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painting, *n.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /'peɪntɪŋ/, U.S. /'peɪn(t)ɪŋ/

Forms: ME **peinting**, ME **peintinge**, ME **peintunge**, ME **peyndyng**, ME **peynting**, ME ...

Etymology: In early Middle English, probably < Old French *peinture* PAINTURE *n.*...

1.

a. Painted matter; that which is painted. In later use *esp.* as a count noun: a representation on a surface executed in paint or colours; a painted picture or likeness.

In quot. c1230 *fig.*

- ?c1225 (1200) *Ancrene Riwe* (Cleo. C. 6) (1972) 178 To childene ha beoð þæt fleoð an peintinge [c1230 *Corpus Cambr.* *peinture*; a1250 *Titus adepeinture*] þe þuncheð ham grisliche & grureful to bihalden.
- c1230 (1200) *Ancrene Riwe* (Corpus Cambr.) (1962) 124 Wa & wunne i þis world al nis bute peintunge [a1250 *Titus* *peintinge*; a1250 *Nero* *ase peinture*].
- a1250 (1200) *Ancrene Riwe* (Nero) (1952) 179 Ine schelde beoð þreo þinges: þæt treo and þæt leðer & þe peintunge [c1230 *Corpus Cambr.* *litunge*].
- a1382 *Bible* (Wycliffite, E.V.) (Bodl. 959) Wisd. xv. 4 Not in to error in ladde vs þe out thenking of þe euele craft of men ne þe shadeve of peynting [a1425 *L. V.* *peynture*; *L. picturæ*].
- c1400 WYCLIF *Sel. Eng. Wks.* (1871) III. 455 Alle men worschyppe..þoo ymages, or ony peyntingus, synnen and done ydolatrie.
- ?c1425 tr. Guy de Chauliac *Grande Chirurgie* (Paris) 29 Henry..wolde determyne anothomye wiþ 13 peyntinges [?a1425 *N.Y. Acad. Med.* *picturez*; ?a1425 *Hunterian* *ymages depeynted*; *L. picturis*].
- ?c1475 *Catholicon Anglicum* (BL Add. 15562) f. 91^v, Payntyngge, *pictura*, *emblema*.
- 1547 KING EDWARD VI *Iniunccions* §28 Also, that they shall take awaie, vtterly extincte, and destroye, all shrines,..candelstickes, tryndilles or rolles of waxe, pictures, paintynges [etc.].
- 1561 H. CHEKE tr. F. Negri *Freewyl* v. v. 184 God doth strayghtly forbyd vs to make any grauen images, payntynges, or other lykenesses of any creature, to geue honour and seruice vnto them.
- 1598 SHAKESPEARE *Loves Labours Lost* III. i. 19 With..your handes in your pocket like a man after the olde painting.
- 1639 N. N. tr. J. Du Bosq *Compl. Woman* I. 10 To refresh the eyes with their paintings.
- 1689 *London Gaz.* No. 2511/4, A Collection of Paintings and fine Limnings by the best Masters.
- 1724 J. HENLEY in J. Henley et al. tr. Pliny the Younger *Epist. & Panegyrick* I. v. vi. 224 There is a painting of Branches, and of Birds..that equals the Beauty of the Marble.
- 1766 J. ENTICK *Surv. London* in *New Hist. London* IV. 449 The pavillions or alcoves are ornamented with paintings.
- 1809 W. BLAKE *Descr. Catal.* 62 The distinction made between a Painting and a Drawing.
- 1876 H. JAMES *Roderick Hudson* iii. 91 Amid dropped curtains and the scattered gleam of firelight upon polished carvings and mellow paintings.

- 1918 W. CATHER *My Antonia* I. xi. 92 We had files of those..magazines which used to publish colored lithographs of popular paintings.
- 1972 *Modelworld* Oct. 81/1 When all the painting of this stage is completely dry, the..serials can be applied.
- 2002 *Adrenalin* No. 13. 135/2 The ceiling is like a pointillist painting composed of a thousand pieces of Blu Tack.

b. The representing of a subject on a surface by the application of paint or colours; the art of making such representations; (in extended use) the practice of applying paint to a canvas, etc., for any artistic purpose.

- a1387 J. TREVISA tr. R. Higden *Polychron.* (St. John's Cambr.) (1869) II. 147 Þei beþ i-cleped Pictes by cause of peyntynge of woundes þat beþ i-sene on hire bodies.
- a1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (BL Add.) f. 50, Somtyme, spekinge of a writere oþer of a peyntour, me seiþ þese han a good hond, þat is to menyng, good craft of wrytynge oþir good lecture of poyntyng.
- c1425 EDWARD, DUKE OF YORK *Master of Game* (Vesp. B. 12) (1904) 22 His heed may not be wel deuysed Wiþout paintyng [Fr. *paintre*].
- 1440 *Prompt. Parv.* (Harl. 221) 390 Peyntynge, or portrature, *pictura*.
- 1531 T. ELYOT *Bk. named Governour* I. viii. sig. Cviii^v, He shulde be..enstructed in painting or keruinge.
- 1558 *Treas. Acc.* in W. Lauder *Tractate* (1864) Pref. 8 For paynting of the vii Planetis, of the kart, with the rest of the convoy xvi *li*.
- 1598 R. HAYDOCKE tr. G. P. Lomazzo *Tracte Artes Paintinge* I. 7 Painting, Carving and Plasticke are all but one and the same arte.
- 1638 F. DU JON *Painting of Ancients* 12 The facultie of Painters..knoweth no end in painting.
- 1690 J. LOCKE *Ess. Humane Understanding* II. ix. 62 The Idea we receive..is only a Plain variously colour'd, as is evident in Painting.
- 1714 *Boston News-Jet.* 12 Apr. 2/2 A Boarding School, where will be carefully Taught..Filigrew, Painting upon Glass, Writing, Arithmetick, and Singing Psalm Tunes.
- 1770 J. REYNOLDS *Wks.* (1855) 329 There are excellencies in the art of painting beyond what is commonly called the imitation of Nature.
- 1841 R. W. EMERSON *Ess.* 1st Ser. xii. 294 Painting and sculpture are gymnastics of the eye.
- 1874 *Internat. Rev.* Mar. 204 The painting of the picture was nothing more than the clean and orderly setting forth of what already existed.
- 1900 E. SINGLETON *Great Pictures* 6 He is before all things a poetical painter, blending the charm of story and sentiment, the medium of the art of poetry, with the charm of line and colour, the medium of abstract painting.
- 1949 F. SWINNERTON *Doctor's Wife comes to Stay* 163, I do a bit of painting, myself; enough to take the boys in art.
- 1988 *Classical Q.* 38 113 The legend..is known to have been a theme of sculpture, painting, and lyric in the fifth century.

c. *Computing.* The creation of graphics or images in electronic form in a

manner analogous to painting (sense 1b), as by the use of a paint program (*paint program n.* at PAINT *n.* Compounds 2).

- 1972 *N.Y. Times* 5 Dec. 94/6 Another device named 'Epic-II', which is an experimental system for electronic painting.
- 1995 *Desktop Publishers Jrnl.* July 32/1 Produced by the same people..who created the inexpensive Matisse painting software.

2.

a. The action of applying a coat of paint to a surface; the action of colouring or staining something; (occas.) an instance of this. Also *fig.*

- 1351–2 in *Antiquary* (1914) 50 386 For arnement, rosyn, and geet for the painting of the glass.
- 1465 in T. H. Turner *Manners & Househ. Expenses Eng.* (1841) 290 Paid to Crystyne for powderenge and peyntynge of my masteres sheldes and his sadylle, x s.
- 1497 in M. Oppenheim *Naval Accts. & Inventories Henry VII* (1896) 237 Workyng abought the payntyng of the seid ship.
- 1507 in J. B. Paul *Accts. Treasurer Scotl.* (1902) IV. 33 For..scarlet to the prince hurle stule;..Item, for paynting of the rollis of it.
- 1579 W. WILKINSON *Confut. Familye of Loue* 48 These his vayne payntynges of his margent, shall hereafter make his cause more odious.
- 1602 E. HAYES *Treat. Planting in J. Brereton Briefe Relation Discov. Virginia* 16 The Saluages weare faire colours in some of their attire, whereby we hope to find rich dies and colours for painting.
- 1661 G. RUST *Let. conc. Origen in Phenix* (1721) I. 42 If the House be ruinous..all the external Painting and Pargetting imaginable..can neither secure the Inhabitants from its Fall.
- 1715 R. SOUTH *Serm.* IV. i. 46 Like the Plaistering of Marble, or the Painting of Gold.
- 1751 E. HAYWOOD *Betsy Thoughtless* III. iii. 33 He has bespoke the finest coach, and the genteelest chariot you ever saw,—all in a new taste, and perfectly French;—they are quite finished, all but the painting.
- 1813 J. AUSTEN *Let.* 25 Sept. (1952) 337 No. 10 is made very comfortable with cleaning, and Painting & the Sloane S^t furniture.
- 1861 DICKENS *Great Expectations* II. vii. 107 Rather a stately house of its kind, but dolefully in want of painting.
- 1925 *Woman's World* Apr. 47/3 (*caption*) The painting of residential property may readily be arranged on a convenient payment basis.
- 1949 P. H. BUCK *Coming of Maori* (1950) II. xiii. 319 The decorative painting of woodwork did not advance very far in Polynesia.
- 1988 *Which?* Nov. 518/1 (*heading*) Our tips to make painting less of a chore.

b. The colouring of the face or body for cosmetic purposes; (occas.) an instance of this. Now *rare exc.* as an extended use of sense 2a.

face-painting: see FACE *n.* Compounds 2.

- 1435 R. MISYN tr. R. Rolle *Fire of Love* 95 Of qwhome sum þer fowles to hyde or þer bewte þa study

to increse with payntyng of begillynge avotre þer faces þa color & qwhittyn.

- 1483 CAXTON tr. G. de la Tour-Landry *Knyghte of Toure* sig. Eiv, The peyntyng of her face..was cause and occasion of suche horryble countrefaiture.
- 1577 R. HOLINSHED *Hist. Eng.* 79/1 in *Chron.* I, Suche paynting of their bodyes..they estemed a great brauerie.
- 1594 T. BOWES tr. P. de la Primaudaye *French Acad.* II. 77 In all their paintings and prankings they..lift vp themselues against nature.
- 1612 J. SMITH *Map of Virginia* 21 Many other formes of paintings they use, but he is the most gallant that is the most monstrous to behould.
- 1650 T. FULLER *Pisgah-sight of Palestine* IV. vi. 116 Painting was practised by Harlots, adulterated complexions well agreeing with adulterous conditions.
- a1704 T. BROWNE *Wks.* (1715) IV. 13 Your Youth flies away on the Back of swift Hours, Which no praying, no painting, no sighing restores.
- 1768 O. GOLDSMITH *Good natur'd Man* IV. 53, I presum'd to reprove you for painting: but your warmer blushes soon convinc'd the company, that the colouring was all from nature.
- 1880 'OUIDA' *Moths* III. xxi. 17 Vera would be a sublime wax doll..if she rouged... It is all cant to be against painting.
- 1952 H. JENKINS *Edward Benlowes* xviii. 209 At this date, according also to Evelyn, the painting of the face was 'a most ignominious thing and us'd only by prostitutes.'

c. Computing. The filling of (part of) a display screen with a particular colour.

- 1984 *InfoWorld* (Nexis) 21 May 74 You can select color masks for painting that will allow you to replace all of a certain color in a design without touching any other color.
- 1995 *NetGuide* Sept. 42/1 There's good use of graphics..and of Netscape 1.1 features like full-screen painting.

3. The result of applying paint; the fact or quality of being painted; colouring; pictorial decoration. Also: the relative condition of something as regards paint (freq. with modifying adjective).

- c1390 W. HILTON *Mixed Life* (Vernon) in C. Horstmann *Yorkshire Writers* (1895) I. 273 He [*sc.* Christ] wol cun þe more þonk for meke wasschyng of his feet..þen for al þe precieuse peyntyng & araying þat þou can make aboute his hed.
- a1450 *St. Edith* (Faust.) (1883) 1780 Þre lytulle 3ates of entrynge..veron set on crosse wyse, wt þre crosses also of ry3t gode peyndyng.
- a1500 (1450) *Gesta Rom.* (Harl. 7333) 264 He ordeined also vij craftes abowte it y-peynt, in the entent þat the childe my3t..beholde the craftis, and the Riall payntyng yn hem.
- 1593 *Rites & Mon. Church Durh.* (1842) 29 The fairness of the wall, the staitlynes of the pictures and the lyvelyhoode of the paynting.
- 1601 B. JONSON *Fount. of Selfe-love* I. iv. sig. C2^v, To praise the cleanness of the streete wherein he dwelt, or the proud painting of his posts.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Timon of Athens* (1623) I. i. 159 A peece of Painting, which I do beseech Your

Lordship to accept.

- 1760–1 in R. Willis & J. W. Clark *Archit. Hist. Univ. Cambr.* (1886) II. 496 Repairing the painting of the room.
- 1782 'J. H. ST. J. DE CRÈVECŒUR' *Lett. from Amer. Farmer* xi. 254 He brought this piece of painting over with him.
- 1817 J. EVANS *Excurs. Windsor* 22 A rich piece of painting in enamel.
- a1859 T. B. MACAULAY *Hist. Eng.* (1861) V. xxiii. 112 Gazers who admired the painting and gilding of his Excellency's carriages.
- 1893 'O. THANET' *Stories Western Town* 3 They [*sc.* the houses] were in good painting and repair.
- 1927 R. H. WILENSKI *Mod. Movement in Art* 147 Imitations of..Post-Cubist art are not confined to actual works of painting.
- 1977 S. KOSTOF *Architect* 25 A good deal of work had to be done on the building itself: the fluting of the columns, for example, the painting of the sculptural decoration, and the finish of the ceiling.
- 1998 *Washington Times* (Nexis) 16 July c8 She picks up another piece of painting, a watercolor of a woman who looks a bit like a young Betty Ford.

4. *fig.* Chiefly *literary*. Depiction in words, representation in vivid language; (occas.) an instance of this. In later use freq. with explicit allusion to the literal sense.

See also WORD PAINTING *n.*

- a1400 *Ancrene Riwe* (Pepys) (1976)) 109 Þenche on þine synnes, on þe ioyes of heuene..What he haþ done for þe, how vnkynde þou haste ben azeins hym; Vche one of þise wolde haue a longe poyntyng.
- c1425 LYDGATE *Trooyes Bk.* (Augustus A. 4) II. 194 Of peyntyng I haue noon excellence With sondry hewes noble.
- c1450 *Speculum Christiani* (Harl. 6580) 230 Al pompe and makynge or peyntyng of wordes and ydel argumentes of worldly philosophy be turnede euyn into nocht.
- ?1615 G. CHAPMAN tr. Homer *Odysses* (new ed.) XIX. 295 Thus, many tales Vlysses told his wife, At most, but painting; yet most like the life.
- 1679 DRYDEN *Troilus & Cressida* Pref. sig. b3, The painting of it is so lively, and the words so moving.
- 1771 T. JEFFERSON *Let.* 3 Aug. in *Papers* (1950) I. 77 We never reflect whether the story we read be truth or fiction. If the painting be lively, and a tolerable picture of nature, we are thrown into a reverie.
- 1791 T. PAINE *Rights of Man* I. 21 The tragic paintings by which Mr Burke has outraged his own imagination.
- 1845 A. ALISON in *Blackwood's Mag.* Sept. 354 James..is yet so enamoured of description, and so conscious of his powers in that respect, that he in general overlays his writings with painting to the eye.
- a1877 W. BAGEHOT *Lit. Stud.* (1879) 207 Few things in literary painting are more wonderful.
- 1986 *N.Y. Times* (Nexis) 30 Nov. VII. 32/3 Ronald Blythe's specialty is painting with words; his subject is the English landscape, with figures.

†5. In *sing.* and *pl.* Pigment, paint; cosmetics. *Obs.*

- a1425 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (Morgan) f. 210^v, Glas..is amonge stones as a foule [L. *stultus*] amonge men, for it fongeþ all maner of colour & [a1398 *BL Add.* maner colour of] peyntynge [L. *omnem tincturam*].
- a1500 in J. Evans & M. S. Serjeantson *Eng. Mediaeval Lapidaries* (1933) 114 Glas..is amonge stones as a fowle is amonge men, for it receyueþ al maner of colors & peyntynge.
- 1591 R. PERCYVALL *Bibliotheca Hispanica* Dict. s.v. *Mudas*, Painting for womens faces, *Fucus*.
- 1594 T. LODGE & R. GREENE *Looking Glasse* sig. C^v, The costly paintings fetcht fro curious Tyre, Haue mended in my face what nature mist.
- 1608 E. TOPSELL *Hist. Serpents* 144 Adulterated with Meale, Chalke, white-earth, or painting.
- 1650 J. BULWER *Anthropometamorphosis* 158 Thou defacest the features of God, if thou cover thy Face with painting.
- 1675 *Char. Town Misse* 7 The rest of her retinue consists of her She-Secretary, that keeps the Box of her Teeth, her Hair, and her Painting.
- 1762 D. GARRICK *Cymbeline* III. vii. 46 Some Jay of Italy, Whose Feathers were her painting, hath betrayed him.

COMPOUNDS

C1.

painting-apron *n.*

- 1620 tr. Boccaccio *Decameron* II. VIII. iii. f. 63, He tooke off his large *painting Apron, which he fastened with his girdle in the manner of a sacke.
- 1886 *Gentleman's Mag.* Apr. 322, I always found her bending over her easel, a large painting-apron covering her shabby dress.
- 1916 W. D. HOWELLS *Daughter of Storage* 191 She had her ugly painting-apron still on, and her thumb through the hole in her palette.

painting brush *n.*

- 1737 C. LEADBETTER *Mech. Dialling* xxvii. 193 *Painting Brushes of several Sizes.
- 1855 THACKERAY *Newcomes* II. x. 100 A great palette, and a sheaf of painting-brushes.
- 1990 *Newsday* (N.Y.) (Nexis) 22 Feb. 13 You can prevent drops from landing on your head by simply sticking the painting brush through the middle of a paper plate and securing with scotch tape.

painting-cleaner *n.*

- 1852 THACKERAY *Henry Esmond* i, As one has seen unskilful *painting-cleaners do.

† painting colour *n. Obs.*

- 1559 P. MORWYNG tr. C. Gesner *Treasure of Euonymus* 236 After the same maner that oyl of Spik and oyl of Cloues is wont to be made of them y^t make *painting colours.
- 1735 *Dict. Polygraph. at Body*, To bear a body, a term us'd of painting colours.
- 1899 *Times* 10 Jan. 14/1 (*adv.*) Gesellschaft der Chemischen and Lackfabrik Charles Bowet..recommend..Paper-hanging Colours, Varnish, Oil Lakes, Enamel and Painting Colours, Lakes for Leather.

painting machine *n.*

- 1850 *Sci. Amer.* 14 Dec. 99/3 The painting of such a vast quantity of sash bars has..been provided for by means of a '*painting machine'.
- 1966 'H. MACDIARMID' *Company I've Kept* ii. 59 A painting-machine like Jean Tinguely's to produce unexpected designs.
- 2002 *Boston Globe* (Nexis) 27 June 8 Nearby is a large steel grid, an electric painting machine he built in his Medford studio.

painting room *n.*

- a1750 L. PILKINGTON *Mem.* (1754) III. 43 He gave me a little Room to myself; but, as it was withinside of his *Painting-room, I was a Prisoner all the Morning, and might fast and write till Three o'Clock in the Day.
- 1803 B. GREATHEED *Jrnl.* 16 Jan. (1953) ii. 27 We now went to Davids painting room in the Louvre.
- 1952 W. PLOMER *Museum Pieces* ix. 68 Since my visit to the painting room he had almost completely hidden from me the feelings which seemed to have driven him to make a pass at me.

painting stone *n.*

- 1837 M. M. SHERWOOD *Henry Milner* I. xiii. 57 Bits of broken plates, which Henry used as pallets and *painting-stones.
- 2000 *Albuquerque* (New Mexico) *Jrnl.* (Nexis) 17 Aug. 24 She pours the pigment into a painting stone and rubs it with black hematite until a proper consistency is reached.

C2.

painting cloth *n.* (*a*) *Obs. rare* = PAINTED CLOTH *n.*; (*b*) a piece of cloth designed or prepared for an artist to paint on; (*c*) a large piece of cloth used as a protective covering for furniture, etc., while a room is being painted.

- 1668 F. KIRKMAN *Eng. Rogue* II. xii. sig. H8^v, Old *painting Cloath..Dives in the flames..the Prodigal on Horse-back.
- 1992 *Los Angeles Times* (Nexis) 11 Nov. F2/2 It cleverly covers the second act furniture with a painting cloth (an added line explains that Gould's office is being painted).
- 1999 *China Daily* 10 Dec. 9 On canvas, painting cloth, and other materials, Viallat presents to viewers

ever-changing lines, symbols, and colours.

2000 *Calgary (Alberta) Sun* (Nexis) 20 Feb. C031 Protective Products International..goes beyond offering common painting cloths with items like hardy protective skins for tubs.

2002 *Advertiser (Adelaide)* (Nexis) 31 Aug. 41 Fabric painting, pre-shaded painting cloth.

painting root *n. Brit.* (now *rare*) the plant corn gromwell, *Lithospermum arvense*, the root of which was formerly used to produce a red colouring matter.

1796 W. WITHERING *Arrangem. Brit. Plants* (ed. 3) II. 226 *Lithospermum arvense*... Corn Gromwell. Bastard Alkanet... *Painting Root... [*note* The bark of the root tinges wax and oil of a beautiful red, similar to that which is obtained from the root of the foreign Alkanet that is kept in the shops.]

1919 *Bot. Exchange Club* 5 511 *Lithospermum arvense* L. Swalcliffe Grange, Oxon.,...in cornfields... Sent to show the red root which apparently gives occasion for the colloquial name 'Painting root'.

painting, n.

Third edition, July 2010; online version November 2010. <<http://www.oed.com:80/Entry/136092>>; accessed 15 February 2011. An entry for this word was first included in *New English Dictionary*, 1904.

Oxford University Press

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