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Panel beater

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A **panel beater** is a term used in some [Commonwealth](#) countries to describe a person who repairs vehicle bodies back to their factory state after having been damaged (e.g., after being involved in a collision).^[1]

Description [[edit](#)]

In the USA and Canada, the same job is done by an **auto body mechanic**. They do this using many skills such as [planishing](#) as well as various other [metalworking](#) techniques, [welding](#), use of [putty](#) fillers, and many more. Accident repair may require the panel beater to either repair or replace various parts of a vehicle. These parts may be made from various metals including various [steels](#) and [alloys](#), many different [plastics](#), [fibreglass](#) and others.

The common panel beater will work on everyday vehicles, cars, vans, 4WDs for example. Specialised areas include repairs to motorcycles, trucks and even aircraft. Some panel beaters also work exclusively on [vehicle restorations](#), and do not repair smash work at all. Others may specialise in body customisation such as is seen on hot rods etc.

Training to become a panel beater is done by completing a [trade](#) apprenticeship.^[2] For the most part these apprenticeships are around four years long, but can be completed earlier. These usually consist of three years on the job training mixed with schooling at a trade school or [TAFE](#). The fourth year is usually on the job training alone.

Special equipment examples:

- Various hammers and dollies used for planishing.
- Body files and flippers.
- Assembly tools such as [socket](#) sets, [screwdrivers](#) and [spanners](#).
- Other hand tools like [pliers](#), [tin snips](#), [vise grips](#), [punches](#), [chisels](#), etc.
- Hydraulic pushing/pulling devices.
- Vehicle measuring and aligning devices, or jigs e.g.
- Vehicle lift [hoists](#).
- Personal safety equipment such as [boots](#), [overalls](#), [safety glasses](#), welding helmets, gloves, [respirators](#) and hearing protection.

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- Welding equipment - [MIG](#) or [TIG](#).

Special equipment for restoration, advanced panel repair or panel fabrication from scratch include:

- [English wheel](#)
- Power hammer
- Pear shaped mallets and Sandbags
- Benders/Folders
- Rollers/Rolls
- Beaders/Swaging machines
- Station bucks^[3]
- Templates
- [Oxy-acetylene](#) welding equipment
- [Lead loading](#) equipment

References [\[edit \]](#)

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