

# marie claire hair



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## Beginner's guide

When they're bad, they're awful, but when they're good... well, you wouldn't know because

### So, what are hair extensions?

They are pieces of hair, either real or synthetic (see box, far right), that are attached to your own hair at the root. They can have either a lengthening or a thickening effect (or both).

### How long does it take to put them in?

Synthetic extensions take four to five hours to put in, with two stylists working on you; real ones take six to eight hours – you need about 200 more pieces of hair. There's also a new procedure called Great Lengths (call 0870-241 4671 for information), which uses an air pressure system (instead of glueing or knotting) that bonds hair far more quickly – a full head of hair is possible in one hour. Fans of the system include Jennifer Aniston, Jennifer Lopez and Lisa Marie Presley.

### How long do they last?

You should be able to keep them in for three to four months, but 'tidy-up' trips to replace loose extensions are recommended every six to eight weeks.

### Are they easy to remove?

Synthetic extensions can be removed very simply – they just slide off the hair with no mess or residue. Real extensions need to be professionally removed, using a special substance.

### Does it matter how long my hair is to begin with?

Felny Georgiou at Connect salon in north London (020-7483 3845) recommends that hair is at least 3-4in long, but it is possible to attach extensions to shorter hair – she transformed Victoria Beckham's short spikes into Rapunzel-style locks by applying nearly 450 extensions.

### Do extensions damage hair?

'Only if applied too tightly,' says Lucinda Ellery, of Lucinda Ellery Hair Solutions (020-8741 8224). Too tight extensions can cause traction alopecia – they literally pull your real

## THE ONES WHO GOT IT RIGHT...



Sarah Jessica Parker



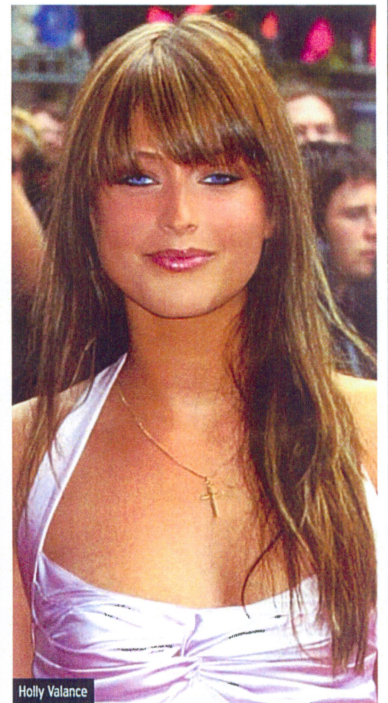
Emma Bunton



Christina Aguilera



Beyoncé Knowles



Holly Valance

hair out of your head. 'Initially, extensions will feel strange and even uncomfortable,' she says, 'but they shouldn't give you a headache.' Hair matting (knotting up at the root) can also occur, especially with real extensions.

### Are extensions a solution to hair-loss problems?

Around 8 million women in the UK suffer some kind of hair loss. The Mark Glenn salon in London's Mayfair (020-7495 6969, [www.markglenn.com](http://www.markglenn.com)) specialises in the Kinsey System, in which a micro-fine mesh is placed over the area of hair loss,

and micro-fine extensions are attached to both the mesh and natural hair. It allows hair to grow unhindered and the extensions can be washed and styled like normal hair.

### Do you need to use special hair products on extensions?

Real extensions act like real hair, so you can wash your hair as normal. However, it's best to use a non oil-based shampoo, which won't break the seal of the attachment. Try Umberto Giannini's Sleek And Chic range, or products by Phytomer. And keep a detangling spray

to hand, such as ProHair Daily Conditioning Spray, £6.45. For fake hair extensions, try Goldwell Definition Shine & Vitality shampoo, £5.20, or Tesco Apple & Aloe Vera shampoo – you don't need conditioner.

### How much do extensions cost?

A shoulder-length head of real hair extensions costs about £500; a similar length of synthetic extensions costs about £350.

### Where can I get them done?

Extensions specialist Dome can recommend a salon in your area – visit [www.domecosmetics.com](http://www.domecosmetics.com), or call 0800-298 7780.

# tohairextensions

they look so natural. Zanna Roberts presents all you need to know about extensions

## THE ONES WHO GOT IT WRONG...



Jordan



Dannii Minogue



Jennifer Ellison



Letitia Dean



Vanessa Feltz

## Real v synthetic

Both real and synthetic extensions are effective and can look fabulous. Here's how to choose between them.

### GET REAL HAIR EXTENSIONS IF...

- \* You style your hair using hot bare metal appliances such as straightening irons and curling tongs. Neither can be used on synthetic hair.
- \* You want your hair to have lots of movement.
- \* You want finer attachments.
- \* You are willing to pay more for a truly natural look.
- \* You have patience - it can take up to eight hours for a full head.

### GET SYNTHETIC HAIR EXTENSIONS IF...

- \* You want your hair to look glossier than average, especially in photographs (fake hair reflects light, making it appear shiny, whereas real hair absorbs light).
- \* You want your style - e.g., curls - to last longer than normal.
- \* You have suffered from hair loss in the past - synthetic extensions are about half the weight of real hair and, because they're non-porous, they don't double in weight when wet like real hair.
- \* You have a very sensitive scalp - it may react to the acetone used to remove real extensions.
- \* You don't want second-hand hair.

## Where do real hair extensions come from?

In the UK, a lot of hair is bought from Eastern Europe, but hair can come from all over the world. 'The origin of real hair is important when choosing red or blonde colours,' says Julian Guyonnet, creative director of west London salon Antenna (020-7938 1866). 'If it's of Asian origin, it's often had to go through a lengthy colouring process to reach that shade, leaving it coarse and dull.' Always insist on hair that was fairly similar to your own to start with. ■

PHOTOGRAPHS: REX

## Long for it

1. Goldwell Definition Shine & Vitality Shampoo, £5.20.
2. Umberto Giannini Sleek And Chic Blowdry Cream, £4.95.
3. Tesco Apple & Aloe Vera Shampoo, 69p.
4. ProHair Frequent Use Shampoo, £5.45.

