in prepping cedar that's been neglected for years?**

For weathered cedar siding in North Vancouver, both stain and paint are viable options, but the choice depends on the condition of the wood and the look you want. Semi-transparent stain lets the natural cedar grain show through and is easier to maintain long-term since it wears gradually rather than peeling. Paint offers more colour options and stronger protection but requires more thorough prep and will eventually peel if moisture gets behind it — a real concern given our coastal climate.

Prepping neglected cedar involves several steps. First, the siding needs power washing at a controlled pressure (around 1,500 PSI maximum) to remove the grey oxidized layer without damaging the soft wood fibres. Any areas with mildew or algae need treatment with a wood-safe fungicidal wash. After drying for at least 48 hours, the surface should be hand-sanded to open up the grain for better absorption. Loose or cracked boards need renauling or replacing before any coating goes on.

For a typical North Vancouver home with 1,500 to 2,000 square feet of cedar siding, expect to pay between \$8,000 and \$14,000 for professional prep and two coats of a high-quality acrylic stain, or \$10,000 to \$18,000 for a full paint system with primer and two topcoats. The price varies based on the height of the home and how much prep work the cedar needs.

As a next step, have a painter inspect your siding in person to assess how much wood replacement might be needed — that's usually what drives the final cost up or down.

Q12

Our house has Hardie board siding and the previous owners never repainted it. How is painting fibre cement different from painting regular wood siding?

Painting Hardie board (fibre cement) siding differs from wood in several important ways, and getting the approach right matters for longevity — especially in Metro Vancouver's wet climate. Fibre cement is more dimensionally stable than wood, meaning it doesn't expand and contract as much with moisture changes, so paint adhesion tends to last longer when properly applied.

The key difference is in the prep. Fibre cement is alkaline, so it requires a primer specifically formulated for high-pH substrates. Using a standard wood primer can lead to adhesion failure within a few years. If the factory primer is still intact and in good shape, a light sanding and cleaning may be all that's needed before applying two coats of 100% acrylic latex paint. If the surface is chalky or the original coating has deteriorated, a bonding primer should be applied first.

Unlike wood, fibre cement doesn't need to be sealed on the back side, but all cut edges and joints should be caulked with a high-quality polyurethane or silicone-modified caulk to prevent moisture wicking. In Vancouver, where we get prolonged rain exposure from October through April, this step is critical.

The paint itself should be a premium exterior acrylic with good flexibility and mildew resistance. Sherwin-Williams Duration or Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior are popular professional choices here because they handle our damp conditions well.

For your next step, check a few areas of your siding by pressing painter's tape firmly against the surface and pulling it off — if old paint comes away with the tape, a full prime-and-paint job is needed rather than just a recoat.

Q13**There's some soft wood around our window frames and along the bottom of the siding. Do painters handle rot repair, or do we need a carpenter first before getting the house painted?**

Many experienced exterior painting contractors in Metro Vancouver handle minor to moderate wood rot repair as part of their scope of work, since rot is so common here given our damp coastal climate. However, the extent of the damage determines whether a painter can handle it or whether you need a dedicated carpenter or even a building envelope specialist.

For small areas of soft wood — such as window sill corners, trim ends, or isolated spots along the bottom course of siding — painters typically dig out the soft material, treat the area with a wood hardener like Minwax or PC-Petrifier, and fill it with a two-part epoxy filler such as PC Woody or Bondo Wood Filler. Once cured and sanded, these repairs hold up well under paint and can last many years.

If the rot extends deeper than about 25 millimetres, or if the framing or sheathing behind the siding is compromised, that crosses into carpentry territory. Structural rot around windows can also indicate a building envelope issue, which is particularly relevant for Vancouver homes built during the leaky condo era of the 1980s and 1990s. In those cases, you should have the damage assessed before painting over it.

A good painting contractor will be upfront about what they can repair themselves and what needs a specialist. Budget roughly \$150 to \$400 per area for minor epoxy rot repairs done by the painting crew, while full board or trim replacement by a carpenter typically runs \$300 to \$800 per section depending on accessibility.

As a next step, poke any suspect areas with a screwdriver — if it sinks in more than a few millimetres, mark those spots so your painter can assess them during the estimate.

Q14**I keep hearing about elastomeric coatings for stucco homes. Is that worth the extra cost here in Vancouver, and how is it different from regular exterior paint?**

Elastomeric coatings are absolutely worth considering for stucco homes in Metro Vancouver, where our heavy rainfall and temperature swings create the perfect conditions for hairline cracks in stucco to let moisture in. The fundamental difference is flexibility — elastomeric coatings can stretch up to 300 to 500 percent of their original size, meaning they bridge and seal hairline cracks as the stucco expands and contracts. Regular exterior paint, even premium acrylic, can only stretch about 10 to 20 percent before it cracks.

These coatings are applied much thicker than standard paint — typically 10 to 20 mils dry film thickness compared to 2 to 4 mils for regular paint. This creates a waterproof membrane over the stucco surface while still allowing moisture vapour to escape from the inside. That breathability is important in our climate because trapping moisture inside stucco walls leads to serious damage over time.

The trade-off is cost. Elastomeric coatings run roughly 30 to 50 percent more than a standard exterior paint job. For a typical 2,000-square-foot stucco home in Vancouver, expect to pay around \$12,000 to \$20,000 for a professional elastomeric application versus \$8,000 to \$14,000 for conventional paint. However, the coating typically lasts 10 to 15 years compared to 5 to 8 years for standard paint, so the long-term cost per year can actually be lower.

The prep work is also more involved — all existing cracks need to be routed and filled, and the surface must be completely clean and dry before application.

For your next step, have a painter inspect your stucco for any active cracking patterns, as these could indicate structural movement that even elastomeric coatings won't permanently solve.

Q15

We live in a three-storey home in East Vancouver and need the whole exterior painted. What should I know about scaffolding requirements and how much extra does the height add to the cost?

Painting a three-storey home in East Vancouver introduces significant logistical considerations compared to a standard two-storey job. At that height, most professional painters will need proper scaffolding rather than just extension ladders, both for safety and for quality of work — it's very difficult to do thorough prep and apply even coats while perched on a ladder three storeys up.

Scaffolding for a typical East Vancouver three-storey home usually costs between \$2,500 and \$6,000 depending on how much of the house needs to be wrapped and how long the job takes. Some contractors own their own scaffolding, which can reduce costs, while others rent from companies like Scaffold King or Pacific Scaffold. The scaffolding typically stays up for the duration of the job, usually one to three weeks.

In BC, WorkSafeBC regulations require fall protection for any work above 3 metres (roughly 10 feet), and working at heights above 7.5 metres requires a written fall protection plan. A reputable contractor will have this documentation and carry proper insurance — ask to see their WorkSafeBC clearance letter and liability insurance certificate before signing a contract.

Overall, expect a three-storey exterior paint job in East Vancouver to run between \$15,000 and \$28,000, with the scaffolding and additional labour time accounting for roughly 25 to 40 percent of the premium over what a comparable two-storey home would cost. The square footage of paintable surface and the condition of the existing paint are the other major cost drivers.

As a next step, get at least three quotes and specifically ask each contractor whether their price includes scaffolding or if it's billed separately — some quotes exclude it, which leads to surprise costs.

Q16**Our 1920s Craftsman home in Kitsilano might have lead paint under the current layers. What are the rules around lead paint removal in BC, and does that change how the painting job is done?**

If your Kitsilano Craftsman was built in the 1920s, there is a very high likelihood of lead paint in the older layers, especially on exterior trim, window frames, and siding. In BC, any home built before 1960 is assumed to have lead paint unless testing proves otherwise, and homes built between 1960 and 1990 may also contain lead in some coatings.

WorkSafeBC has strict regulations around lead paint disturbance. Any sanding, scraping, or heat-stripping of lead paint must follow WorkSafeBC's lead exposure guidelines, which require containment measures to prevent paint chips and dust from contaminating the soil and neighbouring properties. Contractors must use HEPA-filtered equipment, wear appropriate respiratory protection, and collect all debris for proper disposal as hazardous waste.

For your painting project, this means the prep phase will be more involved and more expensive. Rather than aggressive scraping and sanding, many painters opt for an encapsulation approach — stabilizing any loose paint, priming with a high-adhesion bonding primer, and applying new coats over the existing lead layers. This is often safer and more cost-effective than full removal, provided the underlying paint is reasonably sound.

If significant paint removal is necessary, expect the cost to increase substantially. A lead-safe exterior repaint on a heritage Craftsman in Kitsilano typically runs \$18,000 to \$35,000 depending on the home's size, the number of decorative trim details, and how much old paint needs to be disturbed.

As a next step, hire a certified environmental testing company to do an XRF (X-ray fluorescence) test on your exterior surfaces — this non-destructive test tells you exactly which layers contain lead, so your painter can plan the safest approach.

Q17**How do Vancouver painters deal with the rain? If I book an exterior painting job, what happens if it rains for two weeks straight in the middle of the project?**

Rain management is something every experienced exterior painter in Metro Vancouver has learned to navigate — it comes with the territory. The painting season here generally runs from May through September, with July and August being the most reliable months. However, even in peak summer, unexpected rain can disrupt schedules.

Professional painters monitor weather forecasts closely and plan their work accordingly. Most require a minimum of 24 to 48 hours of dry weather after rain before applying paint, because the siding and trim need to dry thoroughly. Painting over damp surfaces is one of the most common causes of premature paint failure — the moisture gets trapped under the coating and causes blistering and peeling within a year or two.

If rain hits mid-project, a good contractor will cover any freshly painted surfaces with tarps or plastic sheeting, secure all materials, and pause work until conditions improve. This is normal and expected. Most contracts for exterior painting in Vancouver include a weather contingency clause that extends the completion timeline for rain days without penalty.

Some contractors use moisture metres to test the siding before painting — the moisture content should be below 15 percent for most coatings. In Vancouver's shoulder seasons (April, May, September, October), morning dew can also delay the start of painting each day until surfaces dry off, typically by 10 or 11 AM.

The paint itself matters too. Premium exterior acrylics from manufacturers like Benjamin Moore and Sherwin-Williams are formulated to cure in cooler, more humid conditions, which makes them well-suited to our climate compared to oil-based paints that need warmer, drier conditions.

For your next step, book your exterior painting for June through August if possible, and discuss the contractor's rain policy and timeline buffer before signing the contract.

Q18

We want to paint our heritage home in Strathcona and we've heard there are restrictions on colour choices. Is that true, and how does heritage designation affect an exterior paint job?

If your home is in the Strathcona heritage conservation area, there are indeed guidelines that can affect your exterior colour choices, though the specifics depend on whether your home is individually designated under the Vancouver Heritage Register or simply located within the broader character area.

For homes on the Vancouver Heritage Register, any significant exterior changes — including colour — may require a Heritage Alteration Permit from the City of Vancouver. The city generally encourages historically appropriate colour palettes that reflect the era when the home was built. For Victorian and Edwardian homes common in Strathcona, this typically means period-appropriate combinations rather than modern or high-contrast schemes. The Vancouver Heritage Foundation is an excellent resource and can provide guidance on appropriate colours for your home's architectural style.

For homes in the broader Strathcona character area that aren't individually designated, the restrictions are less formal, but the neighbourhood's heritage character is still considered during any permit review. Most homeowners in the area choose to respect the heritage aesthetic voluntarily.

From a practical painting standpoint, heritage homes often have significantly more decorative trim, brackets, spindles, and ornamental details than modern homes. This detail work is time-consuming to prep and paint properly, and it typically adds 30 to 50 percent to the cost compared to a simpler home of the same size. Expect painters to quote detailed trim work separately from the main body and accent colours.

Many painters who specialize in heritage homes in Vancouver also have experience with historical colour research and can help you choose an authentic palette that complements your home's architecture and your neighbours.

As a next step, contact the Vancouver Heritage Foundation or check the city's Heritage Register online to confirm your home's designation status before finalizing any colour decisions.

Q19**The bottom two feet of our exterior siding keeps peeling no matter how many times we repaint. We're in a ground-level townhouse in Burnaby. What's going on and how do we fix it for good?**

Recurring paint failure along the bottom of siding is one of the most common exterior painting problems in Metro Vancouver, and it almost always points to a moisture issue rather than a paint quality problem. In a ground-level Burnaby townhouse, there are several likely culprits.

First, check your ground clearance. The BC Building Code requires a minimum 200-millimetre (8-inch) clearance between the ground or any landscaping and the bottom of the siding. If soil, mulch, or concrete is piled up against the siding, moisture wicks up into the wood through capillary action, pushing the paint off from behind. This is extremely common in townhouse complexes where landscaping has been built up over the years.

Second, look at your drainage. If rainwater pools near the foundation or if downspouts discharge too close to the building, the constant splash-back saturates the lower siding. Vancouver's heavy rainfall makes this worse than in drier climates.

Third, check for missing or damaged flashing at the base of the wall. Proper kick-out flashing and a starter strip direct water away from the siding. If these are missing or deteriorated, no amount of repainting will solve the peeling problem.

The fix involves addressing the moisture source first. Clear back any soil or mulch from the siding, ensure proper drainage slope away from the building, and repair or install base flashing. Then the damaged siding should be replaced or treated, primed with a moisture-blocking primer, and painted with a high-quality acrylic that can handle some moisture exposure.

If your townhouse is strata-managed, these exterior repairs typically fall under strata responsibility, so check your bylaws before commissioning work independently.

As a next step, pull back any landscaping touching the bottom of your siding and check whether the wood behind it is soft or discoloured — that will tell you how extensive the moisture damage has become.

Q20**What's a reasonable price to repaint the exterior of a standard two-storey detached house in Surrey? I want to know what's fair so I don't get ripped off?**

For a standard two-storey detached home in Surrey — typically around 2,000 to 2,500 square feet of living space — a professional exterior repaint generally costs between \$7,500 and \$15,000 in the current Metro Vancouver market. The wide range reflects differences in the home's condition, the amount of prep work needed, and the quality of materials used.

At the lower end (\$7,500 to \$10,000), you're looking at a home in reasonably good condition that needs a pressure wash, light scraping and sanding, spot priming, caulking of gaps, and two coats of a quality exterior acrylic on the body with one to two accent colours on trim. This assumes the home has standard vinyl or wood siding without excessive decorative elements.

At the higher end (\$12,000 to \$15,000), the home likely needs more extensive prep — significant scraping of failing paint, wood rot repairs, re-caulking of all windows and doors, full priming, and possibly three colours with detailed trim work. Homes with cedar shingle accents, multiple gables, or hard-to-reach areas will also push the price higher.

When comparing quotes, make sure you're comparing the same scope. Ask each contractor to specify the number of coats, the exact paint products they'll use (brand and product line), what prep work is included, and whether minor wood repairs are covered or extra. Also confirm they carry WorkSafeBC coverage and at least \$2 million in liability insurance.

Be cautious of quotes significantly below \$7,000 for a full two-storey exterior in Surrey. Extremely low bids often mean corners will be cut on prep, cheaper paint will be used, or the crew lacks proper insurance.

As a next step, get three written quotes from established contractors with verifiable references in the Surrey area and compare not just the bottom-line price but the scope of work each one includes.

Q21

Our stucco has hairline cracks all over the exterior - should we just paint over them or do they need to be fixed first?

You should never just paint over stucco cracks without addressing them first, especially in Metro Vancouver's wet climate. Hairline cracks under about 1/16 of an inch can often be filled with a high-quality elastomeric coating that bridges minor cracking, but anything wider needs proper repair with a compatible stucco patching compound before painting. In Vancouver, moisture intrusion through cracked stucco is a serious concern given our 1,200+ mm of annual rainfall. Water that gets behind the stucco can cause rot in the sheathing and framing, which is exactly the kind of damage that fuelled the leaky condo crisis. A professional painter experienced with stucco will typically power wash the surface, fill and patch all cracks with a flexible repair compound, apply a bonding primer, and then

finish with two coats of elastomeric paint. Elastomeric coatings are ideal for Vancouver stucco because they stretch and contract with temperature changes without cracking. Expect to pay around \$4,500 to \$8,000 for a full stucco crack repair and recoat on a typical two-storey Metro Vancouver home, depending on the extent of damage. If you notice cracks that are wider than a quarter inch or any areas where the stucco sounds hollow when tapped, that could indicate the stucco has delaminated from the substrate and may need more extensive remediation. As a next step, have a qualified exterior painter inspect the stucco and assess whether simple crack filling will suffice or if deeper repairs are needed before recoating.

Q22

We bought a condo that was remediated after the leaky condo issues - when is it safe to paint the new exterior cladding?

After a leaky condo remediation, the timing of exterior painting depends on what cladding system was installed. If your building was re-clad with fibre cement panels like Hardie board, most manufacturers recommend waiting at least 90 days before painting to allow the material to fully cure and acclimate to Vancouver's humidity levels. For new stucco applied over a proper rainscreen system, you typically need to wait 28 to 30 days for the stucco to cure before applying paint. If the remediation was done during our wetter months from October through March, you may need to extend these timelines since moisture slows curing considerably. Many remediated buildings in the Lower Mainland now have rainscreen wall assemblies as required by the BC Building Code updates that came after the leaky condo crisis. These systems include a drainage cavity and ventilation gap behind the cladding, which actually helps the new exterior dry more effectively. When it is time to paint, use a breathable, high-quality acrylic latex exterior paint that allows moisture vapour to pass through rather than trapping it behind the coating. Trapping moisture was a contributing factor in the original leaky condo failures. Your strata council should have documentation from the remediation contractor specifying exactly what cladding was installed and any manufacturer recommendations for finishing. As a next step, review your remediation warranty documents and consult with a painter who has experience working on post-remediation buildings in Metro Vancouver to ensure the coating choice will not void any warranties.

Q23

How much does it cost to paint a garage door in Vancouver and is it worth doing or should I just replace it?

Painting a garage door in Metro Vancouver typically costs between \$350 and \$700 for a standard single or double door, depending on size, condition, and whether it is steel, wood, or aluminum. Replacing a garage door, by contrast, runs \$1,500 to \$4,000 or more installed. If your existing door is structurally sound with no major dents, rust-through, or broken panels, painting is absolutely worth it and can transform your home's curb appeal at a fraction of the replacement cost. Preparation is the most important part of painting a garage door in our climate. Steel doors need to be sanded to remove any surface rust, primed with a rust-inhibiting primer, and finished with a high-adhesion exterior acrylic paint. Wood garage doors require more extensive prep including sanding, filling any cracks, and priming bare wood to prevent moisture absorption during our rainy season. For aluminum doors, you need a bonding primer specifically designed for non-ferrous metals. One thing to keep in mind with Vancouver's climate is that garage doors take a beating from rain, and south-facing doors get significant UV exposure in

summer. Using a paint with built-in UV protection and choosing a colour in the light to mid-range will help the finish last longer, typically five to seven years before needing a refresh. As a next step, clean your garage door with a degreaser and inspect it closely for rust, dents, or wood rot to determine whether painting or replacement makes more sense for your situation.

Q24

Can you actually paint vinyl siding? Our house in Burnaby has faded vinyl and we don't want to pay for full re-siding?

Yes, you can absolutely paint vinyl siding, and it is a popular option for homeowners across Burnaby and Metro Vancouver who want to refresh their home's appearance without the \$20,000 to \$40,000 cost of full re-siding. The key rule with painting vinyl siding is that you must choose a paint colour that is the same shade or lighter than the original colour. Darker colours absorb more heat, which can cause vinyl panels to warp and buckle, especially on south and west-facing walls that get direct summer sun. Modern vinyl-safe exterior paints from major manufacturers are formulated with heat-reflective pigments that reduce this risk, but sticking to lighter shades is still the safest approach. Surface preparation for vinyl involves thorough cleaning, typically with a pressure washer on a gentle setting, to remove the chalky oxidized layer that forms on faded vinyl. Once clean and dry, a high-adhesion acrylic latex paint bonds well to vinyl without a separate primer in most cases, though some painters prefer a bonding primer for extra durability. In Vancouver's climate, you want to paint vinyl siding during a dry stretch when temperatures are above 10 degrees Celsius, ideally between May and September. A professional paint job on vinyl siding for a typical Burnaby two-storey home runs approximately \$5,000 to \$9,000, and the finish typically lasts seven to ten years with proper application. As a next step, check your siding for any cracked, warped, or loose panels that should be replaced before painting, as paint will not fix structural damage to vinyl.

Q25

What's the best approach for painting the concrete foundation walls that are visible on our split-level home in North Vancouver?

Painting exposed concrete foundation walls on a North Vancouver split-level requires careful preparation due to the heavy rainfall and moisture conditions on the North Shore. Concrete is porous and naturally wicks moisture from the ground, so the biggest challenge is ensuring the paint adheres properly and does not peel or blister from hydrostatic pressure pushing moisture through the wall. Start by cleaning the concrete thoroughly with a pressure washer to remove dirt, moss, and any efflorescence, which is that white powdery mineral deposit common on concrete in wet climates like ours. Any existing loose or peeling paint must be scraped and wire-brushed off completely. Patch cracks and holes with a hydraulic cement or concrete patching compound. Once the surface is clean and dry, apply a masonry primer designed for below-grade or moisture-prone concrete. For the topcoat, use an elastomeric masonry paint rather than standard exterior latex. Elastomeric coatings are thicker, more flexible, and better at bridging hairline cracks that develop as concrete shifts seasonally. They also provide superior waterproofing, which is essential given North Vancouver's annual rainfall that often exceeds 2,000 mm in higher elevation neighbourhoods. Choose a colour that complements your home's upper exterior but be aware that the portion of foundation below grade should not be painted at all, as it needs to breathe. As a next step, check whether your foundation has any active water seepage or drainage issues that need to be resolved before painting, since no paint will perform well over concrete that is constantly saturated.

Q26

We have an older aluminum siding home in East Vancouver - can it be painted and how long will it last?

Aluminum siding can definitely be painted, and many older East Vancouver homes from the 1960s through 1980s are excellent candidates for this kind of refresh. Aluminum siding itself is incredibly durable and rarely needs replacing, but the factory-applied paint finish oxidizes and chalks over time, leaving a dull, faded appearance. A quality paint job on aluminum siding can last eight to twelve years in Metro Vancouver's climate, which is actually longer than paint on wood siding because aluminum does not expand, contract, crack, or rot. The preparation process is critical for a lasting finish. The siding must be thoroughly washed, usually with a pressure washer on moderate setting, to remove the chalky oxidized layer. If you run your hand across the siding and it leaves a powdery residue on your fingers, that oxidation must be completely removed or the new paint will not bond properly. After cleaning and drying, a high-quality bonding primer formulated for metal surfaces is essential. Skip the primer and your paint will peel within a year or two. Follow the primer with two coats of 100 percent acrylic latex

exterior paint. Avoid oil-based paints on aluminum as they tend to become brittle and crack. One advantage of painting aluminum siding is that you can change the colour of your home dramatically since you are not limited by the vinyl siding rule of going lighter. Budget approximately \$5,500 to \$10,000 for a full aluminum siding paint job on a typical East Vancouver two-storey home. As a next step, inspect your aluminum siding for any dented or damaged panels and check that all trim and corner pieces are secure before getting quotes from painters experienced with metal siding.

Q27

How do rainscreen systems on newer Vancouver homes affect exterior painting and maintenance?

Rainscreen wall systems, which became standard practice in Metro Vancouver construction after the BC Building Code updates following the leaky condo crisis, have a significant impact on how exterior painting and maintenance are approached. A rainscreen system creates a ventilated drainage cavity between the exterior cladding and the weather-resistant barrier underneath. This means the cladding itself, whether it is fibre cement, stucco, or wood, dries out more effectively than older direct-applied systems. For painting purposes, this is actually good news. Paint on rainscreen-clad buildings tends to last longer because moisture is not trapped behind the cladding causing blistering and peeling from the back side. However, there are important considerations. When painting a rainscreen-clad building, you must not seal or block the ventilation openings at the top and bottom of the wall assembly. These gaps are essential for the system to function and are sometimes located behind trim pieces or at soffit transitions. A painter unfamiliar with rainscreen construction might caulk or paint over these openings, which defeats the entire purpose of the system. For stucco over rainscreen, elastomeric coatings work well but should be vapour-permeable to allow the wall assembly to dry to the exterior. For fibre cement panel cladding, follow the manufacturer's specific paint recommendations, as using the wrong product can void the cladding warranty. Most fibre cement manufacturers require acrylic latex paint and prohibit elastomeric coatings on their products. As a next step, identify what type of cladding your rainscreen building has and request the original manufacturer specifications before choosing a paint system.

Q28

Our heritage home in New Westminster has multiple layers of old exterior paint that's cracking and peeling everywhere - what's involved in stripping it all off?

Stripping multiple layers of exterior paint from a heritage home in New Westminster is a significant project that requires careful handling, especially since homes built before 1978 almost certainly have lead-based paint in the older layers. In British Columbia, lead paint removal must follow WorkSafeBC regulations, which require containment measures to prevent lead dust and chips from contaminating the soil around your home. A qualified contractor will set up ground tarps and plastic sheeting, use HEPA-filtered equipment, and properly dispose of all paint waste as hazardous material. The stripping process typically involves a combination of methods. Infrared paint removers are popular for heritage homes because they soften paint for scraping without the fire risk of heat guns and without the mess of chemical strippers. Chemical strippers work well on detailed trim and mouldings that cannot be aggressively scraped. Pressure washing alone will not remove well-bonded older paint layers and can actually damage soft old-growth wood siding common on heritage homes. Once stripped to bare wood, the siding needs to be sanded smooth, any damaged boards repaired or replaced with matching profiles, and a high-quality oil-based or hybrid primer applied before finishing with acrylic latex topcoats. For a typical New Westminster heritage home, expect the full strip-and-repaint process to cost between \$15,000 and \$30,000 depending on the home's size and complexity of the trim details. The City of New Westminster may also have heritage conservation guidelines that dictate acceptable colours and finishes for designated heritage properties. As a next step, check whether your home is on the New Westminster heritage register and get a lead paint test done before any work begins.

Q29

What exterior paint holds up best in Vancouver's rain? We're repainting our wood siding home in Coquitlam and want it to last?

For wood siding homes in Coquitlam and across Metro Vancouver, a 100 percent acrylic latex exterior paint is your best choice for durability in our wet climate. Acrylic latex outperforms oil-based paints in rainy environments because it remains flexible as wood expands and contracts with moisture changes, resisting cracking and peeling. Look for a paint with a high percentage of acrylic resin solids, ideally above 35 percent, as this directly correlates with durability and weather resistance. The sheen level matters too. Satin or semi-gloss finishes shed water more effectively than flat finishes, but flat paint hides surface imperfections better on older siding. Many Vancouver painters recommend satin as the best compromise for siding and semi-gloss for trim, fascia, and window frames where water runoff is concentrated. Equally important is the primer. For bare or heavily weathered wood, use a

high-quality acrylic primer or, even better, an alkyd primer for superior penetration into the wood grain. The primer creates the foundation for paint adhesion, and skipping it is the most common reason paint fails prematurely in our climate. Application timing is critical in Metro Vancouver. The best painting window is typically mid-May through September when you can reasonably expect consecutive dry days with temperatures above 10 degrees Celsius. Paint applied when humidity is too high or temperatures too low will not cure properly and will fail much sooner. Even during summer, avoid painting surfaces that are in direct hot sun, as the paint dries too quickly on the surface before bonding to the substrate. As a next step, have your wood siding inspected for rot, especially around window frames and at the base where it meets the foundation, and replace any damaged boards before committing to a full repaint.

Q30

Is it worth painting stucco on a 1990s building that went through leaky condo remediation or will the problems just come back?

If your 1990s building underwent proper leaky condo remediation, painting the new exterior should be perfectly safe and the problems should not come back, provided the remediation was done correctly. The original leaky condo crisis in Metro Vancouver was caused by a combination of factors including face-sealed stucco systems with no drainage plane, inadequate flashing, and building envelope designs that trapped moisture inside walls. Properly remediated buildings have been re-clad with modern rainscreen systems that include a drainage cavity, improved flashing details, and weather-resistant barriers that meet current BC Building Code requirements. The new stucco or cladding installed during remediation is a fundamentally different system than what failed originally. That said, the quality of the remediation work matters enormously. Before investing in painting, review the remediation warranty documentation and check whether the building envelope warranty is still in effect, as many carry 10 to 15 year terms. If you are part of a strata, your council should have these records. A post-remediation paint job with elastomeric coatings designed for stucco actually adds an extra layer of weather protection. Choose a vapour-permeable elastomeric paint that allows the wall assembly to breathe while keeping bulk water out. Avoid high-build elastomeric coatings that might trap moisture if applied too thickly, as this can create problems even with a rainscreen system. Your strata should also budget for regular building envelope maintenance inspections every three to five years, which is standard practice for remediated buildings in the Lower Mainland. As a next step, request a copy of the remediation completion report and have the building envelope consultant who oversaw the original work confirm that painting is appropriate at this stage.

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