painting, n.

Pronunciation: Brit. /ˈpeɪntɪŋ/, U.S. /ˈpeɪnt(ɪ)ŋ/

Forms: ME painting, ME peintinge, ME peintunge, ME peyndynge, 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.

1547 KING EDWARD VI Iniunctions §28 Also, that they shall take awai, ytterly extincte, and destroye, all shrines,..candelstickes, tryndilles or rolles of waxe, pictures, paintynges [etc.].

1581 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 pavilions 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 Ántonia 1. 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 beeþ i-cleped Pictes by cause of peyntyng of woundes þat beeþ 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 seþ þese han a good hond, þat is to menynge, good craft of writyng oþir good lecture of poynytynge.

c1425    EDWARD, DUKE OF YORK Master of Game (Vesp. B. 12) (1904) 22   His heed may not be wel deuysed Wiþout paintyng [Fr. painsdre].

1440    Promp. Pars. (Harl. 221) 390   Peyntynge, or portrature, pictura.

1531    T. ELYOT Bk. named Gouernour 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 cart, with the rest of the convoy xvi li.

1598    R. HAYDOCKE tr. G. P. Lomazzo Tracte Artes Paintinge 1. 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 11. ix. 62   The Idea we receive is only a Plain variously colour'd, as is evident in Painting.

1714    Boston News-let. 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

\(\text{paint program n. at PAINT n. Compounds 2}\).

1972  *N.Y. Times* 5 Dec. 94/6  Another device named ‘Epic-II’, which is an experimental system for
electronic painting.

1995  *Desktop Publishers Jrnл.* 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 peyntyng of my masteres sheldes and his saddy lle, 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 yayne payntynges of his margent, shall
hereafter make his cause more odious.

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.

1813  J. AUSTEN  *Let.* 25 Sept. (1952) 337  No. 10 is made very comfortable with cleaning, and Painting
& the Sloane S’ 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.

\(\text{face-painting: see FACE n. Compounds 2}\).

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 peyntynge of her face..was cause and occasion of suche horrrible 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.

1704  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..pen for al þe preciouse peyntyng & araying þat þou can make aboute his hed.

1450  St. Edith (Faust.) (1883) 1780  Pre lyttule 3ates of entrlynge..weron set on crosse wyse, wt þre crosses also of ryȝt gode peyndynge.

1450  Gesta Rom. (Harl. 7333) 264  He ordeined also vij craftes abowte it y-peynt, in the entent þat the childe myȝt..beholde the craftis, and the Riall payntyng yn hem.

1450  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 1. iv. sig. C2⁺,  To praise the cleannesse of the streete wherein he dwelt, or the prouident painting of his posts.

1616  SHAKESPEARE Timon of Athens (1623) I. i. 159  A peece of Painting, which I do beseech Your
Lordship to accept.


1782  ‘J. H. Sr. J. de Crèvecoeur’ 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.

1859  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. Wileński 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.

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5. In **sing.** and **pl.** Pigment, paint; cosmetics. **Obs.**
a1425 J. Trevisa tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus De Proprietatibus Rerum (Morgan) f. 210, Glas. is amonge stones as a foule [L. stultus] amonge men, for it fongeþ all maner of colour & [a1398 BL Add. maner colour of] peyntyng [L. omnem tincturam].

a1500 in J. Evans & M. S. Serjeantson Eng. Mediaeval Lapidaries (1933) 114 Glas. is amonge stones as a foule is amonge men, for it receyueþ al maner of colors & peyntynges.


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.

COMPONDS

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.


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.
painting, n. : Oxford English Dictionary

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' make *painting colours.

1735 *Dict. Polygraph.* at *Body*, To bear a body, a term us'd of painting colours.


**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.**

1750 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’, 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
painting, 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 *Arrangement 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’.

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california