

VANCOUVER PAINT CONTRACTORS

Costs & Budgeting

Painting costs in Metro Vancouver including per-room pricing, per-square-foot rates, exterior estimates, and budgeting for residential and commercial projects

20 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

vancouverpaintcontractors.com/construction-brain

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Q1

How much does it cost to paint a single bedroom in Vancouver?

In Metro Vancouver, painting a standard bedroom (roughly 10x12 feet) typically costs between \$400 and \$800 for a professional job, including two coats of quality latex paint. A larger master bedroom can run \$600 to \$1,100 depending on ceiling height, closet interiors, and the amount of prep work needed.

Several factors influence the final price. If your walls have scuff marks, nail holes, or minor drywall damage, expect an additional \$100 to \$250 for patching and sanding. Accent walls with a darker or contrasting colour can add \$50 to \$150 since darker pigments often require extra coats for even coverage. Rooms with crown moulding, wainscoting, or textured ceilings also take more time and push costs higher.

Paint quality matters too. Most Vancouver painters include a mid-range paint like Benjamin Moore Regal or Sherwin-Williams SuperPaint in their quotes, which runs \$50 to \$70 per gallon. Upgrading to a premium line like Aura or Duration adds \$20 to \$40 per gallon but gives you better washability and colour retention — worth considering for kids' rooms or high-traffic spaces.

Labour makes up roughly 70 to 80 percent of the total cost in Metro Vancouver, reflecting the higher cost of living and insurance requirements in BC. Most painters charge between \$45 and \$65 per hour, with a single bedroom taking one to two days.

To get the most accurate estimate, measure your room dimensions and note any repairs needed, then request quotes from two or three local painters to compare scope and pricing.

Q2

What's the average cost to paint the interior of a whole house in Metro Vancouver?

For a whole-house interior paint job in Metro Vancouver, you can expect to pay between \$4,500 and \$12,000 for a typical three-bedroom home of about 1,500 to 2,200 square feet. Larger homes in areas like West Vancouver or South Surrey with 3,000+ square feet can easily reach \$15,000 to \$22,000 or more.

Most professional painters in the region quote between \$3.50 and \$6.00 per square foot of paintable wall surface for a standard two-coat application. That rate includes labour, materials, basic prep work like filling small nail holes, light sanding, and masking off trim and fixtures. It typically does not include extensive drywall repair, wallpaper removal, or painting ceilings — those are usually quoted separately.

Here's a rough breakdown for a 2,000-square-foot home: paint and materials run about \$800 to \$1,500, while labour accounts for \$4,000 to \$8,000. The wide range comes down to the condition of your walls, the number of colours you choose, ceiling height, and how much furniture needs to be moved or covered.

Vancouver's older neighbourhoods like Kitsilano, Mount Pleasant, and East Van often have homes with lead paint concerns in pre-1980 builds. If lead abatement is required, that adds \$1,000 to \$3,000 depending on the scope, and the contractor must follow BC WorkSafeBC guidelines for safe removal.

A good starting point is to get three detailed written quotes that break out labour, materials, and any extras so you can compare apples to apples.

Q3

How much do painters charge per square foot in Vancouver right now?

In Metro Vancouver, professional interior painters typically charge between \$3.50 and \$6.50 per square foot of paintable wall surface as of 2026. For exterior work, rates tend to be higher — usually \$4.00 to \$8.00 per square foot — because of the added complexity of working at height, weather considerations, and surface preparation.

These per-square-foot rates generally include two coats of paint, basic surface prep, masking, and clean-up. Keep in mind that "square foot" in painting quotes refers to the wall area being painted, not your home's floor area. A room with 100 square feet of floor space might have 350 to 400 square feet of wall surface, depending on ceiling height and window placement.

Rates vary across Metro Vancouver. Painters working in Vancouver proper, West Vancouver, and North Vancouver tend to charge at the higher end due to parking challenges, longer travel times, and the cost of doing business in those areas. You may find slightly lower rates in Surrey, Langley, Maple Ridge, and Abbotsford — often \$3.00 to \$5.00 per square foot for interior work.

Some painters prefer to quote by the room or by the project rather than per square foot, which can actually work in your favour for straightforward jobs. A standard bathroom might be quoted at \$300 to \$500 flat, while a living room runs \$600 to \$1,200.

When comparing quotes, ask each painter to specify exactly what's included — especially prep work, primer, number of coats, and the paint brand — so you can make a fair comparison.

Q4

Is it cheaper to paint my Vancouver condo myself or hire a professional?

For a typical Metro Vancouver condo of 600 to 900 square feet, a DIY interior paint job will cost roughly \$300 to \$700 in materials — paint, rollers, brushes, tape, drop cloths, and primer if needed. Hiring a professional painter for the same condo usually runs \$1,800 to \$3,500, so you're looking at potential savings of \$1,200 to \$2,800 by doing it yourself.

However, the real cost of DIY goes beyond materials. Most first-time painters underestimate prep time. Taping, patching, sanding, priming, and protecting flooring and fixtures in a condo takes significant effort. A job a professional crew finishes in two to three days could take you two full weekends or more, especially if you're working around furniture in a smaller space.

There are also condo-specific considerations in Vancouver. Many strata buildings have rules about work hours, elevator bookings for bringing supplies up, and ventilation requirements. Some buildings require proof of insurance from contractors, which is another reason some owners opt for licensed professionals who already carry the required \$2 million liability coverage.

Where DIY makes the most sense is for single-room refreshes, accent walls, or touch-ups where the scale doesn't justify mobilizing a crew. Where professionals earn their fee is on full-unit repaints, ceiling work, colour changes from dark to light (which require multiple coats and proper priming), and any situation involving high or hard-to-reach areas.

If you're leaning toward hiring out, request quotes from painters experienced with Vancouver condos — they'll know how to navigate strata rules and protect shared hallways during the job.

Q5

What factors make a painting quote higher or lower in the Vancouver area?

Several factors can swing a Metro Vancouver painting quote by hundreds or even thousands of dollars. Understanding them helps you budget realistically and evaluate quotes more confidently.

Wall condition is the biggest variable. Clean, smooth walls in good shape need minimal prep and keep costs down. Walls with water stains, cracks, peeling paint, or old wallpaper require patching, skim-coating, or stripping — adding \$200 to \$1,500 or more to the project. Homes built before 1980 may need lead paint testing and safe removal, which adds \$500 to \$3,000 depending on the area affected.

Colour choices matter more than you might think. Going from a light colour to another light shade is straightforward. But covering a dark accent wall or switching from deep red to white often requires primer plus three or four coats, increasing both paint usage and labour time. Each extra coat can add \$1.00 to \$2.00 per square foot.

Ceiling height affects labour costs significantly. Vancouver's newer townhomes and lofts often feature nine to sixteen-foot ceilings, requiring scaffolding or specialized ladders. This can add \$300 to \$800 per room compared to standard eight-foot ceilings.

Trim, doors, and baseboards are often quoted separately. Painting all the trim in a three-bedroom home can add \$800 to \$2,000. Cabinet painting is even more labour-intensive, typically running \$3,000 to \$7,000 for a full kitchen.

Finally, timing and season play a role. Summer is peak season in Vancouver, and painters may charge a premium. Booking in the slower fall or winter months can sometimes save you 10 to 15 percent.

Ask your painter to itemize their quote so you can see exactly where the costs lie and decide which extras are worth it.

Q6

How much should I budget to paint the exterior of my house in Vancouver?

Exterior house painting in Metro Vancouver typically costs between \$5,000 and \$15,000 for a standard two-storey home, with some larger or more complex properties running \$18,000 to \$25,000 or higher. The wide range reflects differences in home size, siding material, condition, and accessibility.

For a rough breakdown, most Vancouver exterior painters charge \$4.00 to \$8.00 per square foot of paintable surface. A typical 2,000-square-foot home might have 2,500 to 3,500 square feet of exterior wall area once you account for gables, soffits, and trim. That puts the baseline at \$10,000 to \$20,000 before factoring in discounts or extras.

Siding type heavily influences cost. Smooth wood or fibre cement siding (like HardiePlank, common in newer Vancouver builds) is the most straightforward to paint. Rough cedar shingles — very common in older Kitsilano, Dunbar, and North Vancouver homes — absorb more paint and take longer to coat, pushing costs 20 to 30 percent higher. Stucco exteriors, prevalent across Burnaby and Richmond, may need crack repair and specialized primers before painting.

Vancouver's wet climate means proper surface preparation is critical. Power washing, scraping loose paint, caulking gaps, and priming bare wood can account for 40 to 50 percent of the total project time. Cutting corners on

prep in our rainy climate leads to premature peeling and bubbling, so quality prep is money well spent.

Most reputable painters in Metro Vancouver include a two to five-year warranty on exterior work when quality paint is used. Budget for premium exterior paint — products like Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior or Sherwin-Williams Duration run \$70 to \$90 per gallon but hold up far better in our coastal conditions.

Start by getting at least three on-site estimates, since exterior quotes are difficult to do accurately from photos alone.

Q7

What does it cost to have kitchen cabinets painted in Vancouver?

Professional kitchen cabinet painting in Metro Vancouver ranges from \$3,000 to \$8,000 for a typical kitchen with 20 to 30 cabinet doors and drawer fronts. A smaller galley kitchen might come in around \$2,500 to \$4,000, while a large kitchen with an island and pantry can reach \$9,000 to \$12,000.

Cabinet painting is one of the most labour-intensive painting jobs because it demands meticulous prep work for a durable, factory-like finish. The process involves removing all doors and hardware, degreasing, sanding or chemical de-glossing, priming with a bonding primer, and applying two to three coats of a hard-curing paint or lacquer — often sprayed for the smoothest result.

The finish you choose affects pricing. Brush-and-roller application is the most affordable at roughly \$100 to \$200 per door face. Spray finishing costs more — \$150 to \$300 per door face — but delivers a smoother, more professional look that mimics factory-finished cabinetry. Some Vancouver painters offer off-site spraying in a dedicated booth, which produces the best results but adds transport costs of \$300 to \$600.

Paint quality is non-negotiable for cabinets. Products like Benjamin Moore Advance, Sherwin-Williams Emerald Urethane, or a catalyzed lacquer run \$70 to \$100 per gallon but resist chipping, yellowing, and moisture — essential for a kitchen environment.

Compared to full cabinet replacement, which can cost \$15,000 to \$40,000 or more in Metro Vancouver, professional painting delivers a dramatic transformation at a fraction of the price. It's one of the highest-return renovation investments you can make.

Before committing, ask your painter for photos of previous cabinet work and confirm they use a bonding primer — skipping this step is the number one reason cabinet paint jobs fail within a year.

Q8

How much extra does it cost to paint high ceilings and stairwells in a Vancouver townhome?

High ceilings and open stairwells are common in Metro Vancouver townhomes and can add \$500 to \$2,500 or more to your painting estimate compared to standard eight-foot ceilings. The extra cost comes down to safety equipment, time, and the skill needed to work at height.

For ceilings between nine and twelve feet, painters typically use extension ladders and longer roller poles, adding about 20 to 30 percent more time per room. A room that would normally cost \$500 to \$700 with eight-foot ceilings might run \$650 to \$950 at ten-foot height.

Vaulted ceilings and two-storey foyers — found in many Burnaby, Coquitlam, and South Surrey townhomes — are a different story. These often require scaffolding or specialized baker's scaffolding, which can cost \$200 to \$600 to set up per area. The total for painting a two-storey foyer or great room with sixteen-foot ceilings typically runs \$1,200 to \$3,000 for walls and ceiling combined.

Open stairwells are among the trickiest areas to paint. The angled walls, varying heights, and limited footing make them time-consuming and sometimes hazardous. Professional painters charge a premium of \$400 to \$1,200 for a typical three-storey townhome stairwell. Some companies charge this as a flat rate; others factor it into their per-square-foot pricing.

If your townhome has both high ceilings and an open stairwell, it's worth asking the painter to break out these areas in the quote so you can see the upcharge clearly. You might choose to skip the highest areas and focus your budget on the walls and spaces you actually see and touch every day.

Get quotes from painters who regularly work in multi-level townhomes — they'll have the right equipment on hand and won't need to rent scaffolding at your expense.

Q9

Are there any hidden costs I should watch for in a Vancouver painting estimate?

Yes — several costs that aren't always obvious can inflate your final painting bill in Metro Vancouver. Knowing what to watch for helps you avoid surprises and compare quotes fairly.

Moving and protecting furniture is one common extra. Some painters include basic furniture shifting in their price, while others charge \$150 to \$400 for a full house. If you can move smaller items yourself before the crew arrives, you'll save on this line item.

Drywall and plaster repair is frequently underestimated. Minor nail holes and hairline cracks are usually covered in the base quote, but anything beyond basic touch-ups — water-damaged drywall, large cracks from settling, or popped screw heads — can add \$200 to \$1,000 or more. Older homes in East Vancouver, New Westminister, and North Burnaby often need more repair than expected once the painter starts working.

Primer is sometimes quoted as an extra. A good-quality primer like Kilz or Zinsser runs \$40 to \$60 per gallon, and priming an entire house interior can use five to ten gallons. Some painters include it; others add \$300 to \$800 for full priming. Always ask whether primer is included, especially for colour changes or fresh drywall.

Parking and access fees can catch you off guard. In downtown Vancouver, Yaletown, or tight-lot areas, painters may add \$50 to \$150 per day for parking their work van. Condo projects may require elevator booking fees charged by the strata.

Finally, watch for vague line items like "miscellaneous prep" or "as needed." A trustworthy painter will itemize prep work, number of coats, specific paint products, and any exclusions clearly in the written quote.

Before signing, ask your painter directly: "Is there anything that could cause the final price to exceed this quote?" and get the answer in writing.

Q10

How much does it cost to paint a basement suite in Vancouver?

Painting a basement suite in Metro Vancouver typically costs between \$1,500 and \$4,000, depending on the size, layout, and condition of the space. A compact one-bedroom suite of 400 to 600 square feet usually falls in the \$1,500 to \$2,500 range, while a larger two-bedroom suite of 700 to 1,000 square feet runs \$2,500 to \$4,000.

Basement suites come with unique challenges that can affect pricing. Lower ceilings (often seven to seven-and-a-half feet) make the actual wall area smaller, which helps keep paint costs down. However, basements frequently have moisture issues, and painters may need to apply a mould-resistant primer like Zinsser Mold Killing Primer (\$45 to \$55 per gallon) before painting — adding \$200 to \$500 to the total.

Many Vancouver basement suites were finished decades ago and have older textured ceilings, dated wood panelling, or multiple layers of paint that need attention. Scraping a textured ceiling adds \$2.00 to \$4.00 per square foot. Priming over dark wood panelling so it accepts lighter paint well adds another \$300 to \$700 for a full suite.

If you're painting a basement suite between tenants, timing matters. Most painters can complete a one-bedroom suite in two to three days and a two-bedroom in three to five days. In Metro Vancouver's competitive rental market — where a clean, freshly painted suite can command \$100 to \$200 more per month in rent — the investment pays for itself within a year or two.

For a rental suite, choose durable, washable paint in an eggshell or satin finish. Products like Benjamin Moore Regal or Sherwin-Williams ProMar 200 hold up well to tenant wear and make cleaning easier.

Schedule your painting for between tenancies and get a firm timeline from the painter so you minimize vacancy days.

Q11

How much does it cost to paint the exterior of a house in Metro Vancouver?

Exterior house painting in Metro Vancouver typically costs between \$4,500 and \$12,000 for an average-sized home (1,800–2,500 square feet), depending on the number of storeys, siding material, and condition. A single-storey rancher on the east side might come in around \$4,500–\$6,500, while a two-storey home in North Vancouver with cedar siding and significant prep work could run \$8,000–\$12,000 or more. These estimates generally include pressure washing, scraping, priming bare spots, caulking, and two coats of quality exterior paint. Cedar and wood siding tends to cost more because it requires extra prep and often a primer coat. Stucco homes are usually on the lower end since the surface accepts paint more readily. Keep in mind that Metro Vancouver's wet climate means

timing matters — most exterior work happens between May and October, and peak summer months can carry a slight premium due to demand. Scaffolding or lift rentals for taller homes can add \$800–\$2,000 to the total. If your home has lead paint (common in pre-1980 builds in areas like East Vancouver or New Westminister), abatement adds another \$1,500–\$4,000. Always get at least three written quotes that break down prep, materials, and labour so you can compare fairly.

Q12

What does cabinet painting cost in Vancouver? Is it worth it compared to replacing them?

Professional cabinet painting in Metro Vancouver typically runs between \$3,500 and \$7,500 for an average kitchen with 20–30 cabinet doors and drawer fronts. This includes removing hardware, degreasing, sanding, priming, applying two coats of a durable finish (usually a hybrid enamel or lacquer), and reinstalling everything. Larger kitchens with more cabinetry or specialty finishes like two-tone colour schemes can push costs to \$8,000–\$10,000. Compared to a full cabinet replacement, which easily runs \$15,000–\$40,000 in the Metro Vancouver market, painting is a fraction of the cost and can completely transform the look of your kitchen. The key is proper preparation — cabinets see heavy daily use, so a professional spray finish with the right primer and topcoat is essential for durability. Many Vancouver painters now offer off-site spraying, where they remove your doors, spray them in a controlled shop environment, and reinstall them. This method produces a factory-smooth finish and typically costs about 10–15% more than on-site work but delivers noticeably better results. A well-done cabinet paint job should last 8–12 years with proper care. If your existing cabinets are structurally sound, painting is almost always the smarter investment. Ask your painter for references specifically showing cabinet work so you can judge their finish quality before committing.

Q13

How much should I expect to pay for deck staining in the Vancouver area?

Deck staining costs in Metro Vancouver generally range from \$3 to \$6 per square foot, meaning a standard 300-square-foot deck would cost between \$900 and \$1,800 for a professional job. A larger 500-square-foot deck with railings and stairs could run \$1,800–\$3,500. The price depends on the deck's current condition, the type of stain chosen, and how much prep is needed. A deck that just needs a light cleaning and a maintenance coat of semi-transparent stain sits at the lower end, while a deck with peeling old stain that needs stripping, sanding, and brightening before application will be at the higher end. In Metro Vancouver, cedar decks are extremely common, and they respond well to penetrating oil-based stains that protect against our heavy rainfall. A quality exterior deck stain typically costs \$60–\$90 per gallon for the product alone. Given Vancouver's climate, most professionals recommend restaining every two to three years for horizontal surfaces exposed to rain. Solid-colour stains last longer but hide the wood grain, while semi-transparent stains showcase the natural cedar but need more frequent reapplication. Pressure-treated lumber decks are usually a bit cheaper to stain since the wood is less porous. To get the best value, schedule your deck staining for a dry stretch in late spring or early fall and get quotes from painters who specialize in exterior wood finishes.

Q14

What are commercial painting rates like in Metro Vancouver for office or retail spaces?

Commercial painting in Metro Vancouver typically costs between \$2.50 and \$5.50 per square foot of paintable wall surface, though rates vary significantly based on the scope and complexity of the project. A straightforward office repaint of 2,000 square feet of wall space might run \$5,000–\$11,000, while a retail buildout with accent walls, high ceilings, and detailed trim could cost \$8,000–\$18,000. Most commercial painters in the Vancouver market charge based on the total project rather than hourly, and quotes usually include minor drywall repairs, one coat of primer where needed, and two coats of commercial-grade latex paint. After-hours and weekend work, which is common for occupied retail or restaurant spaces, typically carries a 15–25% premium. High-ceiling work in warehouses or lobbies requiring lifts or scaffolding adds \$1,500–\$4,000 depending on height and access. Specialty coatings like epoxy floors, anti-graffiti finishes, or fire-rated intumescent paint have their own pricing — epoxy garage or warehouse floors run \$4–\$8 per square foot in this market. One thing to note is that commercial projects in Metro Vancouver often require WorkSafeBC compliance documentation and proof of adequate liability insurance (typically \$2–\$5 million). When comparing quotes, make sure each contractor is including the same scope of prep work and the same quality of paint, as this is where pricing differences usually hide. Request a detailed written scope of work

before signing any contract.

Q15

Is it cheaper to hire a painter by the hour or get a flat project price in Vancouver?

In Metro Vancouver, most professional painters charge between \$45 and \$75 per hour per painter, while project-based pricing is the more common approach for residential work. For homeowners, a flat project price is almost always the better deal and the safer choice. Here is why: hourly billing creates uncertainty — a two-bedroom repaint might take one crew 16 hours and another crew 24 hours, meaning your final bill could vary by \$1,000 or more with no difference in quality. With project pricing, a typical bedroom repaint runs \$400–\$700, a full interior of a 1,500-square-foot condo costs \$3,500–\$6,000, and you know the total before work begins. Hourly rates do make sense for small, unpredictable jobs like patching and touching up a handful of spots (\$350–\$600 for a half-day minimum) or colour consultations. Some painters also charge hourly for extensive prep work on older homes where the scope is hard to estimate upfront — this is reasonable as long as they give you a time estimate and keep you updated. If a painter only offers hourly rates for a full repaint, that can be a red flag suggesting they lack the experience to estimate accurately. When comparing quotes, always ask what is included: number of coats, prep work, paint quality, and whether moving furniture is part of the deal. A slightly higher project price that includes thorough prep and premium paint is usually better value than a low hourly rate with shortcuts.

Q16

How much money do I actually save doing my own painting vs hiring a pro in Vancouver?

For a typical Metro Vancouver living room, a DIY paint job costs roughly \$200–\$400 in materials (paint, rollers, brushes, tape, drop cloths, and a tray), while hiring a professional for the same room runs \$800–\$1,400. So on paper, you save \$600–\$1,000. However, the real calculation is more nuanced. If you are painting a single accent wall or a small bedroom, DIY makes good financial sense — the skill gap is manageable and the savings are proportionally large. But for larger projects like a full interior repaint, the math changes. A professional crew can paint an entire 1,200-square-foot condo in one to two days, while a DIY effort typically stretches over two to three weekends. Factor in your time at even \$30 per hour and the savings shrink considerably. There are also hidden costs with DIY: buying or renting a quality roller frame, extension poles, and painter's tape adds up, and leftover paint and supplies often go to waste. Where professionals truly earn their fee is in prep work and finish quality — cutting clean lines at ceilings, around trim, and at colour transitions takes real skill and practice. Mistakes like drips, uneven coverage, or poor adhesion can mean repainting sooner, negating your savings entirely. The best middle ground many Vancouver homeowners use is to do simple rooms themselves and hire a pro for high-visibility areas like the main living space, kitchen, and any high or vaulted ceilings. Get a quote for just the tricky rooms to see if the split approach works for your budget.

Q17

When is it actually worth paying more for premium paint in Vancouver?

Premium paints from brands like Benjamin Moore Aura, Sherwin-Williams Emerald, or Dulux Diamond typically cost \$65–\$90 per gallon compared to \$35–\$50 for standard lines, but the extra investment pays off in specific situations common to Metro Vancouver homes. For exterior surfaces, premium paint is almost always worth it — our climate with heavy rain, UV exposure, and temperature swings demands superior adhesion and moisture resistance. A premium exterior paint can last 10–15 years versus 5–7 years for a budget option, meaning you avoid a \$5,000–\$10,000 repaint cycle. On a 2,500-square-foot home exterior, the paint cost difference between premium and standard is only about \$300–\$500, which is negligible compared to the labour savings of not repainting for an extra five to eight years. For interiors, premium paint makes the biggest difference in high-traffic and high-moisture areas: kitchens, bathrooms, hallways, and kids' rooms. The superior washability and stain resistance of premium formulations means walls stay looking fresh for years longer. Premium paints also offer better one-coat coverage, which can actually reduce labour costs — your painter may need only one coat instead of two, saving \$500–\$1,500 on a full interior job. Where you can safely economize is spare bedrooms, closets, and ceilings in dry rooms —

standard paint performs perfectly well in these low-wear areas. A good painter can help you create a room-by-room plan that uses premium paint where it matters and standard paint where it does not, optimizing your overall budget. Ask your painting contractor which product lines they recommend and why.

Q18

How much of a painting quote is just prep work and is all that prep really necessary?

In most Metro Vancouver painting quotes, prep work accounts for 40–60% of the total labour cost, and yes, it is absolutely necessary for a lasting result. On a \$5,000 interior repaint, roughly \$2,000–\$3,000 covers prep: filling nail holes and dents, sanding rough spots, caulking gaps around trim and baseboards, cleaning surfaces, priming stained or patched areas, and masking off areas that should not be painted. Skipping or rushing prep is the single most common reason paint jobs fail prematurely. For exterior work, prep is even more critical and costly. A typical Vancouver exterior paint job might include \$1,500–\$3,000 just for pressure washing, scraping loose paint, sanding, spot-priming bare wood, and caulking around windows and trim. Homes in wetter areas like North Vancouver or Port Moody often have more extensive prep needs due to moisture damage and moss growth. If a quote seems unusually low, check how much prep is included — some painters cut corners by spraying directly over dirty or flaking surfaces, which leads to peeling within a year or two. Drywall repairs are usually quoted separately from standard prep. Small patches (nail pops, minor cracks) are typically included, but larger repairs like water-damaged sections or re-taping seams can add \$200–\$800 depending on extent. When reviewing quotes, look for a line-item breakdown of prep versus painting. A painter who spends adequate time on preparation is protecting your investment. Ask specifically what prep steps are included and do not hesitate to request that the prep work be inspected before painting begins.

Q19

What does it cost to get a fence painted or stained in the Vancouver area?

Fence painting or staining in Metro Vancouver typically costs between \$8 and \$16 per linear foot for a standard six-foot privacy fence, with most homeowners paying \$1,200–\$3,200 for an average 150–200 linear foot perimeter fence. The price depends heavily on the fence style, height, condition, and whether you choose paint or stain. A simple flat-board cedar fence in decent condition needing a semi-transparent stain sits at the lower end around \$8–\$11 per linear foot, while a lattice-topped or board-on-board fence requiring both sides painted with solid-colour exterior paint runs \$13–\$16 per linear foot. New, unfinished cedar fences are cheaper to coat since they require less prep — roughly \$6–\$10 per linear foot for a first application. Older fences with peeling paint need stripping or heavy sanding, which can add \$3–\$5 per linear foot to the total. For Vancouver's wet climate, most professionals recommend a penetrating semi-transparent stain for cedar fences rather than solid paint, as stain allows moisture to escape and does not peel — a major advantage given our rainfall. A quality cedar stain runs \$55–\$80 per gallon. Solid paint looks sharp initially but tends to trap moisture behind the film, leading to bubbling and peeling within three to five years in our climate. If your fence borders a lane or shared property line, confirm whether you need to coordinate with your neighbour for access — painting both sides is ideal but not always possible. Get quotes that specify whether one or both sides are included and what type of product will be used.

Q20

Are there extra costs for painting older Vancouver homes that I should know about?

Older homes in Metro Vancouver — especially pre-1980 builds common in neighbourhoods like Kitsilano, Mount Pleasant, East Vancouver, and New Westminster — often come with additional painting costs that can add \$1,500–\$5,000 or more to a standard quote. The biggest potential expense is lead paint. Any home built before 1978 may contain lead-based paint, and in BC, contractors are required to follow WorkSafeBC guidelines for lead-safe work practices. A lead paint test costs \$30–\$50 per area, and if lead is found, containment and safe removal add \$2,000–\$5,000 depending on the extent. Plaster walls, common in older Vancouver homes, require different prep than modern drywall — cracks need to be properly filled and stabilized, which can add \$500–\$1,500 to an interior job. Exterior wood trim on character homes often has multiple layers of old paint that need stripping rather than simple sanding, adding \$1,000–\$3,000 for detailed trim work. Heritage homes in First Shaughnessy or Strathcona may have additional requirements — while interior painting usually does not trigger heritage review, exterior colour changes on designated heritage properties may need approval from the City of Vancouver. Knob-

and-tube wiring, found in many pre-1950 homes, can complicate wall repairs if insulation needs to be added. Old caulking around original wood windows often needs full removal and replacement, adding \$15–\$30 per window. Despite these extra costs, painting remains one of the most cost-effective ways to maintain and refresh an older Vancouver home. Ask potential painters about their experience with older homes specifically, and request a thorough pre-quote inspection so there are no surprises once the job starts.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Vancouver Paint Contractors. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any basement finishing project. Information is current as of March 15, 2026 and may change. Visit vancouverpaintcontractors.com for the latest answers.