

Faves + **Must-Have** Tool Guide

Based on Skill and Dexterity







in





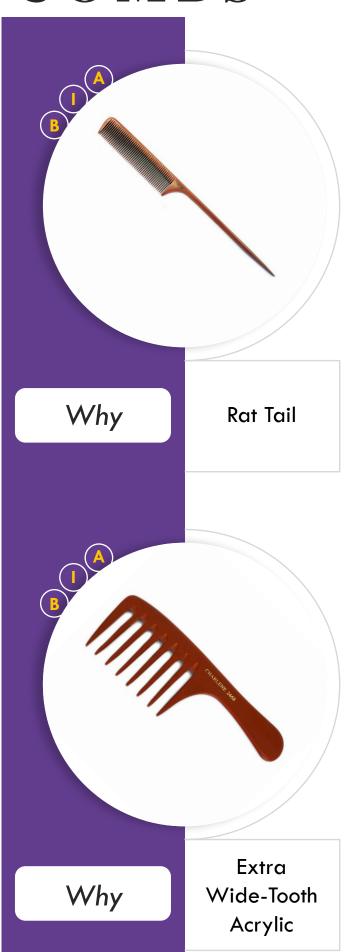


Tools by Category

COMBS BRUSHES 4 CONDITIONING 5 6 DRYING 7 **STRAIGHTENING CURLING** 8 **TRIMMING** 9 **ACCESSORIES** 10 **COMFORT ZONE** 12 13 **NIGHTY NIGHT**



COMBS

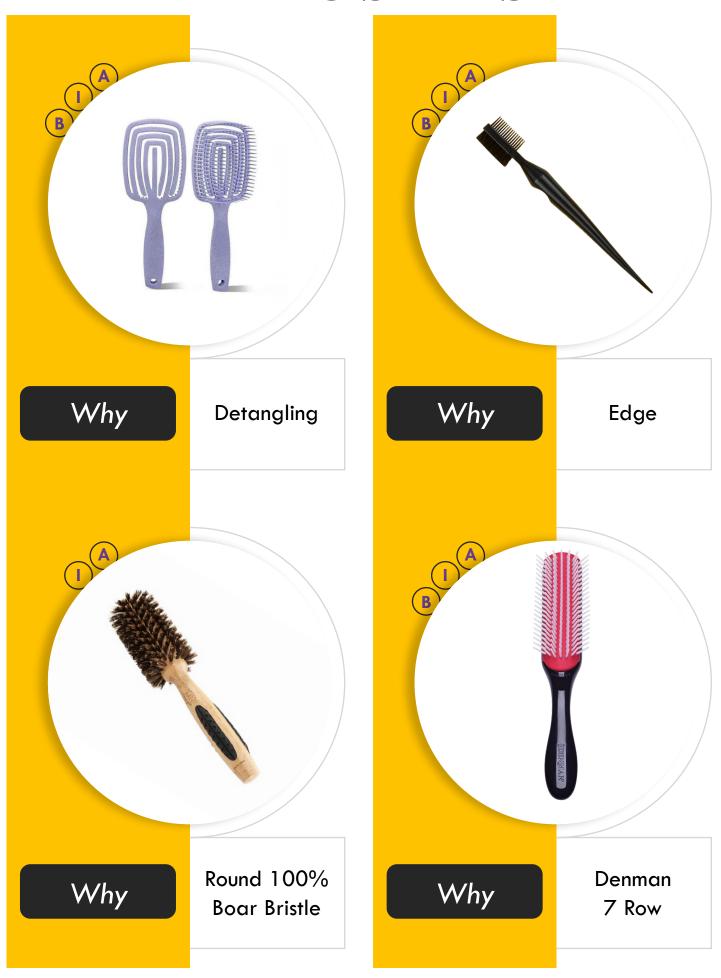


Skill + Dexterity Key:





BRUSHES

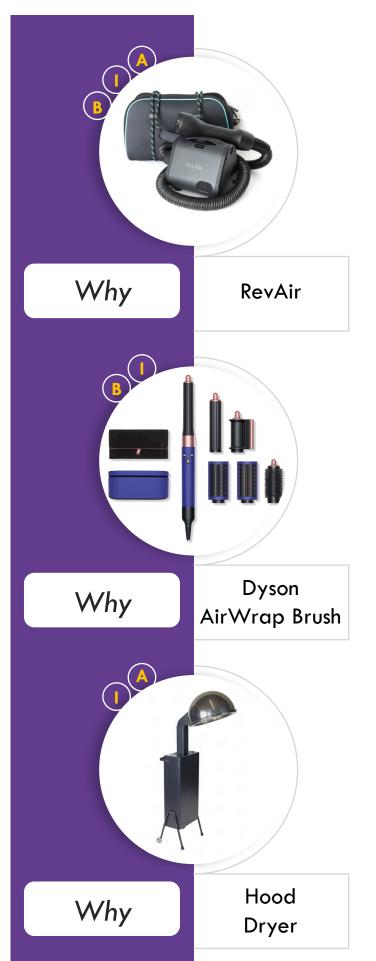




CONDITIONING



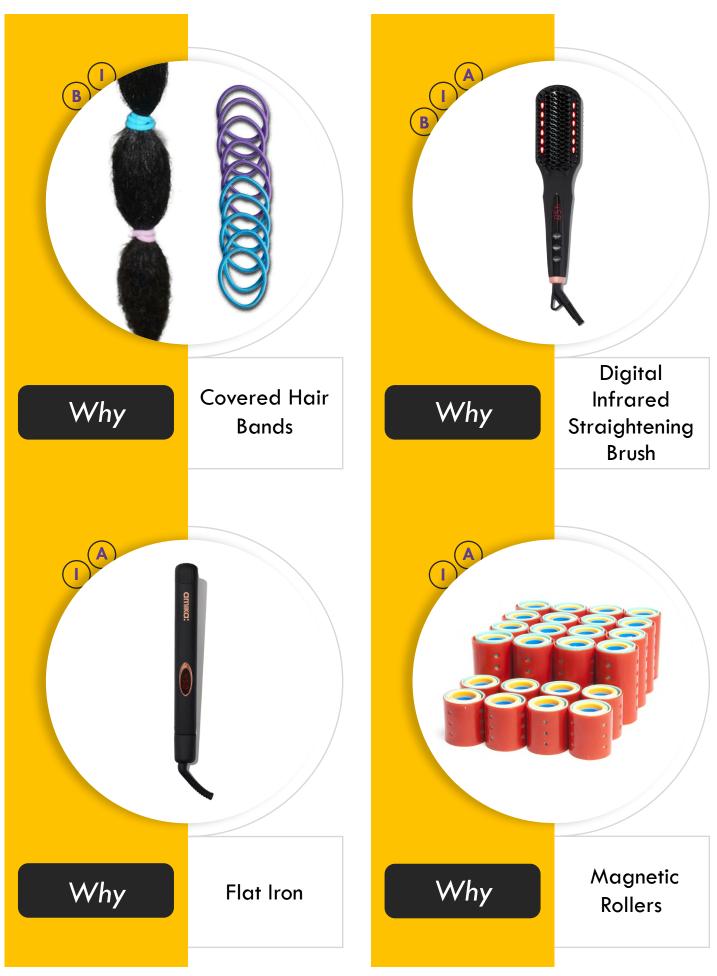
DRYING



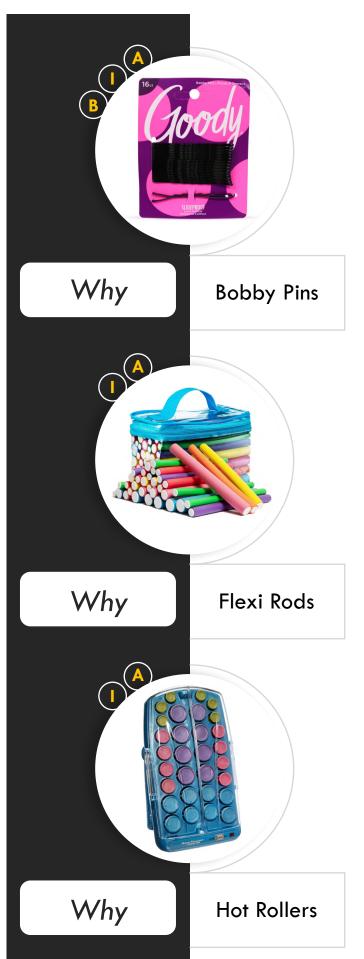


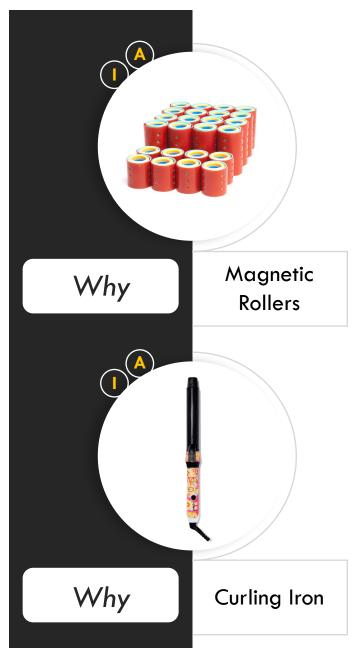


STRAIGHTENING



CURLING

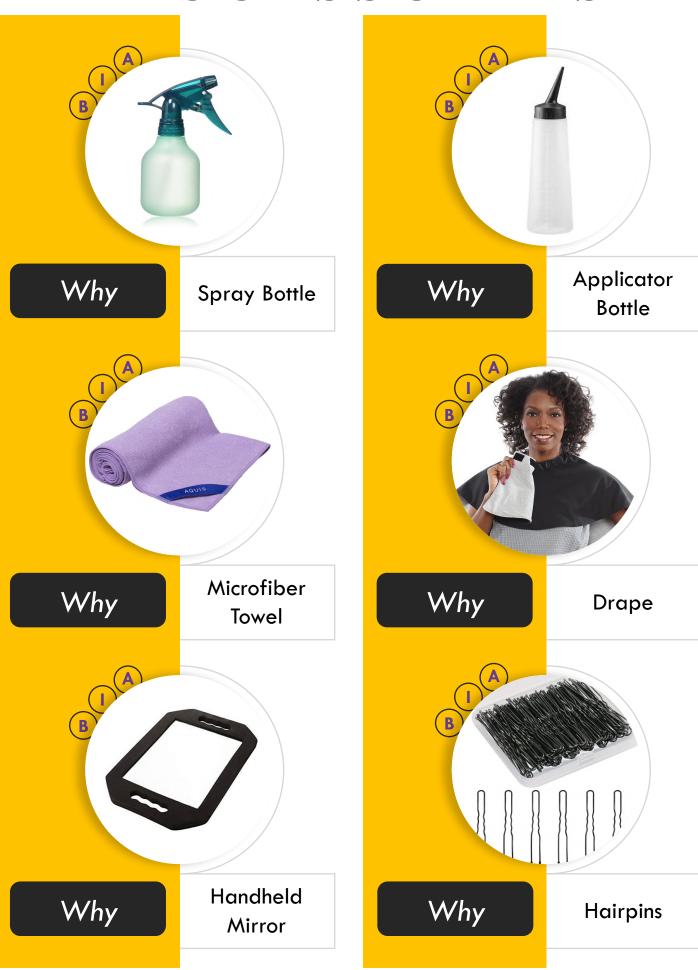




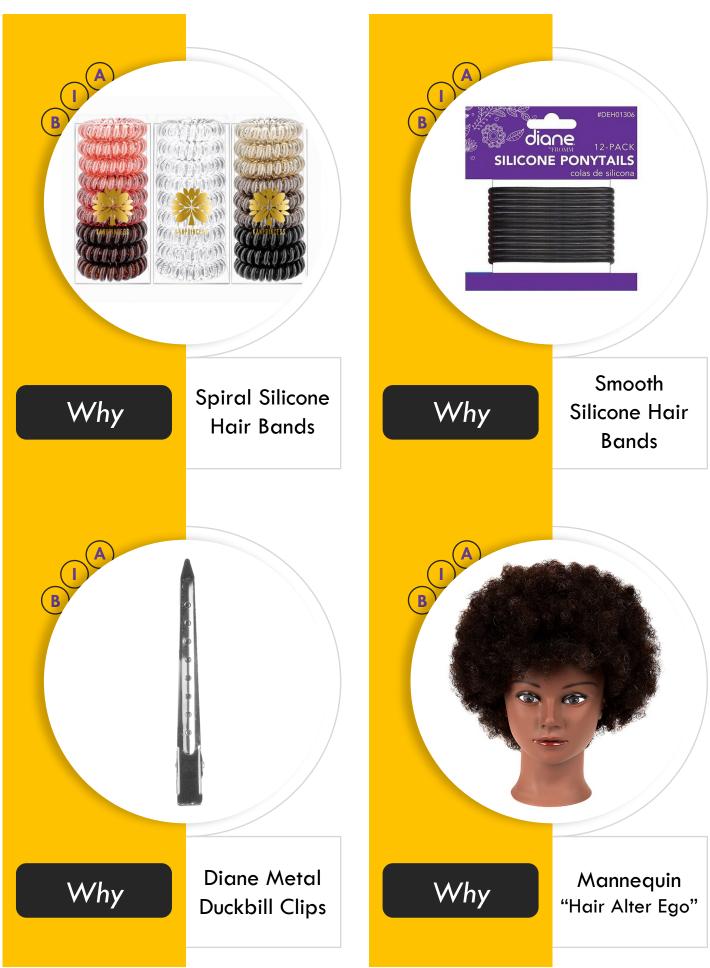
TRIMMING



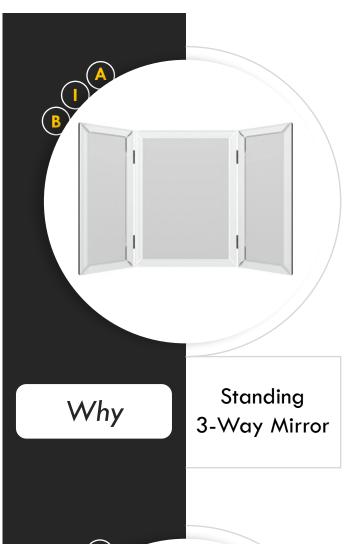
ACCESSORIES



ACCESSORIES



COMFORT ZONE









NIGHTY NIGHT







Why these combs?



Rattail combs simplify parting and sectioning and can also be used to lift sections of the hair when styling.

The fine teeth are also good for smoothing through a small section of hair to make sure hairs are aligned evenly before twisting, finger coiling, flat ironing or curling the hair.

Rattail combs should never be used to detangle the hair.



Fingerstyling is sorely underrated! Use your fingers to style when you can and when you need more control use an extra wide-tooth comb.

The wide-tooth styling comb is useful for hair that's styled curly, straight and everywhere in between. And surprise, surprise the wide spacing is a lot like fingers spread apart.

Acrylic glides more easily through the hair than plastic or hard rubber. It will last forever as long as you don't drop or lose it.



This comb is made from acrylic (not plastic or rubber) a material that produces less surface tension or friction on the hair so it glides through hair more easily.

The narrow teeth help us comb from root to end - removing any tangles that the detangling brush left behind. Wide tooth combs skip past tangles and ultimately result in hair that is more difficult to manage. This comb wins! The teeth are carved to a point, further reducing stress and friction on the hair by literally "slicing" through highly textured hair, without damaging it!

Other perks of the comb are that it is heat resistant, anti-static and will last forever unless dropped just right on tile. These great combs tend to "walk away" though, so keep your eye on yours once you get it!



A pick is a useful tool for creating more volume by lifting and separating hair near the scalp. It is especially helpful for removing parts and blending sections in tight curl patterns and dense hair.



Why these brushes?



Detangling

Get It Now!

Anything stronger than hair can break the hair.

This brush is designed to flex when it hits tangles, reducing stress on the hair. The tool is particularly useful if you are a novice or "heavy handed" styler. It helps remove tangles - with less aggression!



Edge

Get It Now!

This brush is the perfect tool to use for smoothing, sculpting and controlling the edges of your hairline with ease.



Denman 7 Row

Get It Now!

Denman brand brushes used to be great for tools for wet and dry styling at various skill levels. However they changed their rubber and it is no longer heat resistant!

If you have a classic version of the Denman, hang on to it for speedy advanced blow drys!

New purchases of the brush are good for detangling when used on wet soapy hair.



Round 100% Boar Bristle

Get It Now!

Tension straightens the hair! The greater the tension, the silkier the finish. So this is your best tool for creating that super silky blow dry at the intermediate and advanced skill levels.

Boar bristles are hair – boar's hair. So while they are stiff enough to grip human hair they are much less likely to break our hair than synthetic bristles. This is why it is very important to get a brush that is 100% boar, not "reinforced boar." Reinforced is code for "we used some plastic bristles to make this brush less expensive." Beware because the plastic is likely stronger than your hair and more likely to break it. And the heat from the blow dryer typically deforms the reinforced bristles (ironically) so the brushes don't last as long.

The bristles positioning 360° around the brush help guarantee a silky blowdry for highly textured hair, which makes this tool goof proof!

You will find it useful to have several of these brushes in different sizes because the bristles will collapse during the blowdry process. Don't worry, when you finish simply shampoo and soak the brushes for about an hour until the bristles straighten back out, then allow them to dry like new!



Why these for conditioning?

Hood Steamer

Get It Now!





Hand Steamer

Get It Now!

Highly textured hair is porous and often in need of water (moisture)

Steamers are wonderful tools for hydrating the hair while deep conditioning. Hydration is essential for healthy hair and product saturation. The ultra-fine mist is easily absorbed by the hair.

A steamer is a fave more than a must-have since the work it does can be achieved with a hood dryer, plastic cap and well saturated hair.

However, steamers are, hands down, the most ideal tool for deep conditioning treatments.

Plug-in Heat Cap

Get It Now!





Cordless Heat Cap

Get It Now!

Plug-in and cordless heat caps are practical tools for deep conditioning your hair when a hood dryer is too cumbersome and steamer is unavailable.



Why these for drying?



Blow Dryer w/ Attachments

Get It Now!

Heat + air speed determines how fast your hair dries, not how straight it gets.

So, your blow dryer needs to get hot, but most get too hot! My recommendation is the Solano (Moda) for the following reasons:

- 1) It is lightweight, ergonomic and fueled by 1750 watts of power that delivers enough, but not too much, far infra red heat.
- 2) It is easy to find and purchase accessories if they get lost or break.
- 3) Because Solano caters to a professional market, it is easy to repair your dryer FOR LIFE. Once you get used to using a dryer that works you won't want to adapt to a new tool. And last but not least...
- 4) The cords are long and the dryers are not horribly loud these things increase convenience and comfort.



RevAir

Get It Now!

RevAir is an innovative "reverse-air" hair dryer that uses the principles of tension/suction and low heat to pull water from the hair and gently straighten it simultaneously. The styling options are unlimited with this tool because you can set the tension and heat levels to dry, stretch and straighten hair as you please.



Hood Dryer

Get It Now!

A hood dry will allow you to sit still and let you hair dry with diffused air flow. It also can be used with a plastic condition cap to deep condition the hair or get other products to penetrate the hair shaft. It is a nice to have for anyone and a must have for you if you live in a cold climate and can't count on air dry for capturing a great style.

I suggest investing in a floor model hood dryer if at all possible. The footprint is relatively small and when set on wheels it can fit into a closet easily. The comfortable pull up to most any chair and have settings that allow for time and heat variation.

The tabletop dryers always break because they get hotter (with minimal temperature control) than the plastic can withstand with repeated use. I've had more than a few over the years and never found a comfy position underneath one.



Diffuser

Get It Now!

This BedHead diffuser is loud, the cord is short AND I recommend it anyway because it is super easy for beginners to use, and it makes diffusing easy during travel.



Why these for drying?



The Dyson AirWrap Complete is a prestige priced tool that I recommend because of the innovative heat control. The dryer is thermostatic, meaning the temperature at the surface of the hair will not go higher than the designated set point.

The paddle-style brush head creates a goof proof way for beginners with long hair to create salon-worthy blow-drys at home. The bad news is the paddle brush head is the only practical attachment (of the 6 included) for use on curl patterns in the 4 category.

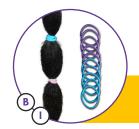


Air Dry

Free For All!

Don't sleep on Mother Nature! When time permits, air drying is the healthiest way to remove water from the hair. There are a few great tools that use tension curl or straighten hair when you have the luxury of time to air dry.

Why these for straightening?



Covered Hair Bands

Get It Now!

Covered elastic hair bands are the best friend of beginner curl-friends looking for a straighter style. The bands can be used to elongate curls via the "banding method" or to secure the base of bantu knots as the hair dries.



Magnetic Rollers

Get It Now!

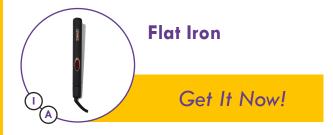
Extra-large plastic rollers (called magnetic because wet hair sticks to the roller as though it was a magnet) can be used to drastically enlarge the curl of hair, even straighten it, because tension straightens hair. The magnetic rollers are used with clips that maintain the tension on the hair while it dries.



Digital Infrared
Straightening Brush

Get It Now!

This Amika Polished Perfection brush may be the most used tool in my home and work beauty kits. The brush is thermostatic, which means heats and cools to maintain the temperature setting you choose, up to 450 degree F. The infrared aspect makes the tool virtually goof proof – it works by pushing excess moisture from the inside of the hair and when used with tension, it can produce a good bit of silkiness.



The heat of the flat iron seals and styles the hair by pushing out the last bit of excess moisture as you apply tension.

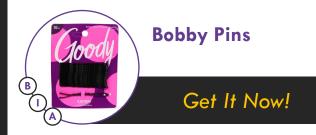
A digital thermostatic display is key. Digital means that you can set the iron to a specific temperature and thermostatic means that the iron will internally control holding that set temperature. Tools that have a dial to set temperature, and/or are not thermostatic, will continue to heat as they sit unused. This can easily result in heat damage or even the dreaded hair coming OFF in the iron that we have all seen on a viral video or two.

As for plate coating. I prefer ceramic, but it is a personal preference! The main thing to check is that there is good tension when the plates close and that the hair between the plates glides through smoothly. Get an iron that feels good in your hand, try it at home for a couple weeks and take it back if you don't love it. Size matters: You'll want a plate size that gives you maximum styling flexibility.

I suggest starting with 1.25" plates then working up or down based on the styling results you desire. While I love the Amika digital infrared flat iron, the default setting when you power on is 450 degrees – too hot! So be mindful of the initial setting of this iron.



Why these for curling?



Don't sleep on pin curls and bantu knots for creating beautiful curls. Well, actually, you do literally sleep on them! Pin curls and bantu knots are sorely underrated and all you need to create them are good old fashioned bobby pins. I recommend having both large (3") and small (2") for ultimate styling flexibility.



While extra-large magnetic rollers can significantly straighten curly hair, smaller rollers can be used to create beautiful curls. Use rollers with wet hair and a setting or wrap lotion. Then sit under a hood dryer to "set" the hair. Roller setting hair is hands down the healthiest way to form large curls in the hair because the most delicate and vulnerable part of the hair (the ends) are furthest away from the heat. Because the hair dries slowly through a wicking process, no portion of the hair gets excessively dry or heat damaged — ever!



All flexi rods are not created equally. A good set has enough cushion to compress when the hair is wrapped around it and a texture that allows the hair a reasonable, but not excessive amount of grip. Remember to get endpapers to do your rod set!



It is true that you can curl hair with the flat iron. However a curling iron is much easier on the hair because it uses one heated surface instead of two hot plates. You'll what a flat iron that is digital and thermostatic for optimal hair protection.



If you have never tried hot rollers, you don't know what you are missing. Hot rollers are a great way to create curl and wave with virtually no negative impact to the hair.

Simply put the heated rollers into hair and allow them to cool. Voila!



Why these for trimming?



Professional Shears

Get It Now!

Cutting and trimming your hair is ideally reserved for a professional stylist and you are worth it! I suggest having a good pair of professional-grade hair cutting shears on hand because there will be times when hairs need to be cut at home: Every now and then there is a tangle that simply won't come out. When hair needs to be cut it should be done with an ultra-sharp tool.

Using any shear or scissor duller than razor-sharp shears on the hair results in the freshly cut end being damaged from the moment it's trimmed. Another reason I suggest having your own shears on hand is for use on our children's hair. We can and should learn how to TRIM our young people's hair, so that their ends can be clipped regularly even when it is impractical to take them to a salon.

JW craft shears are accessible, reasonably priced and great quality for infrequent use.



Advanced! That's the skill level advised for using clippers and trimmers. I love these Panasonic cordless trimmers because they can be used on all types of hair (ahem!) What you are looking for in a trimmer are long battery life, fast motor speed, and impeccable blade precision. The motor speed and precision with which blades come together ensure that hairs cut without pulling and cut close without nicking the skin.

Why these accessories?



Spray Bottle

Get It Now!

Any old spray bottle will do, really. You can choose a fancy bottle that mists, a regular trigger bottle like the one in the link, or repurpose an empty spray bottle from a product that's all gone.

Having a spray bottle handy will help you to rewet sections of the hair that may begin to dry while you are detangling, blowdrying or styling your hair.

They also come in handy for refluffing the dreaded "flat section" that sometimes happens while we rest against a pillow or backrest.



Applicator Bottle

Get It Now!

A narrow tip for precise placement of hair product.



Drape

Get It Now!

A drape or cape comes in handy when you want to protect your clothes from whatever it is you are doing to your hair. This cool transformative Wraparoo turns from a cape into a head wrap in one quick swoop! Quite cool!



Microfiber Towel

Get It Now!

Gentle on the hair + helps to dry hair without heat. My favorite time-saving hack with microfiber towels and highly-texture hair is using one to pat out excessive water after applying gel, mousse or curl potion to the hair. This dramatically reduced drying time! The Aquis towel goes the extra mile with proprietary AQUITEX fabric which "uses uniquely woven channels to quickly wick water away without heat or friction, reforming hydrogen bonds for improved hair strength + keratin structure." Pow!



Smooth Silicone Hair Bands

Get It Now!

The basic rubber band has been upgraded to a smooth silicone hair band that does not damage the hair. You will likely get more use out of the spiral bands due to their flexibility, but having both types on hand certainly can't hurt.



Handheld Mirror

Get It Now!

This handheld mirror allows you to easily see your hair from any angle even without a 3-way mirror. Why this one, you ask?
Because it is large and very lightweight!



Why these accessories?



Hairpins

Get It Now!

Bobby Pins are close on the ends. Hairpins on the other hand, are open on one end. They are great for effortlessly redirecting rogue curls and invisibly securing buns and bantu knots. They are also great for magically shortening areas of the hair to create new looks without the commitment of a haircut.

Be sure to use pins with protective ends that avoid snagging the hair!



Spiral Silicone Hair Bands

Get It Now!

These things are magical! They can be used to hold large or small amounts of hair without snagging. BEWARE there is a larger sized coil that looks similar, but is less stretchy and very easily tangles into the hair. For this reason I suggest you follow the link and get a set for use and reference.

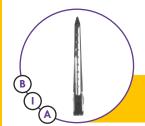


Mannequin
"Hair Alter Ego"

Get It Now!

Everyone needs a hair alterego - a mannequin head with hair similar to the texture of your own hair. Mannequin heads are wonderful for experimenting with new products, tools and techniques before you try them on your own hair.

Professionals use them to practice + enhance performance, so you can too!



Diane Metal

Duckbill Clips

Get It Now!

DIANE. Diane clips have pointed ends that glide into the hair easily. Other brands duckbill clips look the same, but have rounded tips that create stress on the hair as you slide them in. Plastic alligator clips are all the rage, but I feel they snag the hair. And remember anything strong than the hair, breaks the hair. The metal duckbill clips play time-saving double-duty because you can us the pointy end to part the hair before you clip up a section.

Why upgrade your comfort zone?

Creating a comfortable space makes styling your hair a more pleasurable experience! Take a look around the space you use. Are things you need easily accessible? Is the space tidy, well-lit and well-organized? Here are few must haves, but you be the judge: get what you need, but not more than you need, to create comfortably!



It doesn't matter whether you get a hanging version or a standing version, a 3-way mirror is a time saver. It is impossible for me to style my hair or anyone else's well without viewing the look from all angles so here are two great options for hands-free mirror use if you don't already have 360 degree visibility.

You need to be able to see yourself from all angles. Mirrors are key!



As you more into the intermediate phase of styling you may find that you need more than two outlets at a time. It is a pain, and time suck, to have to unplug one tool to plug in another. So power strips and outlet expanders can save the day.



I love portable ring lights because you can use them to add more light whenever and wherever you are – home and away.



A client once purchased these lights to augment the lighting in her bathroom.

Genius! They are flexible enough to place lighting exactly where you need it. And the LED bonus is that they are ultra bright and energy efficient!

Good lighting is critical for easily creating the results you want at home.



Why these for nighty night?



Less is more when it comes to friction and hair. Every natural fiber or cloth that touches the hair will exert friction on your hair and absorb moisture from your hair.

Less friction and competition for moisture means healthier hair and styles that last longer. I like the idea of both a silk pillowcase and hair wrap for redundancy, but one or the other is necessary.

It's a Hair Wrap's silked satin pillowcases are my favorite because they ditch the clunky zipper for a sassy drawstring that keeps the pillow in the case and looks pretty to boot!



Our hair is strongest when there is moisture inside our strands. And when our hair must compete with other fibers (and bone-dry air) for moisture, our hair is a giver (insert heart emoji) it releases moisture to the environment and other dry fibers. Bedrooms full of sheets, blankets, and pajamas wick moisture out of air and our hair.

So the second best way to make sure our hair has what it needs from a humidity perspective is to infuse the air in our bedrooms with moisture by way of a humidifier. Humidifiers are must haves in cold winters and super dry summers. And the other fibers in your bedroom will benefit as well!



Nod to Grace Eleyae for this clear explanation of the benefits of silk and satin

Beware of elastic edging and most satin bonnets sold in stores. The shiny side of the wrap of bonnet should face the hair, not face out.

Kin Apparel helps you easily apply this rule to your daywear as well... Hats, scarves and collars that touch the hair are best lined with silk or satin!



