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THE [BIG] BLOWOUT

By Maria Oldham

How to blow-dry your hair *like a pro*

Getting that “hair commercial” look—amazing movement, voluminous bounce, lustrous shine—may be easier than you think. If you want that smooth, styled look of a professional blowout at home, try these tips from the experts.

THE PROCEDURE

Prep your hair. Begin by applying the right products for your hair (e.g., a mousse for a smooth, defined look; a texturizer for a relaxed, beachy look, etc.). Next, use a comb to distribute a heat-protective agent through your hair while it's still wet.

Let it dry a little. One of the most important things you can do to protect your hair is to remove at least 75% of the moisture before hitting it with heat. Let it air dry for a few minutes while you eat breakfast, or wrap it in an extra-absorbent towel while you're putting on your makeup.

Take it in sections. Separate hair into small sections and clip the top layers out of the way. Keep hair taut against the brush and always keep the nozzle of the blow dryer pointed *downward*. Work from front to back and blow-dry ends *last*, as they will need the least amount of heat.

Use the right tools and technique. Make sure you're using the right brush for your hair (See pg. 64). Pull the brush through your hair as you run the blow dryer down the strands, focusing the air on the *brush*. If your hair is curly, use a diffuser to reduce frizz.

Add a finishing touch. When hair is fully dry, give it a blast of cold air to set the style. Finish with a small amount of serum or gloss at the roots and on flyaways.



Top blow-drying tips for...

LONG HAIR

The look: all-over smooth with volume and body

- massage hair at roots with serum for lift
- rub a small amount of smoothing serum along damp hair before drying
- blow-dry with high heat on low speed
- work from back to front with a large round brush

SHORT HAIR

The look: soft texture, volume, and hold

- apply a mix of styling cream and extra-hold gel
- blow-dry with medium speed and heat
- pinch and twist 1-inch sections while focusing warm air on roots
- style hair around the face with a small round ceramic brush; finish with pomade on ends

CURLY HAIR

The look: soft, defined curls and waves

- apply a curl-enhancing product with a wide-tooth comb while wet
- blow-dry with medium to high-heat on low speed with a diffuser attachment
- cup and lift sections of curls (don't scrunch) while diffusing to avoid frizz
- once almost dry, flip hair upside down and massage roots while you finish blow-drying

FINE HAIR

The look: thicker, fuller hair with lasting volume

- work volumizing mousse into towel-dried hair
- pre-dry on high speed and medium heat until slightly damp
- put top layers into a few rollers and apply root-lifting spray; blow-dry, then unroll and finish ends on low speed
- tousle (don't brush) hair after styling