



# Manicure Basics



## What it is:

A manicure is a beauty treatment which uses special tools, creams, waxes and / or massage techniques to leave **your nails and hands** healthy and looking great!

There are various kinds of manicure, which may involve a different shaping of the nail, the use of a variety of oils and creams, or even of electro-pulse or hot-stone massage as part of the treatment. Some examples include:

**French:** a classic manicure using clear or ivory-coloured polish on the body of the nail, with white at the tip. The nail is usually cut quite square. The **Reverse** involves “the moon” of the nail painted white while the rest is done in a darker shade.

**American:** is similar to French but the shape and color (neutral or off whites) differ. It is a very natural-looking manicure which shapes the nails to your finger tip.

**Hot stone manicure:** this manicure features a hand massage using hot stone therapy to soothe and relax your hand.

**Intensive paraffin wax:** includes warm wax being rubbed into your nails, hands and wrists to moisturise and soften.

**Gel:** If you want a long-lasting manicure without the commitment (or potential damage) of having acrylic nails applied, getting a gel manicure leaving a glossy surface is a good option. All the steps of a basic manicure are taken, except a special polish that requires curing under a UV light is applied. There are two types of gel, hard gel and soft gel. Hard gel gets its name because, once cured, is tough enough to be made into a nail extension. This cured polish typically lasts days longer than the polish used for a basic manicure, and is less prone to chipping. Flexible, they are therefore less prone to damage than acrylic and easier to repair. They are also less toxic, require less maintenance and generally last longer.

**Acrylic:** are the most popular of artificial nails and have held that place since the 1970's. The general process of having acrylic nails done goes like this. An artificial nail is applied to your nail bed (usually sculpted beforehand to suit your nails) before being glued to it with liquid acrylic and powder. Usually it is glued to the tips of nails instead of the whole nail bed and has a matt finish. The result is a hard protective layer that can be used as a canvas if you wish to color your nails. Easier to repair and cheaper than gel nails. They are quite toxic and may not be suitable in pregnancy.

**Luxury:** this usually signifies a whole-hand treatment which includes a hand massage, softening paraffin wax and heated mittens or a wrap; the combination of heat and moisturising unguents warms and soothes your hands, and softens and hydrates your nails.



**Artificial:** full manicure is not typically given when receiving a set of artificial nails, because it interferes with the bonding process between the extensions and the acrylic. If one chooses this option, choosing nail tips can be a fun experience that allows for personalization of the look

**Decorative Embellishments:** - Airbrushing (stencils or freestyle), 3-D (supplied or bring your own e.g. bow tie, rose) and Rhinestones/Gems will all embellish your personalised nails.

**Shellac** – a manicure treatment offering longer lasting smudge-proof nail color. The special formula, called Shellac, brushes on just like regular nail polish. Nails are prepped in the same manner as a basic manicure. However, with care, the polish stays on, chip-free, for weeks. You only need to change polish when new growth starts showing, and that's typically after about 14 days. Shellac offers a more nail-friendly solution by taking gel to the next level -- no sculpting or filing, just thin coats of polish on your natural nail, with a brief time for curing under a UV lamp between every coat. Your natural nails and nail beds must be healthy. If they're splitting, peeling or damaged from using acrylic or gel enhancements, you may need pre nail care.

If you have concerns about UV exposure, UV lamps are low- watt UV bulbs that filter out most of the damaging rays, and have been scientifically tested to be safer than the exposure your hands get from driving in the sun without gloves.

- Try to give your nails a good clean and **remove any traces of old nail polish beforehand**. This will stop the beautician wasting valuable manicure-time doing it herself, so that she can get on with the good stuff! You might want to take off your rings, too, if there's massage involved.

### The Benefits:

Nail parts are part of as well as an outward projection of you, so they deserve to be treated with care. Nails are one of the first things people see, and having healthy, attractive nails can help you to feel confident about the way you look.

- Treats any skin problems you might have around the nail, such as broken or sore skin
- Improves the shape, texture, strength and health of both fingernails and hands.
- Leaves the nails looking polished, decorated and perfect.
- Healing - pressure points can be stimulated corresponding with other areas of the body
- Exfoliates via oils, creams and waxes
- Stimulate circulation of blood and lymph flow, easing muscle stiffness, loosening fibrous adhesions
- Relaxes the entire nervous system and improves mood
- Cleanse, moisturise, nourish, warms and tones the skin and increase its elasticity (It is safe for very sensitive skins).
- Produce soothing and rejuvenating effects

### What to expect:

A manicure is very soothing. It is very pleasant to be pampered as your therapist touches your hands and nails, especially if the manicurist uses reflexology or other hand-massage techniques to relax you.



You will probably be one-on-one with the manicurist, who should tell you what she is going to do and check to see if you have any queries or concerns.

Your nail technician will apply a cream, oil, or lotion to the cuticles first, and place the hands into a dish of warm water for about five minutes to soak. After the soaking process is over and the cuticles have been tamed, the technician will dry the hand, and ask what nails and length you prefer. You can choose from square, oval, squoval (a combination of square and oval), or the popular stiletto shape.

At this point in the manicure, the shape of the nails has been defined and it is time for a massage. When the massage has been completed, a base coat will be applied first. After that, a polish of your choice is applied usually twice. Last, a top coat is applied. Once the nails have been polished you will place your hands under a nail dryer to complete the drying process

A manicurist will usually dress your nails with your choice of nail colour, and you may also be able to have more decorative nail art applied. Check beforehand if you want this, as you may need another person to do this.

A manicure can last from 15 minutes to more than an hour, depending on what you're having done. Generally speaking, the longer the time allocated to the manicure, the more elements you can expect.

Leave yourself enough time to get the full benefit of the treatment, and **make sure you don't have to rush off**. If for any reason the manicure takes longer, it's hard to drive with sticky polish still drying on your fingers! Whilst shop-bought nail polish often takes five minutes to dry, salon colour can take up to 12 hours to dry completely. (This isn't the case with gel manicures as those polishes contain polymers which harden under UV light; your nails are smudge- and chip-resistant the minute the treatment is over.)

Don't wear gloves, or anticipate needing your hands for any kind of dexterous work immediately after a manicure. It may not be the best thing to go straight back to banging away on a computer keyboard, doing someone's hair, or bathing your children if you have just had **delicate solutions** applied to your nails.

- Following a brief consultation on your general health and any contra-indications to massage we will discuss your treatment process.
- The treatment commences with a warm wash of the areas to be treated.
- You will be made aware of contraindications.
- Following the treatment there is a quick debrief to assess the effect of the treatment. Aftercare advice will be given regarding the best way to maximise the effect of treatment.
- You will be left feeling relaxed, revived and indulged.



### After Care Advice:

Beware, some products used with manicure can be very powerful and some people may have allergies. Always advise your therapist of any health problems. To make the most of your newly manicured feet follow these simple guidelines: If you experience a reaction to your treatment remove product, apply a cold compress and if symptoms persist for more than 24 hours see your GP.

- If any pain is felt in the hand it is recommended that you see a doctor
- Advice further treatment every 2-4 week
- Use a cuticle cream or oil (olive) to moisture soft tissue.
- Use hand cream or lotion every day, especially after bathing
- Always use a base coat under polish to prevent staining, and use a good quality top coat to prevent chipping
- Use an acetone-free nail polish remover
- Keep nails at sensible length and always file straight across the nails
- Exercise to keep joints supple
- Don't put your nails in anything you wouldn't put your hair in. This means bleach, cleaning products, dirty water, soil, etc. Use Rubber Gloves or Gardening Gloves
- Eating a cube of Jelly a day will strengthen nails
- Keep an emery board about your person or in a handbag so if you do break a nail you can easily file it rather than the temptation to bite it off
- Avoid using your nails as tools, for example, don't use nails to open letters, prise off lids etc.
- Use moisturising cream inside cotton gloves at night time to keep hands moist and to reduce dry skin

### Contraindications of Manicure

- Injury to hand or finger e.g wound, muscular or joint – advise therapist
- Joint flexibility
- Problems with blood circulation
- Joint and muscle rheumatism
- Fungal problems