

5 WAYS TO KEEP NAILS IN SHAPE

1. **Avoid metal nail files.** “They can cause nails to split. Instead, shape nails with a medium-grit sandpaper file,” says Deborah Lippmann, owner of Deborah Lippmann Beauty.
2. **File nails from the outer corner to the middle to prevent breakage.** “Healthy nails can be filed every 10 days; brittle nails need about 14 days,” says Fahmida Mumith, a nail technician at Haven Soho in New York City.
3. **Keep your nails clean.** “Use a nail brush to scrub under nails, and dry them really well to ward off bacteria,” says Donna Perillo, owner of Sweet Lily Natural Nail Spa in New York City.
4. **Never cut your cuticles.** “They’ll only grow back thicker and faster,” explains Perillo.
5. **Wait 2 minutes before applying a second coat of polish.** “The trick to polishing at home: Keep your hands on a flat surface with the nails facing away from you while you paint,” says Essie Weingarten, president of Essie Cosmetics.

THE LONGEST-LASTING MANICURE, HANDS DOWN

Can a manicure last 14 days? That’s the claim from CND’s new Shellac System, a hybrid polish/gel manicure (\$45, cnd.com for locations). How it works: A licensed technician applies Shellac UV Vase Coat to clean nails and places them under a UV lamp for 10 seconds (don’t worry; it uses a low, unharmed level of energy). Next, she brushes on 2 coats of color and sets nails under the lamp for 2 minutes per coat. After a top coat and 2 more minutes under the lamp, you leave with “super-shiny color,” says Serena Hampton, a licensed cosmetologist at Beauty Studios in Southfield, MI. During our test, nails held strong for 13 days until slight peeling occurred. The drawback: The salon must remove the manicure with acetone-saturated wraps.