

A white rectangular box with a teal border containing the word 'Plaiting' in teal text. The background of the box shows a close-up of hands plaiting hair.

## Plaiting

### Learning outcomes

- Maintain effective and safe methods of working when plaiting and twisting hair.
- Plait and twist hair.

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### Introduction

Plaiting is a method of intertwining three or more strands of hair to create a variety of woven hairstyles. These styles can be accompanied by ornamentation, such as flowers, beads, silks or added hair, for special occasions.

The numerous options for plaited effects are determined by the following factors:

- Number of plaits used
- Positioning of the plait across the scalp or around the head
- The way in which the plaits are made (under or over)
- Any ornamentation/decoration or added hair applied



# Plaiting

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## General tips

Factors that may influence setting and dressing services:

- Hair cut
- Hair growth patterns
- Hair length
- Hair density
- Head and face shape
- Hair texture
- Hair elasticity
- The occasion for which the style is required

Each of these factors will need to be discussed with your client during your consultation, in order to address and deal with the different ways they will affect the final result.

## Effect on the hair structure

Plaiting and twisting involves some additional tension on the hair and this can put the client's hair roots under considerable excess stress. Our clients want their designs to be neat, controlled and easy to manage and to last for as long as possible. Because of this, it is very easy to cause traction alopecia.

## Cost effectiveness

Styling products are expensive. The profitability of the job you are doing relates directly to the amount of product you use. Always start with a small amount to begin with - you can dispense more later if needed.

# French plaiting

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## Tools required for this treatment



Tail comb

## Step 1

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- Divide the hair at the front into three equal sections.
- Hold them with one section in one hand and two in the other, then pass one of the outer sections across and into the centre.
- Do the same on the other side.

## Step 2

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- Take an extra section on one side and join it in with the outer section.
- Do the same on the other side.

## Step 3

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- Continue step two, taking in a new section of hair from the hairline each time.
- Your French plait will now form.





# Fishtail plaiting

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## Tools required for this treatment



Tail comb



Sectioning clip



Braiding bands

## Step 1

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- Start by separating the hair into two sections.
- Holding one section in each hand, sub-divide one of the sections into two, taking the outer, narrower section and passing it across the other and into the centre.

## Step 2

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- Do the same with the other side - subdivide and pass the outer over and into the centre.
- Repeat this movement and work down the hair length. Secure when fishtail is complete.

## Step 3

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- Repeat steps one and two at the back of the hair. Secure with braiding band.



# Cornrowing

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## Tools required for this treatment



Flat sectioning clips



Tail comb



Straight cutting comb



Braiding bands



Styling products

## Step 1

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Decide on the linear design that you want to create first, as this will have an impact on where you start.



Section off a channel of hair - the length of the scalp plait required. Section all the other hair out of the way with flat clips.

## Step 2

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Take a small section from the front and subdivide into three sections.



Cross the left and right sections under the central one.



Move the outer left section over the central section, then bring the right outer section in and over the central section.



## Step 3

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- To progress along the scalp, pick up a small section and incorporate it into the left section. Again, move the outer left section over the central section. Now bring the right outer section in and over the central section.

## Step 4

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- Repeat step three until you have worked along the scalp to the desired point.

- When you have reached the end of the plait, secure the remainder with a braiding band.

**Tip:**

Remember to keep the plait taut, with an even tension, to avoid 'sagging'.

## Step 5

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- Complete the other cornrows in the same way.

**Tip:**

Incorporate added hair/extensions in the following ways:

- Working the added hair into the style during plaiting.
- Knot the added hair onto a single section of a plait and form other sections of the plait as you work through the hair.
- Twist the added hair around the natural hair and secure it at the ends by tying with thread.
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# Maintaining the look

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## Maintaining and removing

- Some plaits, such as cornrows, can last up to two months, but can start to look a bit untidy after a while if they are not properly maintained.
- Make sure you give your client advice on washing and conditioning their hair while it is braided, protecting it at night and moisturising the scalp, including product recommendations.
- Plaiting is difficult to remove. Make sure that you are careful and patient when you disentangle the hair.
- When plaits are removed, you may also find that the scalp sheds a lot of dead skin cells. This is quite normal and shouldn't be mistaken for something more sinister.
- Care should be taken when removing plaits.

### Tip:

If hair is left in a plaited or twisted style for too long, the quality and condition of the hair can deteriorate. Here is a list of the potential effects:

- Dryness and brittleness (the hair lacks moisture).  
Hair damage or breakage.  
Traction alopecia from constant
- root tension.
- Hair knotting or becoming matted (may be impossible to remove without cutting).
- Scalp dryness and flaking.