

How do I get there from here?

# Automotive Collision Repair Technician & Automotive Refinishing Technician

## What kind of work will I be doing?

An **Automotive Refinishing Technician** is a person who paints and refinishes automobiles, trucks, and buses. They may be involved in collision or restorative work, or they may design and create custom paint jobs. When painting only a portion of a vehicle, they calculate how much paint will be needed to cover the area. They mix paints to match exactly the existing color, and blend the paint to its correct thickness. Painters use a spray gun to apply both the primer and final coats of paint.



An **Automotive Collision Repair Technician** is a person who repairs, adjusts, and replaces sheet metal and allied parts of automobiles, trucks, and buses.

Automotive Collision Repair Technicians work on the outside structure of vehicles. They repair and replace doors, front-end body, and underbody components. They hammer out dents, buckles, and other defects, and remove damaged fenders, panels, and grills. They also straighten bent frames, file, grind, and sand repaired body surfaces, as well as repaint repaired surfaces. Other duties include repairing or replacing interior components such as seat frame assemblies, carpets, and floorboard insulation. They make use of hand tools as well as a range of specialty tools, such as cutting torches, soldering equipment, blocks, and hammers.

## What are the working conditions like?

**Work Area** - Working conditions can vary. Some shops are large, bright, and well ventilated, while other shops can be less equipped. However, there are strict environmental regulations that establish workplace condition minimums. Some garages may be cold and drafty. All workers will be exposed to paint fumes, noise, dust, and dirt. Positions usually require good manual dexterity, good observation abilities, and a degree of strength. Some artistic ability as well as good hand-eye coordination is important.

**Wages** - An **Automotive Collision Repair Technician** working full time at a new car dealership earns an average of \$53,000 per year, but can easily earn up to \$80,000 per year.

An **Automotive Refinishing Technician** working full time at a new car dealership earns an average of \$56,000 per year, but can easily earn up to \$90,300 per year.

The potential for custom and creative work as an Automotive Refinishing Technician means your potential income is only limited by your creativity and drive!

### Did You Know...

Custom paint and auto body modifications are one of the fastest growing areas of labour hours in the automotive sector. New car dealerships have recognized this fact, and collectively are one of the major supporters for the advancement of auto body technicians.

## How do I get certified?

The **Automotive Collision Repair Technician** apprenticeship process requires time spent learning on the job and in the classroom. An apprentice must complete a four (4) year program including 6,750 workplace hours and 450 in-school hours of training. After completion of training, a passing grade on examinations will result in the BC Certificate of Apprenticeship, BC Certificate of Qualification, and the Interprovincial Standard Endorsement, also known as Red Seal.

All new **Automotive Refinishing Technician** apprentices must be previously certified in the Automotive Refinishing Prep Technician trade, or hold a Certificate of Qualification or Interprovincial Standard Endorsement, also known as a Red Seal, in the Auto Collision Repair trade prior to acceptance into the apprenticeship program.



**High School Requirements** - A Grade 12 education is preferred. A Grade 10 education or equivalent, including English 10, Math 10, and Science 10 is recommended.

**Training Streams** - While in high school, students can bank practical hours through a *Secondary School Apprenticeship Program (SSAP)*, or complete the first level (year) of their technical training through *ACE IT*, an *Entry Level Trades Training* program (*ELTT*). Your counselor has details.

High school graduates can enter a training stream by either becoming employed and working under a certified technician, by entering an ELTT program at a community college or university, or through a Pre-Apprenticeship Program at a private training institution.

**Training Institutions** - The following institutions offer Automotive Collision Repair or Automotive Refinishing Technician training:

British Columbia Institute of Technology  
Camosun College  
College of the Rockies  
Okanagan University College

[www.bcit.ca](http://www.bcit.ca)  
[www.camosun.bc.ca](http://www.camosun.bc.ca)  
[www.cotr.bc.ca](http://www.cotr.bc.ca)  
[www.ouc.bc.ca/](http://www.ouc.bc.ca/)  
[www.okanagan.bc.ca](http://www.okanagan.bc.ca)  
[www.vcc.ca](http://www.vcc.ca)  
[www.autotrainingcentre.com](http://www.autotrainingcentre.com)  
[www.centre4trades.ca](http://www.centre4trades.ca)

Vancouver Community College  
Automotive Training Centres  
Centre For Trades Training

## What does the future of this sector look like?

The number of people employed in the automotive service sector in BC increased 8% over a recent five-year period. Automotive Refinishing Technicians are a part of this sector. New car dealerships have recognized the need for a manufacturer based refinishing and collision repair industry, and are instrumental in the development of this sector. Vehicles are a part of life in Canada, and will be for the foreseeable future; that means a solid demand for technical automotive service labour.

### Want more info?

Visit the **Industry Training Authority** website at [www.itabc.ca](http://www.itabc.ca) for the latest information on certifications, training, and more.