

no more bad hair days

Dry or Oily, flat or flyaway—if anything can go wrong with your hair, chances are it will. But for every problem there is a solution...

drab color Your best first step is to choose a vibrant color. Janelle Cancade of Edward Carriere in Winnipeg suggests one that is warm and reflects light. To keep it that way, try products formulated specifically for colored hair, such as Clairol's ColorHold ColorCare System, Logics Color Refresher, or Redken's Shades EQ Color Enhancing Shampoo. If you're highlighting, Colorpanes Windowed Foil Highlighting Sheets allow you to see whether you've achieved the right color level without having to remove the foil. If you want to give highlights a boost, Bitu Hamidi of Esthetica in Montreal suggests coloring your entire head of hair with a semipermanent color in the same tone. Ugo Tabardel of L'Ultime in Montreal, meanwhile, suggests perking up color with Sebastian Cellophanes, which range from clear to darkest black. "It coats the hair the way varnish does a hardwood floor, and lasts up to a month and a half."

fine hair Fine hair tends to be delicate and will break if tortured into full, wavy styles. What you might do instead is explore the various natural, semipermanent and highlighting color options; these will swell the cortex of each strand and make the hair appear thicker. A shorter cut, whether blunt or layered, looks best and will help prevent split ends. Fine hair rubbing against the shoulder is more likely to split and is also more prone to static electricity. Tabardel suggests using a natural-bristle brush rather than a plastic one, which can promote static. And a little dirt never hurt. Harry Josh at Axis in Vancouver says that dirtier hair has more volume, making it easier to manipulate. If you must wash, he recommends applying Rusk Radical Hair Creme to add a little grunge.

dull hair If your problem is a scarcity of shine, there are a number of possible culprits. You might start by rethinking your haircut. "If your hair is layered," says W. Greg Young of Christopher J's in Victoria, B.C., "all you'll see are the ends of the hair. The shiny part is the shaft." Young considers blunt cuts a good alternative. Harmful styling techniques, or a shampoo too harsh for your hair, might also be the cause. "Hair is like a fabric," he warns. "The more you wash, dry and abuse it, the more dull and faded it will become. Find out what kind of fabric your hair is. After all, you wouldn't treat your silk blouse like your jeans." Because heat can reduce shine, use a cool setting on your blow-dryer. A shine enhancer may also help. Josh prefers Sebastian Laminates because its silicone content seals and smooths the cuticle to create a glossy sheen. Others to try include Aveda's Pure-Fume Brilliant and Trevor Sorbie's oil-free, high-shine finishing gel, Glossaire. Also effective: hair color with specific shine-enhancing properties, such as Castings by L'Oréal, and Redken's Shades EQ hair glossing system.

dry hair The simplest way to avoid dryness is to get out of the habit of washing your hair daily. According to Josh, the natural oils produced by the scalp's sebaceous glands are slow to travel down the hair shaft and will never reach the ends if washed away regularly. He suggests shampooing just the roots every day, while others recommend washing only once a week, but conditioning daily. Cancade suggests using a conditioner with panthenol, an ingredient known for its hydrating qualities, while Young favors Redken's Extreme and Climatress. Tabardel has found that a regular deep-penetrating conditioner, applied with a plastic bag over the hair while you're sitting in the tub, works particularly well. Long hair requires special attention because the ends tend to be more porous and, therefore, dryer. Laurence Blandford of La Coupe in Montreal suggests putting long hair in a ponytail, which can then be conditioned, while Mirko Pasutto at Platine Coiffure Esthetique in Montreal recommends putting almond oil on the ends for 15 minutes at a time. Avoid alcohol-based products, which can cause drying, and use leave-in conditioners such as Humectress by Nexus or Alberto VO5's Fortifying Leave-In Conditioner.

oily hair Fight that basic instinct to overwash; if the scalp is stripped of its oils, it will overcompensate by producing more. (Other don'ts include trying to make the hair itself squeaky-clean; the oil starts at the scalp and cleansing efforts should be concentrated there.) Vigorous rubbing of the scalp, in particular, will only stimulate the production of oil by the sebaceous glands, so go easy. If oily hair poses a real problem, try adjusting your diet to regulate the intake of oils and use a pH-balanced shampoo. Amy Minshull of Suki's in Vancouver suggests Phyto Saponaria for oily hair, while Hamidi recommends Kheil's All Sport Everyday Shampoo and Conditioner, a sports line designed to gently remove surplus oil. If all else fails, Tabardel suggests rinsing hair with a mixture of one-quarter of a cup cider vinegar and three-quarters of a cup water, instead of conditioner.

damaged hair If you're going to have chemical processing done, keep in mind the old adage: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. When relaxing your hair, use a gentle no-lye formula such as Dark & Lovely Excellence. When perming, go the gentle route as well, with a product such as Wella's Pre-Perm Gel. And remember: coloring at the same time that you perm or relax is asking for trouble. If damage does occur, replenish the hair with a reconstructor that contains keratin. But don't expect miracles. "You can't reform or rehydrate," says Cancade, "but you can hide the damage. Get a good trim to cut it off, followed by a semipermanent rinse to give a more lustrous look."

flat hair Steer clear of heavy conditioners, which only weigh the hair down and make it appear flatter. Using a volumizer such as Aveda's after a light conditioning is a much better bet. Apply mousse to the roots of the damp hair and blow-dry lifting hair up and away from the roots. Use a brush with a rubber base, or a round brush, to keep the bristles from tearing out the hair. Layering, says Pasutto, will remove weight from the hair and add body. Hamidi cautions against products with a high oil content because of their heaviness. And as for using Velcro rollers to add lift...well, as Young says, it's so easy, anyone can learn to do it.

growing out hair Growing out a short haircut doesn't mean a sabbatical from the scissors. Says Blandford: "You can trim and reshape without taking off a lot of length." Once you've settled on the style, start with a good base cut and then try to hold off trimming for as long as you can—up to three months, if possible. Where trimming is necessary to cut away damage and maintain the appearance, Josh recommends cutting the back up until the ends at the front match up, creating an even length all the way around. Tabardel, meanwhile, advises setting the hair. "Where there is curl, body and movement," she explains, "the cut and shape become less important."

tangles Proper washing techniques will help keep this painful problem at bay. Pasutto suggests brushing the knots out of the hair before washing and then detangling with the fingers while conditioning. Don't rub the hair all together into a big lather; hold it flat between your two palms, Minshull says, and press the shampoo into it. Detanglers can also help when you have difficulties; once out of the shower, Josh suggests applying Infusion 23 to the hair and then gently combing out the tangles, starting from the ends and working your way up.

unruly hair

Long hair with an abundance of body and texture needs the right controls. To turn a potentially nightmarish mess into the dream hair shown at right, Ingrid Reinhart of Reinhart McMillan in Toronto favors subtle layers that promote an elongated silhouette, while preventing the hair from spreading too wide and becoming overpowering. "The layers should be cut when the hair is wet and then reshaped when dry to accommodate the curl," she says. Reinhart combed in Aveda's Elixir while the hair was still wet to promote softness and discourage tangles or static. To prevent frizziness and ensure a defined curl, she applied Phytodéfrisant to the damp hair, then blow-dried with a diffuser. Reinhart suggests spot reapplications of défrisant throughout the day, since some areas may be harder to manage than others. Tank-dress, Poor Boy.

