



Face and body painting

Guidelines for painting faces and bodies

- It is not advisable to paint a child's face if they are under 3. Small children often cannot sit still for long or could move without warning, which could lead to paint entering the child's eyes or mouth (or they may scratch the paint off and put it in their mouths). Young children also have sensitive skin which is more prone to dehydration than that of older children.
- Check with your client (or their parent) if they have sensitive skin, food allergies or reactions to soaps, creams or dyes. If so you should perform a small patch test first (on a body part other than the client's face) to determine whether they will react to the face or body paint. It is ultimately your decision whether or not to paint a client's face or body.
- Check the client has clean skin free from scratches and that they do not have contagious infections such as conjunctivitis, lice, cold or flu, chicken pox. For consumer information on these conditions and their symptoms visit [HealthyWA \(external site\)](#).
- It is best to avoid painting the faces of people with acne, dermatitis or other skin conditions, as there is a risk of infection, or the condition may be further exacerbated.
- Before you start painting, clean the area to be painted (face, arm, leg) with soap and warm water or with disposable wipes. Take extra care around the eyes and when wiping runny noses.
- If you are painting a child's face, make sure a parent or guardian is supervising.

Alert

Some individuals are allergic to even the most pure and nontoxic colours.

If your client shows any signs of an allergic reaction during the painting session stop the session immediately and seek emergency medical advice. Always call dial triple zero (000) in an emergency.

Signs of an allergic reaction can include:

- paleness
- shortness of breath
- difficulty in breathing
- undue swelling and puffiness around the eyes.

Paint and supplies

- Paints, crayons, inks, glitters and other cosmetic preparations must be safe and specifically designed for use on human skin.
- "Non-toxic" on the labels does not necessarily mean the product is safe to use on skin. Some people are allergic to approved chemicals and colorants used in craft paints and other stationery products.
- Bulk supplies should be stored and handled in a sanitary manner to avoid contamination. Paint and glitter products should be taken from stocks using clean spatulas.

Cleaning and disinfection of brushes, pens and other tools

- Single-use disposable colour applicators, for example cotton swabs and sponges are strongly recommended.
- Reusable paint brushes should be washed thoroughly in warm water and soap and soaked in 70 per cent isopropyl alcohol for at least 2 minutes, then left to dry. Brushes should be cleaned after every client.
- The water used to clean brushes should be changed after each client.
- The tips of the face painting pens and markers should be wiped with a 70 per cent isopropyl alcohol swab after each use.
- Eye and lip pencils must be resharpened after each use, and the sharpener cleaned regularly.
- Reusable stencils should be made from non-porous, cleanable materials. Wipe down reusable stencils with 70 per cent isopropyl alcohol after each use.

- Use disposable paper towels.

Artist and client hygiene

- Wash your hands before each face or body painting session.
- Disposable hand wipes and hand sanitiser can be used as an alternative to hand washing between clients.
- Careful attention should be paid when painting around the eye area, especially on very young children and those unable to keep still.
- Single-use elastic bands can be used to manage hair.

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