

The Ways You Are Damaging Your Hair Without Even Knowing It



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We are all obsessed with having long, thick, and beautiful hair. However, a lot of what we are doing to our hair to make it look its best is actually making it feel its worst. Heat tools, color processing, chemical processes, and even how we brush or wash our hair can cause significant hair damage. You may think you're doing everything you can to make your hair gorgeous, but you're actually damaging it in the process. Let's treat our hair right so it can do its best job for us!

Color smart:

New hair lighteners can now be used without heat, says George Gonzalez, owner of George the salon Chicago. Added heat can open the cuticle, which can leave your hair dry or looking

brittle. Processing your color at room temperature could be beneficial in maintaining healthier hair when you get blonde highlights.

Your drying technique:

People put the dryer directly against the hair because they think that's the way to get it straight. That can do real damage, especially with a metal brush, says Gonzalez. If it's not too bad, you can repair the damage with conditioners. But once hair is too overstressed and chemically dried out from heat, there's nothing to do but cut it and let new hair grow in. Pull the dryer a bit away from the brush and don't let it touch the hair directly.

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Using hair tools too hot or too long:

Having the iron on too long on the hair section or the setting too high (or possibly both), is very dangerous says Mike van den Abbeel of Mosaic Hair Studio & Blowout Bar. Another huge factor for damage is to use the flat iron when the hair isn't 100% dry. The steam that is created when the iron touches the water still in the hair can scorch both the hair and the scalp.

Skimping on quality tools:

It's counter productive to spend a bundle at the salon but use sub-par styling tools. Heated styling devices are very important to the health and appearance of hair. This is one area you absolutely want to invest in quality products. A powerful blow dryer limits drying time and a ceramic flat iron minimizes 'hot spots' and hair damage, says dermatologist and scalp expert Rebecca Kazin, MD, FAAD.

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Rocking a pony regularly:

You may think skipping the heat styling in favor of a low-key style is sparing your hair. However, repeatedly pulling hair back can cause traction alopecia (hair loss from chronic tension on hair), says Kazin.

Over-brushing:

You don't need 100 brush strokes a day for healthy hair! Quite the opposite, excessive brushing can ruffle the hair cuticle and cause breakage, says Kazin.

Shampooing daily:

Lathering up every day can be very drying to the hair, Kazin says. If hair is 'dirty' (like after gym), you can just shampoo the roots and use conditioner on the ends. Or, invest in dry shampoo – (it can be a time and hair!) lifesaver.

Brushing wet hair:

Wet hair is fragile and brushing it when wet can cause major breakage. Use a wide tooth comb to avoid excessive pulling, says Kazin.