

Salon assistant Job Description

A free job description template for the Hair and Beauty industry

Company Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This salon assistant job description template is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and hair 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

A salon assistant (also known as a salon junior or apprentice assistant) keeps a hair or beauty salon running smoothly by supporting stylists and therapists and looking after clients from the moment they arrive. The role blends front-of-house customer service with the practical, behind-the-chair tasks that give qualified staff more time with clients.

In Australia, salon assistants are typically classified at Level 1 (entry-level) under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award (MA000005). It is an ideal first job in the industry and is often the starting point for a hairdressing or beauty apprenticeship, with assistants progressing to higher levels as they gain skills and take on more responsibility.

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

2. Key responsibilities

Reception and bookings

Greeting clients warmly, managing the reception desk, answering phones and booking or rescheduling appointments.

Shampooing and rinsing

Shampooing, conditioning and rinsing clients, and removing colour and foils under the guidance of stylists.

Client and station preparation

Gowning and preparing clients, setting up stations, and dispensing colour and product ready for treatments.

Cleaning and hygiene

Sweeping hair, sanitising tools and stations, laundering towels and gowns, and keeping the salon tidy and presentable.

Restocking and supplies

Monitoring retail and back-bar stock, restocking shelves and product trolleys, and flagging low inventory.

Supporting stylists and therapists

Assisting stylists and beauty therapists during services, passing tools and product, and helping the team stay on schedule.

3. Skills and attributes

- Communication: Warm, clear communication with clients and team members, active listening and a professional phone manner.

- Customer focus: Genuine interest in making clients feel welcome and comfortable, and the ability to stay calm and friendly under pressure.
- Time management: Ability to prioritise tasks, keep the salon running to schedule and juggle several jobs during busy periods.
- Teamwork: A collaborative, willing attitude, readiness to help stylists and therapists and contribute to a positive salon culture.
- Attention to detail: Care with hygiene and presentation, accuracy in preparing colour and product, and awareness of client needs.
- Reliability: Punctuality, consistent attendance, flexibility with shifts and a tidy, professional appearance.

4. Qualifications and requirements

The salon assistant role is entry-level, so formal qualifications are not required. The focus is on attitude, presentation and availability, with some requirements being mandatory and others simply desirable.

- Working rights (required) — Eligibility to work in Australia
- Formal qualifications — None required — this is an entry-level position
- Previous salon or retail experience — Experience in a salon, spa or customer-facing role is advantageous but not essential
- Interest in an apprenticeship — A desire to progress into a hairdressing or beauty apprenticeship is highly regarded
- First aid certificate — Current first aid certification is desirable

5. Working conditions

- Salon environment with weekend, evening and after-hours trade
- Standing and moving around for extended periods throughout the day
- Minimum 3-hour engagement per shift for casual and part-time staff
- Wearing gloves and other PPE when handling colour and chemicals
- Exposure to hair care and colour products, dyes and cleaning agents
- Compliance with uniform, grooming and hygiene standards

6. Award information

Hair and beauty industry award 2010

Most salon assistant positions in Australia are covered by the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2010 (MA000005). This modern award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in hairdressing, beauty and related salon businesses. View current Hair and Beauty Award pay rates.

Salon assistants are typically classified at Level 1, the entry-level classification (from \$27.81 per hour, or \$1,056.80 per week, in FY2026/27). Casual employees receive a 25% loading — around \$34.76 per hour at

Level 1. Staff progress through to Level 6 (\$32.00 per hour) as they gain skills and responsibilities. Use award interpretation software to calculate pay accurately.

Penalty rates and juniors

Under MA000005, weekend and public holiday work attracts penalty rates: Saturdays are paid at 133% (158% for casuals), Sundays at 200% (225% for casuals) and public holidays at 250%. Overtime is paid at 150% for the first hours and 200% thereafter.

Many salon assistants are juniors. Junior rates are a percentage of the adult Level 1 rate — 50% for employees under 17 and 75% at age 17 — increasing with age. Confirm the correct junior percentage and classification level for each team member before setting pay.

7. Frequently asked questions

About the role

Q: What does a salon assistant do?

A salon assistant supports stylists and beauty therapists and looks after clients throughout their visit. Typical duties include greeting clients and managing reception, booking appointments and answering calls, shampooing and rinsing, removing colour and foils, preparing clients and stations, sweeping and cleaning, laundry, restocking and dispensing product. It is an entry-level role that keeps the salon running smoothly.

Q: What award covers salon assistants in Australia?

Most salon assistant positions are covered by the Hair and Beauty Industry Award 2010 (MA000005). This award applies to hairdressing, beauty and related salon businesses and sets the minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for the role. Always check which award applies to your specific business.

Q: What classification level is a salon assistant?

Salon assistants are typically classified at Level 1, the entry-level classification under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award (MA000005). As they gain skills and take on more responsibility — or begin an apprenticeship — they can progress through the higher levels, up to Level 6. See our Hair and Beauty Award pay rates guide for current rates at each level.

Q: Is a salon assistant the same as an apprentice?

Not exactly. A salon assistant is an entry-level support role that does not require formal study, whereas an apprentice is formally enrolled in a hairdressing or beauty qualification and is paid under apprentice rates. Many salon assistants use the role as a stepping stone and later start an apprenticeship with the same salon.

Qualifications

Q: Do salon assistants need any qualifications?

No formal qualifications are required for a salon assistant — it is an entry-level position. The essentials are working rights in Australia, a friendly and professional attitude, good presentation and availability for the required shifts. Previous salon or retail experience and an interest in a hairdressing or beauty apprenticeship are advantageous but not essential.

Q: Can I hire a salon assistant with no experience?

Yes. Salon assistant roles are designed for people new to the industry, so it is common to hire and train staff without prior experience. Focus on attitude, reliability, presentation and customer service skills. A clear job description helps candidates understand the role and self-select appropriately, and gives you a great pipeline of future apprentices.

Q: Is a salon assistant role a pathway to an apprenticeship?

Very often, yes. Working as a salon assistant is one of the most common ways into a hairdressing or beauty apprenticeship. Assistants learn the fundamentals — hygiene, client care, colour prep and salon workflow — while showing they are reliable, which makes them strong candidates when apprenticeship positions open up.

Q: What should I require vs prefer for a salon assistant position?

Mandatory requirements should be limited to working rights in Australia and availability for the required shifts, since this is an entry-level role. Preferred qualities typically include previous salon or retail experience, an interest in an apprenticeship, and a current first aid certificate. Avoid over-qualifying the role, as it unnecessarily narrows your candidate pool.

Employment

Q: Should I hire a casual or permanent salon assistant?

This depends on your salon's needs. Casual salon assistants offer flexibility for variable demand but attract a 25% casual loading. Permanent part-time staff provide consistency and often better retention. Many salons use a mix — permanent staff for core trading days and casuals to cover peak periods and weekends.

Q: What penalty rates apply to salon assistants?

Under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award (MA000005), Saturday work is paid at 133% (158% for casuals), Sunday at 200% (225% for casuals) and public holidays at 250%. Overtime is paid at 150% for the first hours and 200% thereafter. Use award interpretation software to calculate these rates accurately.

Q: How are junior salon assistants paid?

Many salon assistants are juniors, and junior rates are a percentage of the adult Level 1 rate under MA000005 — 50% for employees under 17 and 75% at age 17, increasing with age until the full adult rate applies. Confirm each team member's age and the correct percentage before setting pay, and update it as they get older.

Q: Is there a minimum shift length for salon assistants?

Under the Hair and Beauty Industry Award, casual and part-time employees must be engaged for a minimum of 3 hours per shift. Keep this in mind when building rosters for short or peak-period shifts. Use digital employment contracts to record employment type, classification and pay clearly for each new starter.

Rostering

Q: How do I roster salon assistants efficiently?

Match assistant shifts to your busiest stylist and therapist bookings so support is available when clients arrive. Our guide to rostering hairdressing staff walks through the process, and rostering software lets you build compliant rosters, see costs live and share shifts with staff instantly.

Q: How far in advance should I publish salon rosters?

Publishing rosters at least 7 days ahead is good practice and helps staff plan around study, family and other commitments. Using rostering software makes it easy to publish early, notify the team automatically and manage any changes with a clear record.

Q: How do I estimate the cost of a salon assistant shift?

Add the base hourly rate, any applicable weekend or public holiday penalties, and the casual loading if relevant. Our free shift cost calculator and overtime & penalty rate calculator help you estimate costs quickly before you publish a roster.

Q: How do I manage salon assistant availability?

Collect availability preferences during onboarding and keep them up to date, especially for junior and student staff. Use staff availability management tools to track when each person can work, set clear policies for requesting changes, and reduce last-minute gaps in the roster.