

By Erin Clements Rushing

## LASHING OUT

Obtaining luxuriously thick, long eyelashes is like the holy grail of beauty (as any gal with a drawer full of half-empty mascara tubes can attest). Luckily, we've found a few great products and local salon services ready to help. Whether you have five minutes or a few hours, we've got a solution for the lashes of your dreams, while avoiding nightmares like raccoon eyes and tarantula legs!

*If you have 5 minutes...*

Enhance pale lashes with Neutrogena's fuss-free Clean Lash Tint (\$6.50, Target). A thick, teddy bear wand helps the formula go on without a clumpy mess and adds a bit of color to wan lashes. Don't expect much length or thickness though - it's just a simple way to beef up barely-there pale lashes, but the flake-free, hypoallergenic formula is a great mascara alternative for contact wearers or those with irritable eyes.

*If you have 10 minutes...*

Add some serious oomph with Shu Uemura's famous eyelash curler (\$19, Sephora). If the thought of using one of these babies gives you Clockwork Orange flashbacks, rest assured there is little to fear. Simply place lashes in the curler between the two sides, getting as close to the eye as possible without pinching. Gently clamp the curler closed for about five seconds. To give your curl extra staying power, try heating the curler with a blow dryer for a few moments before using.

*If you have 15 minutes...*

Fake it with falsies! If you've always wanted to wear false lashes, but couldn't quite get the application down, Sephora's Deluxe Lash Kit (\$18, Sephora) can give you the confidence to try again. The kit comes with everything you need, including adhesive and a special applicator to help you place the false lashes right at your lashline.

*If you have 30 minutes...*

Get your lashes professionally tinted at a local salon. Nancy Oberfeld, an esthetician in Towson, says the procedure takes less than half an hour and costs about \$25. Protective cotton strips are placed on the skin underneath the lashes while a dye is applied. The dye comes in brown, black and even a blue-black, which works especially well on redheads, Oberfeld noted. Lash tinting is an easy alternative to mascara, especially for swimmers or other people with an active lifestyle. It may not be for everyone, though. Oberfeld says that clients with sensitive eyes or skin may want to avoid it. The tint will last for three to four weeks.

*If you have two hours...*

Treat yourself to lash extensions. It may not be a surprise that the lengthiest and most expensive procedure (\$200 for an initial application) can also have the best results. Fran Chatterton, an esthetician at Morgan Gerard Salon in Annapolis, uses Xtreme Lashes products, applying each individual extension to a lash with tweezers and affixing it with a bonding agent. Chatterton says that because the adhesive goes directly on the hair, not the skin, there is no risk for an allergic reaction. Two hours may sound like a long time, but she says many clients simply fall asleep, since the procedure is done with the eyes closed. Although most extensions are only about three millimeters longer than your actual eyelash and give a naturally full look, Chatterton has had clients request extensions up to 16 millimeters long and has even done purple lashes and rhinestone accents. After the treatment, she recommends that clients not wash their lashes for twenty four hours and use a sealant on them twice a week afterwards. The extensions last for about three weeks and a touch-up appointment is only 45 minutes with a price tag of \$60 and up.



**Before and after lash extensions at Morgan Gerard Salon.**