

A close-up photograph of a hairdresser's hands, wearing white gloves, performing a directional perming technique. The hair is dark brown and is being wound onto a black perm rod. The hairdresser is using a brush to apply a yellowish liquid product to the hair. The background is blurred, showing other hair rollers and salon equipment.

Directional perming technique

Learning outcomes

- Maintain effective and safe methods of working when perming and neutralising hair.
- Prepare for perming and neutralising.
- Perm and neutralise hair.

Introduction

Directional winding is carried out when the hair needs perming in a specific direction and is ideal for clients requiring a parting within the perm. It is suitable for any hair length.

In addition to deciding on the best approach, consider the temperature of the salon, direction and size of the curl required, hair condition, hair texture and any previous chemical treatments.

Directional perming technique

General tips

Contact dermatitis

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), up to 70% of hairdressers have to leave the profession due to contact dermatitis. Symptoms can range from slightly inflamed areas of the skin to severe splitting and weeping areas with irritation and soreness.

The following steps can help you avoid this condition:

- Wear disposable nitrile or polyvinyl gloves when shampooing, conditioning, colouring, lightening or using any chemical substances.
- Dry your hands thoroughly with a soft cotton or paper towel.
- Moisturise after washing your hands, as well as at the start and end of each day. It's easy to miss finger tips, in-between fingers and wrists.
- Change gloves between clients. Make sure you don't contaminate your hands when you take them off.
- Check your skin regularly for early signs of dermatitis.

Preventing cross-infection

It is vital that you are able to identify the infections and infestations with which your clients may present. An infestation, infection or disease could be contagious and therefore there is a risk of cross-infection to both stylist and other clients.

Influencing factors

These are sometimes known as critical influencing factors and are anything that could affect the perming process. They must be taken into account for each individual client during the consultation before the perm is attempted and include:

- Temperature of the salon
- Hair condition
- Hair texture
- Hair length
- Direction and size of curl required
- Previous chemical services
- Haircut
- Hair density

Using products without being wasteful

For successful services, you need to know the effects of different products on all hair types. There is a wide range of products available and you need to know when and why you are using these products and the amount of product that you should be using. If you are wasteful when using products, you will be 'eating into' your salon's profits.

Coping with perming and neutralising problems

Problem	Reason	Action
Perm slow to take	Cold salon temperature/wrong selection of perm lotion/insufficient lotion applied	Use added heat (dryer/climazone)/re-damp with stronger solution/re-damp with same lotion
Perm processing too quickly	Hair too porous, allowing lotion to enter hair shaft too quickly/hair too dry when lotion applied/very hot salon	Remove any extra heat/remove cap if used/rinse hair
Hair breakage	Too much tension/lotion too strong for hair type/over processing	Use restructurant or deep penetrating conditioner
Rubber banding marks	Wound too tight	Use restructurant
Hairline and scalp irritation	Cuts, abrasions on scalp/cap and wool left around hairline/too much lotion applied	Rinse immediately using cool water
Fish hooks	Hair ends buckling or bent during winding	Remove by cutting
Frizziness	Over-processing/lotion too strong/rods too small	Cut if possible/use restructurant or deep penetrating conditioner
Uneven curl formation	Lotion applied unevenly/rod tension uneven	Re-perm if hair is in good condition
Too-tight curl	Over-processed/rod size too small	Deep condition/assess hair condition for relaxing



Skin sensitivity test

Tools required for this treatment



Chosen product



Apron



Gloves



Gown



Towel



Shoulder cape

Step 1



Carry out a skin sensitivity test 48 hours prior to the service.



Clean an area in the inner elbow or behind the ear, apply the chosen product to the area and leave to dry. A positive reaction is red skin and/or sore areas that may weep and itch. A negative reaction is no change to the skin area.

Tip:

Always follow the manufacturers' instructions as these may vary.

Consequences of not carrying out this test could include an allergic reaction, anaphylactic shock, contact dermatitis or damage to the skin.



Strand test

Tools required for this treatment



Chemical rearranger



Apron



Gloves



Gown



Towel



Shoulder cape

Step 1

● Apply the chemical rearranger to a discreet section of the hair and carry out the full development.

If the test is on scalp, monitor every five minutes to determine whether the hair has been sufficiently 'smoothed' prior to the perm winding.

If the test is off scalp, take small samples of hair from various areas of the head and apply the rearranger.

The results will determine if the condition of the hair is suitable for proceeding with the service.

Tip:

- If condition of hair is good and outcome confirms this, the service can go ahead.
- If development time is confirmed and degree of straightness achieved, the service can go ahead.
Do not proceed with the service if the degree of straightness is not
- achieved or the condition of the hair is weak.



Elasticity test

Tools required for this treatment



Gown



Towel



Shoulder cape

Step 1



On wet hair stretch a few hairs. Establish if the hair stretches and returns to its original length.



If the hair stretches and returns then elasticity is good so proceed with perm or chemical rearranger service.

If the hair stretches and stays stretched or snaps, the hair is in weak condition and has poor elasticity. Therefore, offer alternative services as poor elasticity is a contraindication against treatment.

Tip:

Conversely, resistive hair will require pre-perm treatments to make the hair more absorbent and pliable when winding the rods into the hair.



Porosity test

Tools required for this treatment



Gown



Towel



Shoulder cape

Step 1



On dry hair, run your finger and thumb along the cuticle layer of the hair shaft towards the scalp.



Feel whether your finger and thumb run along the hair smoothly or whether there is resistance and the hair feels bumpy. More resistance and bumpiness means that the cuticles are raised, which indicates the hair has poor porosity.

Tip:

Good porosity results will mean you can proceed with the service. Slightly porous hair may require corrective pre-perm treatment; if the hair is very porous do not proceed with the service.



Incompatibility test

Tools required for this treatment



Liquid peroxide



Apron



Gloves



Ammonium hydroxide



Bowl



Scissors



Gown



Towel



Shoulder cape

Step 1



Take a test cutting and place hair in a solution of 20:1 liquid peroxide and ammonium hydroxide and leave for 30 minutes.



If the hair bubbles, gets warm and/or there is hair discoloration then there are metallic salts present on the hair.

Tip:

If there is no reaction, proceed with the service.

Do not perm if the hair reacts to the solution.



Scalp analysis

Tools required for this treatment



Gown



Towel



Shoulder cape

Step 1



Check for any psoriasis or eczema.



Check for any lumps, moles, cuts or abrasions. Always ask if the client is aware of any skin conditions.



Ask the client about any previous chemical treatments.

Tip:

Applying chemical treatment could be very painful if any open wounds or skin conditions are present.

Directional perming technique

Tools required for this treatment



Step 1

- Using cool/tepid water, shampoo the client's hair with a soapless base shampoo (with no additives).
- Do not massage vigorously as this may cause over stimulation of the scalp.

Tip:

Over stimulation of the scalp could open the skin's pores and hair follicles which, when perm lotion is added, may cause scalp irritation.





Step 2

- Apply pre-perm treatments, depending on the porosity or elasticity of the hair identified during the hair and scalp analysis.

Step 3

- Part the hair in the direction you want the finished result to fall.

- Take a section the width of your chosen perm rod, apply an end paper and wind.



Step 4

- Continue working in the direction you want the finished result to fall, working from the front of the head to the nape of the neck.

Tip:

Make sure the completed wind is not too tight, as this can cause scalp irritation and damage the hair.



Step 5

- Once all the hair is wound, check the rods are comfortable for your client.

Tip:

Keeping the hair misted with water while winding makes it easier to control.



Step 6

- Apply barrier cream around the hairline.

- Then use strips of cotton wool to prevent any perm lotion entering the face or eyes.

Tip:

Take care not to put the barrier cream on the hair.

Step 7

- Apply the perm lotion to the top and bottom of each rod, ensuring they are saturated, until all the hair has been covered sufficiently.

- Once the application of the perm lotion is complete, remove and replace the soiled cotton wool.

- Leave the perm lotion to process according to the manufacturer's requirements.

Tip:

Removing the soiled cotton wool will avoid irritation and burning. The temperature of the salon will make perms process more quickly in warm climates than in cooler ones.

Step 8

- Check a development test curl to see if the desired development has been reached. Hold the perm rod and undo the rubber fastener.



Unwind the curler one and a half turns or until you see the start of the perm paper.



Holding firmly, push the hair up and then in towards the scalp, allowing it to relax into an 'S' shape movement.

Tip:

Be careful not to pull the hair as it's in a very fragile state. When the size of the 'S' shape corresponds to the size of the curler, the processing is complete.

Step 9



Thoroughly rinse the hair for at least five minutes.



Blot the hair dry with a towel and/or cotton wool.

Tip:

Pay particular attention to the water temperature when rinsing, as warmer water will cause the curls to tighten and cool water will loosen them.



Step 10



Reapply the barrier cream and strips of cotton wool around the hairline.



Prepare the neutraliser according to the manufacturer's instructions and apply it to each perm rod ensuring all rods are saturated.

Tip:

Allow development time for the neutraliser according to the manufacturer's guidelines.





Step 11

- Gently unwind each perm rod and remove the end paper.
- Once all rods have been removed, a second application of neutraliser is carried out.

Step 12

- The neutraliser is then thoroughly rinsed.
- Apply an anti-oxidising conditioner then rinse out.
- Dry the hair and complete the service.

Tip:

Remember to provide aftercare advice for the client on the best way to maintain their new perm, such as product recommendations and the ideal time until their next treatment.