



beauty news, hair

## Yes, "Hair Contouring" Is Now A Thing

BY RENEE JACQUES, ASSOCIATE DIGITAL EDITOR, SEPTEMBER 2, 2015, 4:45:00 PM



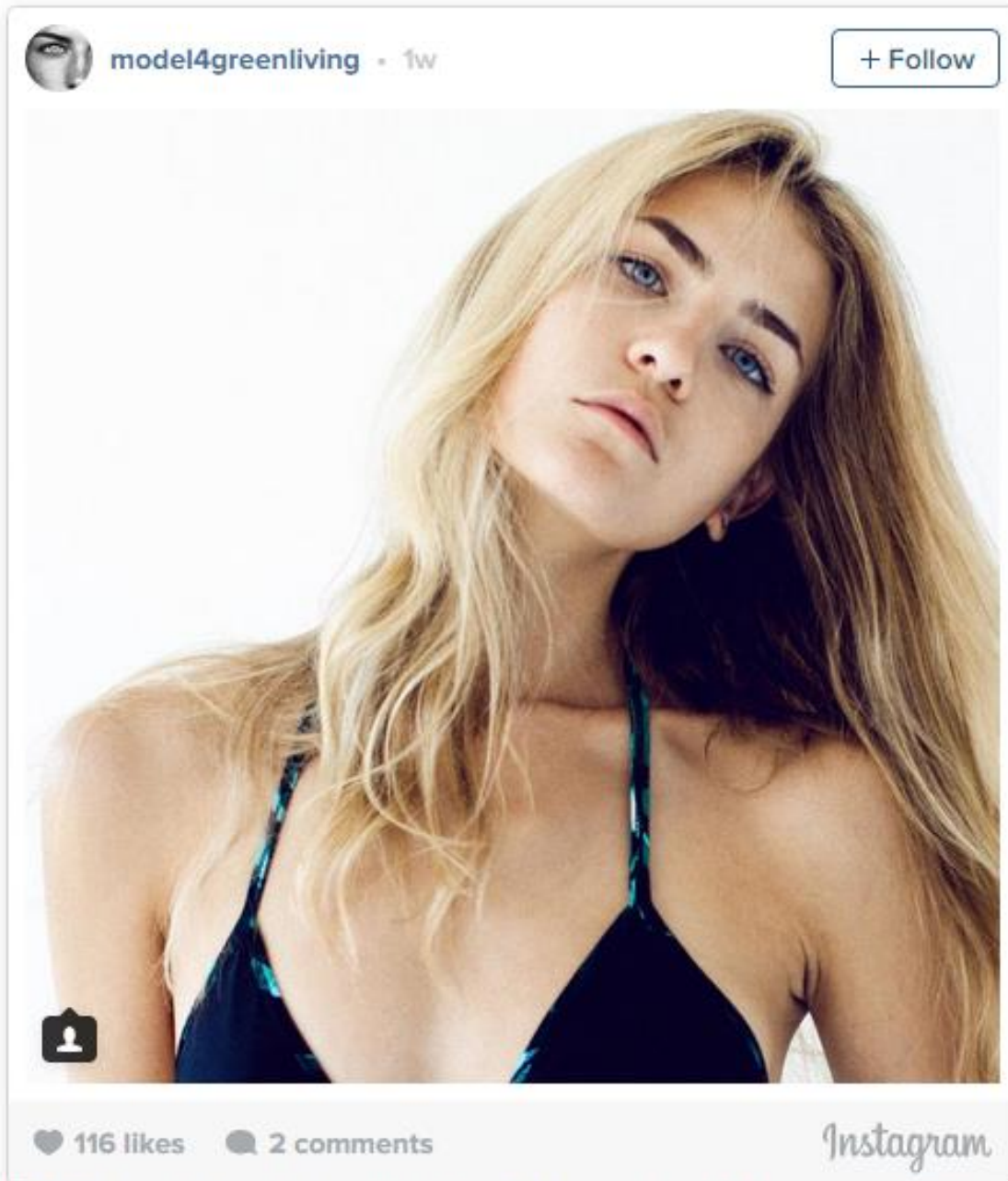
You can **contour your face**, you can contour your body, and now you can also contour your hair. Some colorists have begun throwing around the term "hair contouring" to describe a detailed process of strategically highlighting and lowlighting hair to enhance and flatter a person's face shape.

"Hair contouring uses freehand coloring and highlighting to enhance face shapes," explains Nick Penna, colorist and owner of SalonCapri in Boston. "Highlighting and shading certain parts of the hair can create the illusion of a different face shape, depending on what you want to accentuate." If you're thinking that sounds pretty similar to the makeup type of contouring, you'd be correct. "Just like the makeup technique, light shades are for highlighting and darker shades are for creating a shadow effect." Penna points to this photo of Sarah Jessica Parker as a good example of hair contouring:



He says that because Parker has an oblong face shape, placing highlights near the sides of her face help to create an illusion that her face is wider. "The blonde pieces right next to her forehead travel down to her chin area, drawing the eye to the sides, which emphasizes the width," says Penna. "The tops and underneath sections of hair are dark, which serve as the shadow pieces that try to minimize the length of her face."

Aura Friedman, a colorist at Sally Hershberger Downtown salon in New York City, is quick to point out that while hair contouring is an effective technique, it's not necessarily a new one. "It's a great way to say highlights and lowlights, which is a normal color process," says Friedman. "I do that a lot when I **balayage**. I strategically place darker pieces to enhance the eye color and bone structure of a client. It adds the illusion of depth and density." Friedman uses her client, model Renee Peters, as an example:



But then again, Penna argues that hair contouring goes a bit beyond balayage. "Many stylists have been doing balayage for years now, usually for face-framing highlights and the ombré effect," he says. "Hair contouring is basically taking balayage one step further and strategically placing the color in certain spots to highlight and contour, rather than just being focused on painting on the color in an attempt to make the varied shades of lighter strands look like they appeared naturally from the sun."

Whether the hair-color technique is new or old, one thing is for certain: The popularity of contouring is still going strong.