

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

9 Mistakes That Are Causing Your Hair to Look Thin

And some could be leaving permanent damage.



In a world full of [pretty Pinterest braids](#) and oversized updos, we all covet a thick head of hair to pull them off. And nothing's more [frustrating than a totally limp look](#). And even though genetics determines a lot about the volume of your hair, there are certain styling errors that could be causing it to look and feel thinner.

1. You're using the wrong brushes.

Getting great hair is all about the care you put into it, right down to which tools you use – brushes included. "Flat brushes and metal brushes won't give you as much tension when working with the hair as a boar bristle or [mixed bristle round brush](#)," says Eva Scrivo, celebrity stylist and founder of [Eva Scrivo Salon](#). "This tension allows you to get a better grip to get lift and volume in the right places."

2. Your hair is just one all-over color.

You know how wearing all one color is considered slimming? Same goes for your hair. If you've only got one hue going on, your locks could appear extra thin. The solution: add varied tones. "Highlighting definitely adds depth to your strands," explains Nick Penna, owner and lead stylist of [SalonCapri](#). "Instead of single-toned hair, it creates dimension, giving the illusion of fuller-locks." Scared of winding up with [chunky '90s highlights](#)? Don't worry, there are lots of ways to make highlights and lowlights look totally natural, including [balayage and beyond](#).

3. Rapunzel-length locks are weighing you down.

"If you have thin hair, opt for a cut that is short to medium length," advises Penna. "Thin and fine hair that's very long can often end up looking stringy when it's weighed down by the length." If you've always had long hair and aren't sure how to transition into shorter locks, try a long bob. This [pro-approved fave](#) allows for layered movement that gives your hair the appearance of more volume and dimension while still being long enough to stay versatile.

4. Those updos are pulling your hair too tight.

Penna advises against hairstyles – think slicked-back ponytails and tight topknots – that are extremely tight and pulled back: "They pull on the hair follicle, promoting breakage, hair loss, and ultimately, thinner-looking hair." May we recommend a loose, low braid or [simple beach waves instead?](#)

5. Your hair color is too close to your complexion.

If you're ultra-pale and you have [platinum blonde hair](#), your hair could seem thinner, warns Scervo. "Any hair color that is close enough to one's skin tone that it appears washed out will lack the depth to appear thicker," she says, so if your hair is quite fine, try adding a few varying shades into your style to keep it from looking flat.

6. You're dyeing your hair too dark.

Vampy colors might be in for the winter, but if you're worried about your hair's thin appearance, you might have to go a little lighter. "With very dark colors, the part is more noticeable and may appear wide," explains Scervo. "This gives the illusion of thinner hair." If you love your hair color and want to conceal your visible scalp, try our [handy eyeshadow "filler" trick](#).

7. You're using the wrong products.

Picking the [right products for your hair](#) is a pretty important part of making it look great, but what may work for your friend with thicker locks probably isn't the best thing for you. "Oil- and silicone-based products lay heavy in the hair and tend to make it look thinner," warns Scervo. So, what *does* work? Scervo recommends products "that contain alcohol because they absorb quickly and tend to dry out the scalp a bit which keeps the roots from getting oily right away."

8. Those hot tools are *too* hot.

Using a few hot rollers can add body to your hair, but if you go overboard with heat tools, you risk doing damage. "Just because a styling tool goes up to 400 degrees or more doesn't mean you should be using it on the highest setting," warns Penna. Hot tools can damage the cuticle, promoting hair breakage. He also recommends always using a heat protectant before styling with hot tools to avoid scorching your hair.

9. Your cut is too blunt.

"For ladies with shoulder-length hair or longer, cuts that lack any kind of layering can definitely make hair appear thinner," says Scervo. On top of cutting layers through, she advises adding face-framing pieces, whether it's a side-swept bang or a few traditional layers.

Bonus: If you want to make your hair look thicker in no time, be sure to check out [our tips for getting full, voluminous hair](#).