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Hair styling solutions

Curling irons: Use a thick-barreled model to achieve fashionably loose waves that look more natural, says stylist Nicholas Penna, owner of SalonCapri in Boston. "The bigger the chunks of hair wrapped around the barrel, the looser and more natural-looking the curl," he says. We like TIGI Bed Head 1½-inch ceramic styling iron (\$30) because ceramic heats more evenly than metal, meaning less potential heat damage to hair. For

best results, curl just the ends of hair from mid-length down (rolling all the way to the roots creates too much of a "set" style, Penna says). Then, run fingers through the hair to soften and separate curls.

Hot rollers: Hot rollers can be a time-saving alternative since they curl hair while you dress or apply makeup. The BaByliss Pro Ceramic 20 Roller Hair Setter (\$55) includes three roller sizes. If pressed for time, blow-dry rolled hair,

followed by a cool shot, before unrolling.

Flatirons: When you want a smooth, glossy look (such as the one above), opt for a one-inch flatiron, which is easier to maneuver than larger models. Begin with hair almost totally dry, and go over hair only once to minimize damaging over-exposure to heat, Penna says. Try the Infiniti by Conair Instant Heat Ceramic Straightener (\$58), which heats in less than 30 seconds.

Shopping info Products are available at drugstores or department stores, with the following exceptions:
Avon: 800-367-2866, www.avon.com, Olivella: 201-297-0600, www.olivellausa.com
BaByliss: 888-919-4247, www.babylisspro.com Tweezerman: 800-645-3340, www.tweezerman.com

Send your questions to Cooking Light contributing beauty editor **Maria Ricapito** at ask_beautywise@timeinc.com.