

Back to beauty school

Is your hair and make-up stuck in a rut? Revitalise your routine with expert lessons and insider hints

HAIRSTYLING LESSON

I've been in a tontorial time warp, flattening and straightening my hair to within a cuticle of its life as if the Nineties had never ended. That's why I was keen to try one of the Style For Me sessions at Percy & Reed, to vary the look with modern techniques.



Hair stylist Adam Reed, (above) who does Diane Kruger's hair, promises to be realistic about what customers can achieve at home. He decided that I needed to bring myself into this century with a bit of body and texture but nothing too tricky - to recreate myself. His tips were simple, but (hopefully) achievable. He advised me on how to apply styling cream under and through my hair, rather than just slathering a handful on top in a lava-like slick. He never blasts hairspray straight on; it goes onto the brush and is then buffed into hair. He explained that different brushes can smooth and shape the hair as you blow dry - although he admitted that coordinating two hands takes a while to perfect. His most simple tip of all was to sit down while drying thus avoiding tiredness and trip-hazards. Genius. He demonstrated how I could get more volume at the crown and then pin it for a dishevelled up-do. He also created a bouncy, shiny yet tousled look and then showed me how to restyle it with a quick brush or rub with my hands. From serious to sexy and back again in seconds.

Siobhan Toman tried a Shu Uemura Style For Me session, available nationwide and at Percy & Reed, 157C Great Portland Street, London W1, 020 7637 4634, from £55

MAKE-UP MASTERCLASS

My hair is naturally dark blonde, but I haven't revealed my true colours, so to speak, for around 13 years. My highlighted blonde hair became my trademark and I didn't realise how much colour mattered until I went brunette last month. Suddently my usual dark eye make-up looked wrong, so I panicked, then booked a lesson with Lauren Hersheson (above right). A make-up artist with an impressive CV of session work and catwalk shows, she told me where I was going wrong straight away. She advised me to get rid of my much-loved black liner and go for a softer kohl liner in brown, and softer brown shadow colours, which will make people notice my eyes rather than my make-up. What I enjoyed most, and the reason I would recommend anyone having a make-up lesson - hair change or not - was the explanation of how to apply the products. You are also given a personalised card with product recommendations and a diagram, and even taken round the beauty counter at Harvey Nichols afterwards for help with beauty buys. I'm usually a five-minute kind of girl in the mornings, but I have incorporated some of what I learnt into a new daily routine. I've toned down the bronzer, invested in good quality brushes, eye shadows and primer, and I'm reluctantly putting my black eyeliner down. At least until I'm blonde once again.



Gemma Hayward had a lesson with Lauren Hersheson, in-house make-up artist at Daniel Hersheson Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London SW1, 020 7201 8789, £150

FACIAL MASSAGE GUIDE

After much comparing of different facials, I've come to the conclusion that it isn't lotions and potions which give that fresh glow; it's the massage. Excited by my empirical research, I attempted some haphazard DIY facial pummelling, before deciding this could do more harm than good. Enter Beata Aleksandrowicz (above) a massage specialist and strong believer in the power of facial massage to boost circulation, firm muscles and slow ageing. In one of her personalised tutorials she showed me a simple 10-minute facial massage routine which I could do once a week to tone and tighten my complexion. She demonstrated movements which were ostensibly simple but needed just the right pressure, then corrected my technique as I copied her. The overall effect was noticeable: tighter skin and more defined contours around the jaw and cheekbones. I plan to go back for one or two further sessions, to learn some more fancy moves.



Carola Long had a 60-minute massage lesson with Beata Aleksandrowicz at Pure Massage, Fulham, 3-5 Vanston Place, London SW6, 020 7381 8100, £125

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