

Guide to Hair Care Ingredients

Common Hair Care Ingredients and Their Uses

Name of Ingredient	How it may be listed	Use / Effect
Aloe Vera	Aloe Barbadensis Leaf Juice	Helps to soothe the scalp and hydrate hair, making it softer and more manageable.
Coconut Oil	Cocos Nucifera Oil	Moisturises hair, contributes to its strength, and helps reduce breakage.
Argan Oil	Argania Spinosa Kernel Oil	Rich in antioxidants, nourishes hair, and imparts shine.
Jojoba Oil	Simmondsia Chinensis	Nourishes and strengthens hair, supporting overall hair health.
Olive	Olea Europaea	Provides nourishment and strengthens hair fibres.
Squalane (Olive derived)	Squalane	Mimics the scalp's natural oils, locks in moisture, smooths hair, reduces frizz, and adds shine.
Shea / Cocoa Butter	Butyrospermum Parkii Butter, Theobroma Cacao Seed Butter	Acts as a deep conditioner and helps reduce frizz.
Glycerin	Glycerin	Functions as a humectant, drawing moisture into the hair.
Biotin	Vitamin B7, Biotin	Supports the strength and growth of hair.
Niacinamide	Vitamin B3	Promotes scalp health and overall hair vitality.
Panthenol	Pro-Vitamin B5	Moisturises hair and gives it a fuller appearance.
Hydrolysed Proteins (Silk/Rice)	Hydrolysed silk/rice protein	Helps repair damaged hair, improving its condition.

Ingredients to Use with Caution

Name of Ingredient:	How it may be listed	Use / Effect
Sulfates	Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SLS), Sodium Laureth Sulfate (SLES), Ammonium Lauryl Sulfate	Strong cleansing agents that can strip away natural oils and cause dryness.
Silicones	Dimethicone, Cyclopentasiloxane	Add shine and smoothness to hair, but can build up and weigh hair down over time.
Alcohols	Fatty = (Cetyl, Stearyl, Cetearyl) Drying = (Isopropyl Alcohol, Ethanol, SD Alcohol)	Fatty alcohols are moisturising, while drying alcohols can dry hair if used too often.
Synthetic Fragrance/Parfum	Fragrance/Parfum	May cause scalp irritation and conceal undisclosed chemicals.
Strong Essential Oils (Rosemary, Peppermint, Tea Tree, Eucalyptus)	Rosmarinus Officinalis (Rosemary) Leaf Oil, Mentha Piperita (Peppermint) Oil, Melaleuca Alternifolia Leaf Oil (Tea Tree), Eucalyptus Globulus Leaf Oil	Offer antimicrobial benefits and can stimulate the scalp, but may irritate sensitive skin.
Lavender Essential Oil	(Lavender) Oil, Lavandula Angustifolia (Lavender) Flower/Leaf/Stem Extract, Lavandula Hybrida Oil	Anti-inflammatory and beneficial for scalp health when properly diluted, but can cause allergic reactions if not.
Lemon Essential Oil	Citrus Limon Peel Oil	Helps control oil and cleanse the scalp. Must be properly diluted to avoid irritation.
Hydrolysed proteins (Keratin, Wheat, Soy)	Hydrolysed proteins (Keratin, Wheat, Soy)	Strengthens hair, but excessive use may lead to brittleness.
Titanium Dioxide	Titanium Dioxide, CI 77891	Used as a white colourant in hair mousses and gels; considered a mild



		carcinogenic risk until 2025.
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Ingredients Best to Avoid

Best to Avoid:	How it may be listed	Use / Effect
Parabens	Methylparaben, Propylparaben, Butylparaben, Ethylparaben	Used as preservatives, but linked to possible hormone disruption.
Phthalates	Diethyl Phthalate (DEP – hidden in fragrance)	Acts as a plasticiser and is associated with hormone disruption.
Formaldehyde releasers	DMDM Hydantoin, Imidazolidinyl Urea, Diazolidinyl Urea, Quaternium-15, Bronopol	May release formaldehyde, which is an irritant and allergen.
Coal Tar Dyes	Dyes p-Phenylenediamine (PPD)	Potential carcinogen and scalp sensitiser.
Mineral Oil / Petroleum	Paraffinum Liquidum, Petrolatum	Can coat the hair and block moisture from penetrating the hair shaft.
Artificial fragrances	Parfum, CI 19140, CI42090	Potential irritants that may cause sensitivity.

Tips for Reading Ingredient Labels

Label Tips	Description
Ingredient Order	Ingredients are listed from highest to lowest concentration.
Bad near the top	If an undesirable ingredient appears near the top of the list, it will have a stronger effect.
Bad near the bottom	When a less desirable ingredient is found near the bottom, it is present in a negligible amount.
Look for oils & proteins early in the list	Products are likely to deliver better results if beneficial oils and proteins are listed amongst the first ingredients.

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