

NEW BEAUTY

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beauty brief



CELINE DION

LOOK YOUNGER WITH HIGHLIGHTS

As we age, skin naturally loses pigment, so dark, rich colors can look severe and unflattering. Adding natural, golden highlights will create less contrast between the skin and hair, and help give the face a rosy, refreshed glow. "Multi-dimensional highlights also mimic the natural color of a child's hair," says Brad Johns, color director at New York City's Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa 5th Avenue. And when you lighten hair, don't forget your eyebrows—lightening them one to two shades can soften the face and create a more youthful look.

THE GUIDE TO GETTING

NATURAL-LOOKING HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHLIGHTS GIVE HAIR DIMENSION, A NATURAL SUN-KISSED LOOK AND CAN EVEN TAKE YEARS OFF YOUR APPEARANCE. BUT ACHIEVING EFFORTLESS, NATURAL-LOOKING HIGHLIGHTS CAN BE TRICKY, ESPECIALLY IF YOUR HAIR IS ON THE DARKER SIDE. "HAIR COLOR IS ALL ABOUT COMPLEMENTING YOUR SKIN TONE," SAYS NEW YORK CITY CELEBRITY STYLIST FRÉDÉRIC FEKKAI. "THERE IS NO 'ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL.'" AND JUST BECAUSE YOU CHOOSE TO LIGHTEN YOUR LOCKS DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO STICK STRICTLY TO BLEACH. TODAY'S MODERN TECHNIQUES INCORPORATE VARIOUS COLORS AND TONES TO CREATE A NATURAL AND FLATTERING HUE THAT GOES WELL WITH YOUR SKIN TONE.

How to get the most natural look

The main goal of highlights is to brighten the hair with various shades that are lighter than your natural or colored base. Highlights can also give the hair body and are easier to manage than all-over color. But when applied in thick strips that are too wide or too light in color, highlights can look obvious and fake. "An experienced colorist can help you avoid the 'stripe' look by weaving slices of color throughout the hair," says Beth Minardi, owner of the Minardi Salon in New York City. The same goes for using color on segmented pieces of hair. "The most natural-looking highlights are placed randomly throughout the hair. They should look like they were placed by nature, and not by a colorist," Johns adds.

Where to apply highlights

Whether you choose to do your highlights yourself, or prefer to have them done professionally, it's important that they are applied to the right areas to create the perfect look. "It really depends on your hair type, haircut and the general look you're trying to achieve," says Amanda George, co-owner of the Neil George Salon in Beverly Hills, CA. "Sometimes, with highlights, less is more." Highlights give hair movement and depth, but applying too many can look artificial. When highlights are applied correctly, and to the correct areas, they grow out naturally with a minimal demarcation line.

THE DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES

Lowlights

The opposite of highlights, lowlights use darker colors to break up over-highlighted hair or to make select strands a bit darker. "Lowlights also keep brown hair from looking faded and dull," Minardi says.

BEST FOR *Adding depth*

DOWNSIDE *Lowlights that are too dark can be aging.*

Chunking

If you're looking for bold highlights, chunking is the way to go. Your stylist will randomly section out large chunks of hair and apply color or bleach to them.

BEST FOR *A dramatic look*

DOWNSIDE *Heavily highlighted hair may turn brassy more quickly.*

Painting

Painting uses a brush or comb to literally paint bleach onto the hair. This helps achieve a natural look, "but because the bleach isn't encapsulated in plastic or foil, a larger amount is required, which can burn the hair," Johns says.

BEST FOR *A natural look*

DOWNSIDE *Hair may be susceptible to damage.*

Balage

A freeform type of "hair painting," balage originated in Europe and is one of the most popular techniques. "Balage is a kind of freeform painting that results in a look that is more dimensional and multitoneal," says Fekkal. In most cases, the painted pieces are lightly wrapped in plastic wrap to prevent the color from seeping

BEST FOR *A customized look or for highlighting curly or wavy hair*

DOWNSIDE *A technique-dependent process*

Tipping

This highlighting technique lightens just the tips of the hair, as opposed to the entire strand. "It's best on straight or slightly wavy hair," Minardi says.

BEST FOR *A low-maintenance look*

DOWNSIDE *Cutting will remove colored portion of hair.*

Foiling

A commonly practiced technique, foiling involves placing the hair in sheets of professional-grade tinfoil to prevent bleach from mixing with the rest of your hair. "All major colorists use foil," explains Johns. "It keeps strands separated so color doesn't leak."

BEST FOR *Getting highlights close to the roots*

DOWNSIDE *Frequent touch-ups may be needed.*

