



Afro Beauty

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO
CARING FOR YOUR
CROWN

Created by Rachel Warren

Black HAIRstory

To care for your crown is to know your crown's importance.

Black child, your hair told stories of identity.

In Africa, hair styles were used to represent you! Your hair would tell others what tribe you came from, your social status, your marital status, your religion... It would tell others whether you were mourning or celebrating or preparing to go to war. Hair styles were passed down through generations, keeping you connected to and keeping others informed about your family, your culture, and your experiences.



Black child, your hair led us to freedom.

When we were forced onto slave ships, our hair was slanderously referred to as "wool", and our heads were shaved. This was a way to take away our humanity, our identity, and our relations to the Motherland. Over time, as we survived slavery and our hair grew, we found styles that were practical. Head wraps and braids got us through weeks at a time. Braids also became a secret way to communicate a map to freedom! For instance, the number of plaits worn could indicate roads people needed to walk or where to meet someone to escape captivity.



Black child, your hair honors our overcoming, reminds us of our power, and celebrates self-love.

After slavery, we wrestled with how to assimilate our hair to fit white norms. But, the Black Power Movement, among other things, taught us we can be ourselves, love ourselves, and proudly reclaim what others tried to diminish! See Cicely Tyson's cornrows, Angela Davis' afro, Janet Jackson's Poetic Justice box braids, Erykah Badu's head wrap... Our HAIRstory is rich!

Your Hair Journey

To care for your crown is to discover your crown's unique needs.



**All Black people are not the same and neither is our hair.
That's the beauty of the Diaspora!**

As you'll learn, there are a variety of different curl patterns and textures your hair could have. And, even when black people have the same curl pattern, they may have different porosity (ability to absorb and hold moisture). This means their hair will still behave differently from each other and require different products.

That said, there is no "one-size-fits-all" guide to caring for our hair.

Rather, all black people embark on what is known as their hair journey. Your hair journey is your commitment to understand your hair, experiment with what works for your hair, and discover how to keep it healthy and styled to your liking. So, you may read this and find it helpful, or it may inspire you to keep looking for what's best.

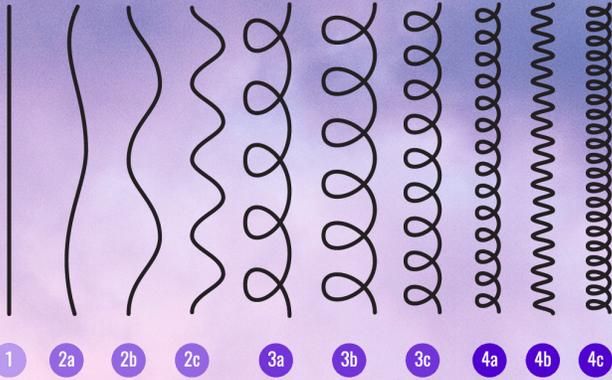
In the meantime, never forget... Your hair is good hair. Your hair is beautiful hair. Your hair is powerful hair. Your hair belongs in every room you walk into in whatever style you choose.

Hair Types

Using a "hair typing system" can give you the language to describe your hair and teach you about your hair's characteristics. This may be one of the first steps you choose to take in your hair journey. In this system, Type 1s are straight, Type 2s

are wavy, Type 3s are curly, and Type 4s are coily/kinky. The A,B,C categories tell you the width of your wave, curl, or coil pattern.

Your hair should be soaking wet when you determine your hair type., and know that you may have more than one type!



3C

3B

3A



shiny, large, loose curls the size of sidewalk chalk



coarse, springy ringlets the circumference of a Sharpie marker



tight, corkscrew coils the circumference of a straw or pencil; strands are densely packed together with lots of natural volume

4A



mini, dense, springy, "s" shaped coils the circumference of a crochet needle

4B



fluffy, cottony, "z" shaped curls; densely packed but still defined

4C



densely packed, tightly coiled, less defined pattern

Hair Products

Once you have an understanding of your hair type or types, you may also want to learn about porosity or other characteristics of your hair. The more you know, the better idea you'll have about what products and styles your hair may prefer!

Some popular brands you may look at using...

<p>African Black Soap Collection: DRY, ITCHY SCALP Dandruff, Eczema & Psoriasis Caspa, eccema y psoriasis</p>  <p>Calm & Clear</p>	<p>Coconut & Hibiscus Collection: THICK, CURLY HAIR Moisture, Body & Shine Hidratación, cuerpo y brillo</p>  <p>Curl & Shine</p>	<p>Raw Shea & Argan Oil Collection: DRY, DAMAGED HAIR Heat, Grow & Strengthen Sold, crecimiento y fortalecimiento</p>  <p>Moisturize & Repair</p>
<p>Deep Cleansing Shampoo What it does: Gently cleanses the scalp, building from styling product, removing old hair oils, while nourishing hair from the roots to ends. Helps with symptoms of dandruff, psoriasis and eczema. How to use: Apply shampoo to wet hair and lather from roots to ends, massaging gently into scalp. Rinse thoroughly. Repeat if necessary.</p>	<p>Curl & Shine Shampoo What it does: Cleanses, detangles and hydrates curls, while restoring body and shine. How to use: Apply shampoo to wet hair and lather. Rinse thoroughly. Repeat if necessary.</p>	<p>Moisture Retention Shampoo What it does: This sulfate-free shampoo cleanses, moisturizes and hydrates dry, damaged, over-processed hair to beautiful, healthy-looking hair. How to use: Apply shampoo to wet hair and lather. Rinse thoroughly. Repeat if necessary.</p>
<p>Balancing Conditioner What it does: Moisturizes and conditions hair while relieving dry, itchy scalp. How to use: After shampooing, apply conditioner to wet hair from roots to ends, massaging gently into scalp. Rinse thoroughly. May also be used as a leave-in conditioner or pre-shampoo.</p>	<p>Curl & Style Milk What it does: Cleanses, detangles and conditions curls, promotes body and shine. How to use: After shampooing, distribute evenly through damp hair as a leave-in conditioner. Do not rinse. Style as desired. May be used Restorative Conditioner.</p>	<p>Restorative Conditioner What it does: Our daily conditioner moisturizes and helps repair dry, itches and damaged, over-processed hair. How to use: After shampooing, apply conditioner evenly through wet hair. Work through hair from roots to ends. Rinse thoroughly. May also be used as a leave-in conditioner or pre-shampoo.</p>
<p>Dandruff & Dry Scalp Elixir What it does: Concentrated treatment helps to calm itching and symptoms of dandruff, eczema and psoriasis. How to use: Part hair in sections. Spray elixir directly onto scalp and massage gently. Do not rinse out, and style as desired.</p>	<p>Hold & Shine Moisture Mist What it does: Hydrates and tames frizz, while providing soft hold and brilliant shine. How to use: Spray liberally on damp hair and use a wide tooth comb to distribute mist evenly. Style as desired. May also be used as a dry hair to tangle and even curls.</p>	<p>Reconstructive Elixir What it does: Oil-based, intensely moisturizing leave-in treatment strengthens and protects strands while adding sheen. Helps tame frizz, leaving hair silky smooth. How to use: After drying and styling, spray evenly onto hair to add the sheen. Do not use during hot styling or other heat styling.</p>
<p>Purification Masque What it does: Detangles and conditions hair while relieving itchy, dry scalp. Reverses product buildup and strengthens hair by sealing in natural moisture. Helps calm symptoms of dandruff, eczema and psoriasis. How to use: After shampooing, apply from roots to ends, and massage gently into scalp. May place hair under a plastic cap and apply moderate heat (such as a hair dryer) for 10-20 minutes. Rinse thoroughly and style as desired.</p>	<p>Curl Enhancing Smoothie What it does: Defines and tames curls. Enhances natural curl pattern without frizz and greasiness. Provides soft, long-lasting hold, while moisturizing curls. How to use: Section hair and apply product sparingly to damp or dry hair. Do not rinse out. Style hair as desired. For best results, use a styling cream for tress, finishes and wash-water styles.</p>	<p>Deep Treatment Masque What it does: Penetrates deeply to moisturize and transform dry, damaged, chemically treated hair to healthy-looking hair. How to use: After shampooing, apply liberally from roots to ends. Massage hair under a plastic cap and apply moderate heat (such as a hair dryer) for 30 minutes, then rinse thoroughly. May also be used as a styling cream.</p>
<p>Essential Elixir Essential oils for scalp and hair health.</p>	<p>Tea Tree Essential oil for scalp and hair health.</p>	<p>Willow Bark Essential oil for scalp and hair health.</p>
<p>Coconut Oil Moisturizing and conditioning.</p>	<p>Shea Butter Moisturizing and conditioning.</p>	<p>Argan Oil Moisturizing and conditioning.</p>



Cantu



Aunt Jackie's

Shea Moisture



Mixed Chicks



Curls



Creme of Nature Argan Oil

You will likely use a mix of brands! Look for detangler, shampoo, conditioner, leave-in conditioner, scalp/natural oil treatment, curl enhancer, styling gel, or whatever else your hair needs.

Tips:

You don't want to overuse product. This could lead to product build up or weigh down your curls. It may be helpful to find suggestions from naturalistas who have a similar hair type as you to begin your product search.

Hair Care

As you find the right products for your hair, you'll realize that you use some more frequently than others, and that each serves its own purpose in keeping your hair cared for. It is important that you establish consistent and appropriate routines. Setting aside time to do so helps keep your hair healthy and growing.

Here are a few examples!

Wash Day Routine - Every 1 to 2 weeks at most

Detangle: The first thing you'll want to do before starting a wash routine is to detangle your hair. You can do this by first spritzing your hair with water to dampen it; then sectioning your hair into four or more parts. You'll apply a detangling product of your choice to each section and then finger comb (followed by wide tooth comb) until there are no knots or tangles.



Wash: Apply shampoo and finger comb it through all parts of your hair. Use your fingertips to massage the scalp. It may help to do this in sections or more than once if you have thick hair.

****shampooing is necessary, but it strips our hair of its natural oils and shouldn't be done too often****

Condition: After rinsing out your shampoo, you'll want to use conditioner to help keep your hair moisturized. You'll use much more conditioner than shampoo, and you'll want to leave the conditioner in for several minutes before rinsing it out. Make sure to especially condition the ends of your hair where it tends to be drier and prone to breakage.

Comb and Oil: Be sure to comb and oil your hair after washing/conditioning. Section your hair to make it more manageable and choose a leave-in conditioner if it will help in the process of combing. Depending on how you style your hair, you may decide to blow dry your hair. Use a dryer with a comb attachment and move from ends to scalp. Because you are applying heat, it will be even more important for you to oil your scalp and hair.

Sleeping Routine - Every night

Moisturize with a natural oil. A little oil goes a long way!

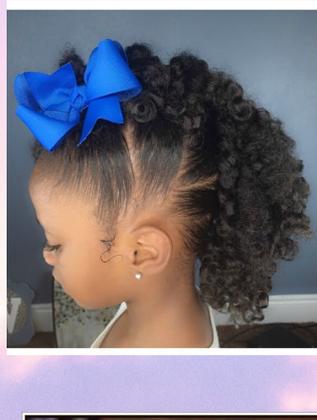
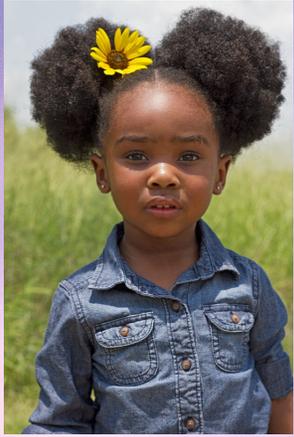
Depending on the style you're wearing, you may need to braid, twist, or wrap your hair to protect it overnight.

Sleep with a satin or silk bonnet or scarf. This will help prevent frizz, breakage, and dryness.



Hair Styling

Styling can be one of the most exciting parts of your hair journey! Our hair can do so many things. Google different styles, Youtube different tutorials to practice on your own, or go to a salon!



Afros, afro puffs, fro hawks, twist outs, twists, lemonade braids, box braids, goddess braids, braided bun, braided pony tails, press and curls, head wraps... You can choose what makes you look and feel good while keeping your hair healthy! Add color, clips, jewels, and bows freely; and always take care of your edges!

Every few months, you should also trim your ends before styling. This will help prevent breakage. And, remember protective styles like braids will typically last you longer (and should be your go-to if you'll be swimming)!

Hair Confidence

This guide is one of many tools that may be a part of your hair journey. Remember that there is no "one-size-fits-all" advice that anyone can give. Your hair journey is your own. You're lucky to be a part of a legacy of blackness that will support you in that journey, so never get discouraged or give up. Continue to learn and practice maintaining healthy hair. Be comfortable and confident because of it. Wear your hair proudly. Know how important it is and how important you are.

You are an Afro Beauty.



Please watch:

Blackish: Hair Day (Season 6, Episode 11)

Nappily Ever After (Netflix original movie)

Braided: An American Hair Story (ELLE documentary)

Don't Touch My Hair (Solange)

Please listen to: I Am Not My Hair (India Arie)

Please read:

Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America

Please know:

There are so many resources that tell our history, celebrate our essence, and help us get to where we want to be. Set goals for yourself and trust that taking care of your hair is a rewarding and beautiful process!