



Acrylic Application Basics

Use this handout to practice basic acrylic application techniques to increase your speed and confidence.

A neat, smooth acrylic application is an important aspect of providing high-quality service to your clients. But if you are unsure of the procedure, it can sometimes be nerve-wracking. Here are the basic steps you need to know to improve your technique to make your acrylic application easier and more professional looking.

PREP SMART: After performing standard nail prep (polish removal, cleaning nails, pushing back the cuticle), lightly buff the nail plate with a medium/fine file to remove shine and natural oils. Brush off the filings. Next, apply a nail antiseptic. You may apply acrylic over a form, a tip, or natural nails. Here, we'll focus on forms. Position the nail form on the nail, bend the form to fit the client's natural nail shape, and be sure the form is tight under the free edge of the nail. If you are not already wearing plastic gloves and protective eyewear, put them on now. Apply primer to the nails sparingly; allow the primer to dry. Prepare your acrylic liquid and powder by pouring them into two separate containers.

APPLY THE ACRYLIC: Dip your brush into the liquid, wipe off excess, and dip the brush into the powder, rotating slightly to create a ball the size of a large pea and of medium-dry consistency.

Place the ball of acrylic on the nail form where the free edge meets the form. Use your brush to dab and pat the acrylic to shape an extension. Place and shape a second ball of acrylic next to the free-edge line in the center of the nail, and dab and press to the sidewalls. Apply additional smaller beads of acrylic to cover the nail, using moisture in the brush to thin and smooth out the acrylic. Apply acrylic to the remaining nails.

SHAPE THE NAIL: When nails are completely dry, remove the forms. Shape the free edge of the nails with a coarse/medium file. Buff the nails with a block until smooth. Apply cuticle oil, clean the nails, dry, and apply selected polish. Inform your client that she will need a fill in two weeks.

