

# Nail technician Job Description

A free job description template for the Hair and Beauty industry

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Reports To: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCLAIMER

This nail technician job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and beauty industry practices at the time of publication. Confirm the applicable modern award for your business and ensure compliance with all relevant employment laws.

## 1. Position overview

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A nail technician (also known as a nail artist or manicurist) provides manicures, pedicures and a range of nail enhancement and nail art services while delivering a warm, professional client experience. The role combines technical skill with hygiene discipline and genuine customer care.

In Australia, nail technicians are typically classified under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020 (MA000005). A nail technician who has completed a Certificate II in Nail Technology usually sits at Level 2, and can progress to higher levels with further qualifications and responsibilities.

This template provides a foundation for creating clear, compliant job descriptions that attract skilled candidates while setting appropriate expectations for the role. Once hired, manage your team efficiently with salon rostering software.

## 2. Key responsibilities

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### Manicures and pedicures

Delivering classic and spa manicures and pedicures, including shaping, buffing, polishing and foot and hand care.

### Nail enhancements

Applying gel, acrylic and SNS (dip powder) enhancements, extensions and overlays to a high standard.

### Nail art and design

Creating nail art, freehand designs and decorative finishes based on client preferences and current trends.

### Soak-offs and repairs

Performing safe soak-offs, removals, infills, cuticle care and repairs to maintain nail health.

### Hygiene and sterilisation

Cleaning and sterilising tools, sanitising work stations and following infection-control and WHS standards.

### Client care and retail

Booking appointments, advising on aftercare, recommending and selling retail products, and processing payments.

## 3. Skills and attributes

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- Technical precision: Steady hands and fine motor skills for detailed nail work, consistent finishes and clean application.
- Customer focus: Genuine interest in client wellbeing, ability to build rapport and manage bookings with care.

- Communication: Clear consultation with clients about designs, aftercare advice and professional phone and desk manner.
- Time management: Ability to keep appointments on schedule, manage back-to-back bookings and work efficiently during peak trade.
- Hygiene discipline: Rigorous tool sterilisation, station sanitation and adherence to infection-control and WHS standards.
- Teamwork: Collaborative attitude, willingness to support colleagues and contribute to a positive salon environment.

## 4. Qualifications and requirements

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The qualifications for nail technician positions vary depending on the salon and the range of services offered. Some are mandatory, while others are preferred or desirable.

- Certificate II in Nail Technology (required) — Nationally recognised nail technology qualification (aligns with Level 2 under the award)
- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- Previous salon experience — Experience in a similar nail or beauty role is advantageous but not essential
- Infection control training — Additional hygiene and infection-control certification is desirable
- First aid certificate — Current first aid certification is desirable

## 5. Working conditions

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- Salon environment with seated, close client work for extended periods
- Exposure to nail products, solvents and dust requiring good ventilation
- Use of personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves
- Shift work including weekends and peak trading periods
- Repetitive hand and wrist movements throughout appointments
- Compliance with uniform, grooming and hygiene standards

## 6. Award information

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### Hair and beauty industry award 2020

Most nail technician positions in Australia are covered by the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020 (MA000005). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in hairdressing, beauty and nail salons. View current Hair and Beauty Award pay rates.

The award classifies employees across Levels 1 to 6. A nail technician who holds a Certificate II in Nail Technology typically sits at Level 2, and can progress to higher levels with further qualifications and responsibilities. For FY2026/27, ordinary hourly rates run from around \$27.81 (Level 1) to \$32.00 (Level 6), with a 25% loading for casual employees. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

## Penalty rates and overtime

Under MA000005, penalty rates apply for weekend and public holiday work. Permanent staff receive 133% on Saturdays, 200% on Sundays and 250% on public holidays, while casuals receive 158% on Saturdays and 225% on Sundays. Overtime is generally paid at 150% for the first hours and 200% thereafter.

Estimate the cost of penalty and overtime hours with the free overtime and penalty rate calculator and the shift cost calculator before you confirm rosters.

## 7. Frequently asked questions

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### About the role

Q: What does a nail technician do?

A nail technician provides manicures, pedicures and nail enhancement services such as gel, acrylic and SNS (dip powder) applications, along with nail art, soak-offs, infills, cuticle care and repairs. They also sterilise tools, maintain a clean work station, advise clients on aftercare, recommend retail products and manage bookings.

Q: What award covers nail technicians in Australia?

Most nail technician positions are covered by the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2020 (MA000005). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in hairdressing, beauty and nail salons. Always check which award applies to your specific business.

Q: What classification level should I use for a nail technician?

Under MA000005, a nail technician who holds a Certificate II in Nail Technology typically sits at Level 2. Employees can progress to higher levels with further qualifications and responsibilities. See our Hair and Beauty Award pay rates guide for current rates at each level.

Q: Do I need to include pay rates in a job description?

It's not legally required, but including indicative pay rates can attract more applicants and set clear expectations. You can reference the applicable award rate or use phrases like 'Award rates plus penalties' or 'Competitive hourly rate based on experience.' Check the current Hair and Beauty Award rates for guidance.

### Qualifications

Q: What qualification does a nail technician need?

The standard qualification is a Certificate II in Nail Technology, a nationally recognised course covering manicures, pedicures, enhancements and hygiene. This qualification aligns with Level 2 under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award. Candidates also need working rights in Australia.

Q: What qualifications should I require vs prefer for a nail technician?

Mandatory requirements typically include a Certificate II in Nail Technology and working rights in Australia. Preferred qualifications include previous salon experience, additional infection-control training, first aid certification and specialist skills such as advanced nail art or SNS application. Avoid over-qualifying entry-level roles as it limits your candidate pool.

Q: Can I hire a nail technician without a formal qualification?

Some salons hire trainees or apprentices and support them to complete a Certificate II in Nail Technology on the job. Without the qualification, an employee is generally classified at a lower level under the award. Consider offering training or apprenticeship pathways to build skills while remaining compliant.

Q: Do nail technicians need infection control training?

Infection control is not always a separate legal requirement, but strict hygiene and sterilisation practices are essential and often covered within nail technology training. Some states and local councils have skin-penetration or infection-control requirements. Having staff with dedicated infection-control training reduces risk and demonstrates due diligence.

## Employment

Q: Should I hire casual or permanent nail technicians?

This depends on your business needs. Casual nail technicians offer flexibility and suit variable demand, but attract a 25% casual loading. Permanent part-time staff provide consistency and may have higher retention. Many salons use a mix — permanent staff for core trade and casuals for peak periods.

Q: What penalty rates apply to nail technicians?

Under MA000005, permanent staff receive 133% on Saturdays, 200% on Sundays and 250% on public holidays. Casual employees receive 158% on Saturdays and 225% on Sundays. Overtime is generally paid at 150% for the first overtime hours and 200% thereafter. Use award interpretation software to calculate rates accurately.

Q: What is the casual loading for nail technicians?

Casual nail technicians receive a 25% casual loading on top of the ordinary award rate, paid instead of leave entitlements such as annual and personal leave. For FY2026/27, ordinary rates under MA000005 range from around \$27.81 (Level 1) to \$32.00 (Level 6) before the casual loading is applied.

Q: What should I include in a nail technician employment contract?

Key elements include: position title and classification level, employment type (casual/part-time/full-time), hourly rate or salary, applicable award, reporting structure, main duties, work location and required qualifications. For casuals, include the casual loading percentage. Use our digital employment contracts to simplify this process.

## Rostering

Q: How far in advance should I provide rosters to nail technicians?

Providing rosters well in advance helps staff plan and reduces last-minute gaps. Check the notice and change requirements under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award for your business. Using rostering software helps ensure compliance and gives staff visibility of their upcoming shifts.

Q: How do I manage nail technician availability for rostering?

Collect availability preferences during onboarding and update them regularly. Use staff availability management tools to track when each team member can work. Set clear policies about minimum availability and how to request changes. This simplifies roster creation and reduces last-minute gaps.

Q: How can I control weekend labour costs in a nail salon?

Weekend penalty rates under MA000005 (133% Saturday, 200% Sunday) can significantly affect margins. Estimate costs before you publish rosters using the overtime and penalty rate calculator and the shift cost calculator, then balance your mix of permanent and casual staff accordingly.

Q: Can I use rostering software for a small nail salon?

Yes. Even small salons benefit from rostering software to manage appointments, track hours with time and attendance and apply award rates automatically. It reduces admin, improves accuracy and helps you stay compliant with the Hair and Beauty Industry Award.