

Make-up Artist

Make-up artists apply make-up and style hair for people appearing on camera, in front of a live audience or for special occasions.

ANNUAL SALARY

Variable

Average UK salary in 2020 was £30,378
(source Office for National Statistics)

WORKING HOURS

38 to 40 irregular

You could work: For a company / freelance / self-employed; away from home

-1%

FUTURE EMPLOYMENT

There will be 1% fewer Make-up Artist jobs in 2025.
In your local area

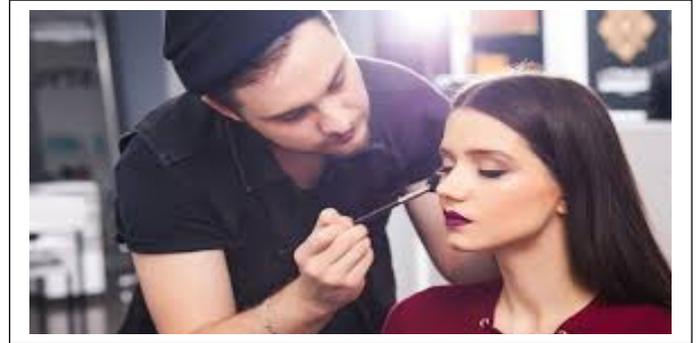
What's it all about?

What you'll do

Day to day tasks

In this role you could be:

- communicating with clients to clarify visual requirements
- reading scripts to ascertain the materials and look required, budget implications and identifying areas where research is required
- producing and sketching design ideas for hairstyles and make-up
- ensuring continuity in hair and make-up and liaising with other members of the design team to ensure the overall look/effect is consistent and coherent
- demonstrating and implementing a practical understanding of lighting, the photographic process, colours and the impact of special effects/make-up processes on the skin
- ensuring that appropriate action is taken to minimise unpleasant side effects from the use of specialist make-up/hairdressing techniques
- maintaining awareness of health and safety issues and legislation
- casting facial and body moulds and sculpting latex foam, known as prosthetics
- fitting and maintaining wigs, hairpieces and prosthetics
- hairdressing
- keeping up to date with available make-up and beauty products



- sourcing, budgeting and ordering materials and equipment from specialist suppliers
- time management - knowing how long a client will take to be made up
- working quickly and accurately in time-pressured conditions
- taking detailed notes and photographs of work to maintain an up-to-date portfolio of work.

Skills and Knowledge

You'll need:

- design skills and knowledge
- the ability to work well with your hands
- the ability to work well with others
- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- to be flexible and open to change
- excellent verbal communication skills
- the ability to use your initiative
- patience and the ability to remain calm in stressful situations
- to be able to carry out basic tasks on a computer or hand-held device

Working environment

You could work at a TV studio, in a theatre, on a film set, at a film studio, live music venue or private addresses.

Entry requirements

You can get into this job through:

- a university course
- a college course
- an apprenticeship
- working towards this role
- specialist courses run by private training providers

University

You can do a foundation degree, higher national diploma or a degree in specialist make-up techniques like:

- make-up for media and performance
- media make-up artistry
- theatrical, media and special effects make-up

Subjects that show that you have creative flair and good communication skills can be useful for getting on to university make-up artistry courses. These could include: art and design; performing arts; drama or theatre studies

You'll also need creative talent and a print or online portfolio to demonstrate your skills.

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- 1 or 2 A levels, or equivalent, for a foundation degree or higher national diploma
- 2 to 3 A levels, or equivalent, for a degree

College

You could study for a qualification in media make-up or beauty, for example:

- Level 2 Certificate in Make-up
- Level 3 Diploma in Theatrical and Media Make-up
- Level 3 Diploma in Beauty Make-up Techniques

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, for a level 3 course

Apprenticeship

You could get into this job through a beauty therapy intermediate apprenticeship.

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- some GCSEs, usually including English and Maths, or equivalent, for an intermediate apprenticeship

Work

You could start out as a trainee or assistant to a make-up team, or find casual work doing make-up and hair for extras in crowd scenes or private bookings.

You could also get experience in salon, wedding and events make-up, or through working in cosmetics sales, and build a professional portfolio to demonstrate your skills.

Volunteering and work experience

You could volunteer behind the scenes in theatres or amateur dramatic societies.

Other routes

You can do specialist make-up and beauty courses through private beauty schools.

More information

Career tips

It's a good idea to get practical experience to put together a portfolio of work to show employers. You can get this through: amateur theatre; student film, theatre and photography projects; charity or student fashion shows; working with established make-up artists and photographers; working in related areas such as department store cosmetics counters, wedding and events make-up

Professional and industry bodies

You can join the [National Association of Screen Make-up and Hair](#) for professional development.

Further information

You can find out more about careers in make-up on stage and screen from [ScreenSkills](#).

You can get more information on working in creative careers from [Discover Creative Careers](#).

Employment by region

Region	Jobs
Yorkshire and the Humber	6,813
London	14,882
South West	9,527
South East	17,440
Wales	5,224
Scotland	6,296
West Midlands	9,111
North West	9,757
North East	2,766
East of England	9,734
Northern Ireland	3,352
East Midlands	8,266

Career path and progression

Many make-up artists work freelance and develop their career by building a network of contacts and getting recommendations from their clients.

With experience, you could progress to chief make-up artist or make-up designer. You could also develop specialist skills, for example applying body art or making facial or body moulds for creating and fitting prosthetics.

You could move into areas like fashion and photography, print and digital media or special effects.

You might also specialise in medical aesthetics, using make-up techniques to hide scars and skin conditions to improve a client's psychological wellbeing and confidence.