

Apartment Exterior Painting Guide

A Portland planning sheet for owners, managers and multifamily teams

Use this before approving exterior apartment painting

- Review siding, trim, caulking and water-risk areas before pricing the repaint.
- Separate protection issues from curb-appeal upgrades so the budget makes sense.
- Plan tenant notices, parking impacts and access before the crew arrives.
- Phase the work by building, elevation or section when a full-property push creates chaos.

Best use: budget meetings, exterior walkthroughs, bid comparison, tenant notice planning and pre-start meetings.

Apartment Exterior Repaint Priority Matrix

Exterior Area	Why It Matters	Decision
Peeling siding	Signals coating failure and possible moisture exposure.	Inspect first
Failed caulking	Lets water into joints, trim gaps and transitions.	Repair first
Trim + fascia	Protects vulnerable wood and shapes curb appeal.	Prioritize
Stairs + railings	High-touch, high-visibility and safety-adjacent.	Plan access
Balconies	Resident coordination and weather exposure both matter.	Phase carefully
Back elevations	Often neglected until paint failure gets expensive.	Do not ignore

Portland Weather + Building Condition Walkthrough

What to check before exterior paint becomes a repair project.

Weather and moisture checks

- ☐ Identify north-facing and shaded walls that stay damp longer.
- ☐ Look for mildew, algae, water staining or dirt trapped near landscaping.
- ☐ Check gutter discharge, splashback zones and downspout failure points.
- ☐ Confirm the schedule includes washing, dry-back time and rain-delay language.
- ☐ Avoid approving exterior coating work without a realistic dry weather window.

Siding, trim and caulking checks

- ☐ Mark peeling, bubbling, cracking, chalking and bare substrate areas.
- ☐ Check trim, fascia, window surrounds and door frames for soft or exposed wood.
- ☐ Review failed caulk around joints, trim transitions, windows and siding seams.
- ☐ Separate minor prep from repairs that should be priced before painting.
- ☐ Confirm spot priming is included where bare wood or repaired areas are present.

Access and protection checks

- ☐ Walk the crew path before work starts: ladders, lifts, stairs, gates and parking.
- ☐ Identify cars, patios, balconies, plants, signage and walkways needing protection.
- ☐ Confirm whether lifts, ladders or special access equipment are needed.
- ☐ Plan safe pedestrian routes around active work zones.
- ☐ Assign one manager or owner contact for schedule changes and field questions.

Tenant Coordination + Phased Schedule Plan

A cleaner way to paint occupied apartment exteriors without lighting up the complaint inbox.

30 days before painting

- ☐ Confirm buildings, elevations and surfaces included in the exterior scope.
- ☐ Choose colors and get ownership, board or management approval where needed.
- ☐ Review parking, access, balconies, patios and resident-facing work areas.
- ☐ Decide whether the project will be phased by building, elevation, section or priority zone.

7-14 days before painting

- ☐ Send tenant notices with clear dates, work areas and access instructions.
- ☐ Explain parking impacts, balcony clearing, window instructions and pet considerations.
- ☐ Confirm staging areas, water access, equipment placement and safety routing.
- ☐ Set a weather-delay update process before weather forces the conversation.

During active painting

- ☐ Keep walkways open or clearly rerouted whenever possible.
- ☐ Update residents when work shifts by weather, access or building sequence.
- ☐ Check daily cleanup around entries, stairs, parking and common walk paths.
- ☐ Track punch-list items by building or elevation instead of relying on memory.

Simple Phasing Filter

Phasing Choice	Best For	Watch Out For
By building	Larger properties with clear building separation.	Repeated setup time
By elevation	Weather-exposed sides or visible fronts.	Color transitions
By priority zone	Failure areas, entries, rails and stairs.	Scope creep
Full exterior push	Smaller properties with strong access.	Tenant disruption

Scope Approval + Contractor Questions

Use this before signing the estimate or giving the green light.

Scope questions to answer

- ☐ Are siding, trim, fascia, doors, railings, stairs, balconies and breezeways clearly listed?
- ☐ Is washing, scraping, sanding, caulking, spot priming and masking included?
- ☐ Are repairs included, excluded or priced separately?
- ☐ Are product, sheen, color placement and number of coats clearly stated?
- ☐ Is the final walkthrough and punch-list process defined before work starts?

Contractor questions to ask

- ☐ Have you handled occupied apartment exterior painting in Portland before?
- ☐ How do you protect residents, cars, landscaping, patios and walkways?
- ☐ How do you phase work around weather, access and tenant movement?
- ☐ Who is the main project contact during the repaint?
- ☐ What parts of this property would you repair before painting if you owned it?

When to call Lightmen Painting

- ☐ The exterior paint is peeling, cracking, chalking or exposing wood.
- ☐ Failed caulking, trim damage or moisture-risk areas need review before repainting.
- ☐ Residents will be affected and the project needs clean phasing and notices.
- ☐ The estimate needs a clearer scope before ownership approval.
- ☐ You need a Portland painting contractor who understands apartments, weather and scheduling.

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