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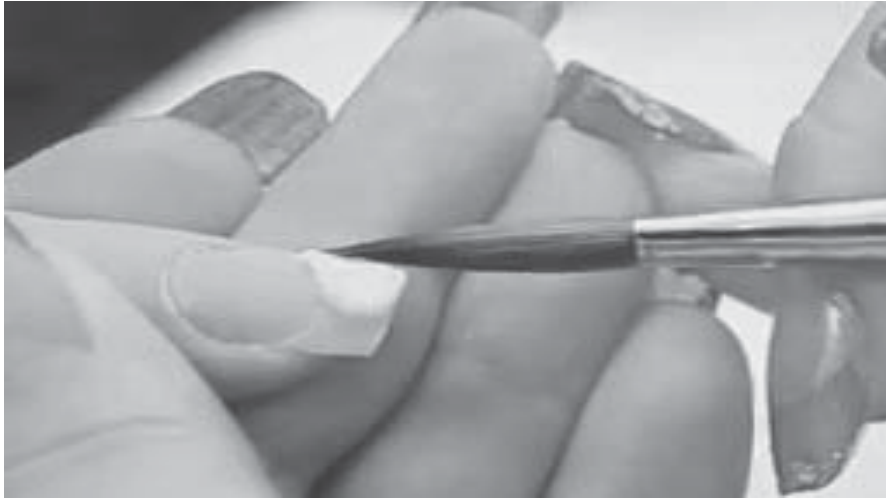


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# Monomer and Polymer Nail Enhancement



## Segment Outline:

1. Introduction
  - a. Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder
  - b. The Importance of Studying Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancements
  - c. Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Overview
2. Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Supplies
  - a. Monomer Liquid Mix
  - b. Polymer Powder
  - c. Nail Dehydrator
  - d. Nail Primer
3. Appropriate Hand Washing
4. Abrasives
5. Nail Forms
6. Nail Tips
7. Dappen Dish
8. Acrylic Nail Brushes
9. Safety Equipment
  - a. Safety Eyewear
  - b. Dust Masks
  - c. Protective Gloves
  - d. Storing and Disposing of Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Products
10. Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Maintenance, Crack Repair, and Removal
  - a. Areas of Concern for Building Properly Structured Nail Enhancements
  - b. Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Removal

- c. Odorless Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Products
- d. Colored Polymer Powder Products

#### 11. Salon Safety Guidelines for Nail Technicians

- a. Basic Salon Sanitation
- b. Product Safety
- c. Items to Dispose or Not
- d. What Nail Techs Need to Know About Disinfectants and Detergent Cleaners
- e. Your Professional Responsibility

#### **Segment Objectives:**

After completing this segment of the course, you will be able to:

Explain monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancement chemistry and how it works.

1. Describe the apex, stress area, and sidewall, and tell where each is located on the nail enhancement.
2. Demonstrate the proper procedures for applying one-color monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements over tips and on natural nails.
3. Demonstrate the proper procedures for applying two-color monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements using forms over nail tips and on natural nails.
4. Describe how to perform a one-color maintenance service on nail enhancements using monomer liquid and polymer powder.
5. Demonstrate how to perform crack repair procedures.
6. Implement the proper procedure for removing monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements.
7. Review safety guidelines for nail technicians



# Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Composition

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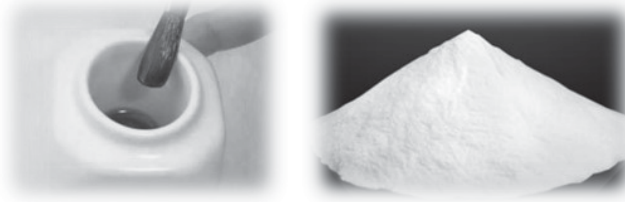
## Introduction

Modern day monomer liquids and polymer powders come in numerous colorations, including variances of more common pink, white, clear, and natural. These colorations may be applied unaccompanied or intermixed to produce everything from custom-made shades of pink to match or heighten the color of your client's nail beds, to bold primaries or pastels that may be used to produce an all-encompassing range of designs and patterns. With these powders, you are able to make unique colors or designs that can be interlocked permanently in the nail enhancement. They offer a fantastic way to tailor-make your services or to convey your artistry and creativeness.

Nail enhancements are constructed by blending together liquids and powders that are normally referred to as **acrylic nails**. It may surprise you to find out the actual definition of acrylic, since for numerous years this word has really been applied incorrectly by the nail enhancement industry. The term acrylic in reality pertains to a full family unit of thousands of dissimilar substances, each of which share important, closely associated characteristics.

**Acrylics** are utilized to make a broad range of products, including contact lenses, cements for mending broken bones, Plexiglas windows, and even makeup and different cosmetics. Amazingly, all nail enhancement products are based wholly on ingredients that come from the acrylic category. For example, the ingredients in two-part monomer liquid and polymer powder enhancement systems belong to an offshoot of the acrylic family known as **methacrylates**. Put differently, acrylic is a very all-purpose term for a large grouping of ingredients.

# Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder



Monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancement products are based on methacrylates. You can discover some similarity in the spelling of the full term, which shows that they are from the same chemical category or group. To be as precise and particular as conceivable, this course segment refers to the **two-part monomer liquid** and polymer powder enhancement system as **monomer liquid** and **polymer powder**. Nevertheless, please bear in mind that different industry literature, product marketing, and the like may continue to utilize the word acrylic.

## The Importance of Studying Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancements

Manicurist should study and have an exhaustive discernment of monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements because:

- Monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements are common services that will be oftentimes requested, and clients will anticipate expert service.
- Monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements are profitable services. Clients who desire them are devoted to their maintenance, so if you gain your clients' trust and respect, you will form a loyal clientele.
- Acknowledging how to properly work with the enhancement material and understanding its chemical composition will permit you to perform the service safely for you and for your client.

## Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Overview

Also known as sculptured nails, monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements are created by mixing **monomer** liquid, a chemical liquid mixed with polymer powder, a powder in white, clear, pink, and many other colors, to form the nail enhancement. Hence the reason for the terms liquid and powder is obvious.

Poly means many, so polymer means a substance formed by combining many small molecules (monomers) into very long chain-like structures. Mono means one and mer stands for units, so a monomer is one unit called a molecule. This is important to remember, since you will hear these terms many times throughout your career.

Polymer powder and monomer liquid products can be applied in three basic ways:

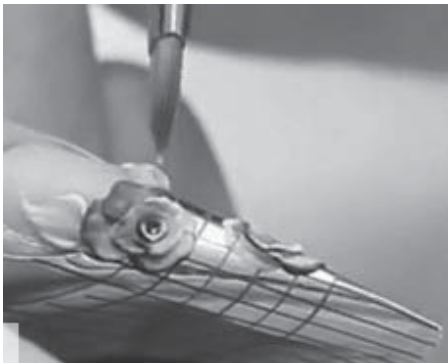
## 1. Over a nail tip



## 2. On the natural nail as a protective overlay



## 3. On a form to create a nail extension



An oval application and pointed, round, or natural hair brush is the advisable brush to utilize for applying these products. The brush is immersed in the monomer liquid. The natural hair bristles soak up and hold in the monomer liquid like a basin. The tip of the brush is then touched on to the surface of the dry polymer powder, and as the monomer liquid absorbs the polymer powder, a small bead of product forms. This small bead is then carefully arranged on the nail surface and worked into shape with the brush.

Polymer powder is created by applying polymerization, also known as curing or hardening, a chemical reaction that produces polymers. It may seem unusual that polymer powder is also constructed generally from ethyl methacrylate monomer liquid. In this method, trillions of monomers are connected together to make long chains. These long chains produce the tiny round beads of polymer powder used to produce definite types of nail enhancements.

The monomer liquid component is normally one of three versions of monomer liquid employed in the beauty industry: ethyl methacrylate, methyl methacrylate, or odorless monomer liquid. All three frequently incorporate separate monomers that are utilized as customizing additives. The industry standards are the ethyl methacrylate monomer liquid (EMA) and the odorless monomer liquid. *Methyl methacrylate (MMA) is not recommended for use upon nails and is not legal according to the state board rules.*

During the production of polymer powder, the powder builds into tiny round beads of somewhat variable sizes. The beads are then poured through a series of particular screens that assort the beads by size. The ones that are the correct size are split up and then mixed in with different special additives and colorants. The final mix is prepackaged and sold as polymer powder. It makes up an astonishingly advanced method that takes really unique manufacturing equipment, tons of quality control, and technological know-how to do it correctly.

## Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Supplies



Just as every type of nail enhancement service requires particular instruments, implements, equipment, and supplies, so do monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements.

### Monomer Liquid Mix

The mix ratio generally assures suitable set and uttermost strength of the nail enhancement. This intermixture functions in a similar way as other, more familiar, mixtures. For instance, whenever too much flour is added to cookie batter, the cookies will dry out and crumble; if insufficient flour is added, the cookies will be soft and gooey. As is checks true for monomer liquids and polymer powders. Whenever too much powder is picked up in the bead, the enhancement will cure wrong and might be brittle or discolored. Whenever insufficient powder is used, the nail enhancement can become fragile, and clients will be at greater jeopardy of acquiring skin soreness and sensitiveness.

The monomer liquid will be mixed with polymer powder to build the modeled nail. The quantity of monomer liquid and polymer powder applied to create a bead is known as the mix ratio. A bead mix ratio could be better depicted as dry, medium, or wet. Whenever equivalent measures of liquid and powder are utilized to make the bead, it is titled as a dry bead. Whenever double the amount of liquid as powder is in use to make the bead, it is titled as a wet bead. Midway between these two is a medium bead, which bears one-and-a-half times more liquid than powder. As a whole, medium beads are the ideal mix ratio for working with monomer liquids and polymer powders.



## Polymer Powder

Polymer powder is obtainable in white, natural, clear, pink, and many other colors. The color(s) you choose will depend on the nail enhancement method you are using.

A chemical reaction, referred to as cross-linking, occurs when the acrylic nail powder is mixed with the monomer liquid. This reaction causes long chains of polymer strands to form, which quickly harden and can be shaped to resemble a fingernail. Dyes and pigments are added to alter the resin's appearance. One example is benzoyl peroxide, which is added to the nail powder to create a white appearance. Color stabilizers are also added to prevent the discoloration of the resin caused by exposure to UV rays.

Alterations can be made to the acrylic nail powder to create gel and fiberglass artificial nails as well. By rejoining the monomers into short chains called oligomers, you can create gel nails. Oligomers are several thousand monomers long, making the nails rigid and inflexible when the resin hardens. This gives the fake nails a glass appearance and structure, causing them to shatter when they break.

Acrylic nail powder is used in combination with a monomer liquid, which hardens to form an acrylic resin. The primary ingredient in acrylic powder is polyethylmethacrylate, a combination of 70 percent ethyl methacrylate and 30 percent methyl methacrylate. The combination creates a resin that is flexible and strong, much like natural nails. Without the use of acrylic powder, artificial nails would just be flimsy pieces of plastic that are glued to the nail.

## Nail Dehydrator

Nail dehydrators remove surface moisture and tiny amounts of oil left on the natural nail plate, both of which can block adhesion. Nail dehydrator should be applied liberally to the natural nail plate only; skin contact should be avoided. This step is a great way to help prevent lifting of the nail enhancement prior to applying primer.

Most standard nail primers come in liquid form and are brushed onto the surface of each nail in a similar manner to nail polish. Some types of nail primer are made from acidic chemicals that can frequently irritate surrounding skin; so many nail technicians first apply an adhesive protector on each of the client's fingers to prevent this problem. Nail primer is normally applied after the cuticles are softened and exfoliated. Some manicurists prefer to roughen the surface of each nail with an emery board to remove the natural oils, though others caution that this step can sometimes increase the chance of nail irritation. Since acid-based primers act as dehydrating products, only one applied coat is usually enough to be effective.

## Nail Primer

Many kinds of nail primers are available today. In the past, acid-based nail primer (methacrylic acid) was widely used to help bond enhancements to the natural nail. Since acid-based nail primer is corrosive to the skin and potentially dangerous to eyes, acid-free and nonacid primers were developed.

Acid-free and nonacid primers are the more common primers used. They function as comfortably as or more dependable than acid-based nail primers, and hold the extra reward of not being corrosive to skin or eyes. All nail primer products must be utilized with precaution, and skin contact must be avoided. Read the manufacturer's directions and refer to the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for safety handling recommendations and instructions. Acid-based nail primers must be applied with caution and in accord with the manufacturer's directions.

For acid-based nail primers: utilizing a small applicator brush, insert the brush tip into the nail primer. Touch the brush tip to the edge of the bottle's neck to discharge the surplus primer back into the bottle. Keeping the brush dry and utilizing a light scattering action, cautiously dab the brush tip to the middle of the properly groomed natural nail. The acid-based primer will disperse and cover up the nail plate. Do not apply too much product—it will run onto the skin and cause burns or accidental injury. Make sure

to read the label for the manufacturer's indicated application processes and safeguards.

For nonacid and acid-free nail primers: utilizing the applicator brush, insert the brush into the nail primer. Wipe the extra product off of the brush. Using a somewhat damp brush, completely cover up the nail plate with the primer. Do not use too much product—it will run onto the skin and result in skin irritation or sensitiveness. The brush should absorb sufficient product to cover two or three nails. Make certain the whole nail plate is compensated. Before plunging the brush back into the container, mildly wipe the brush on a clean table towel so that you do not contaminate the bottle with any debris the brush may have picked up. Make certain to read the label for the manufacturer's advised application processes and cautions.

## Appropriate Hand Washing

Always have your clients to wash their hands thoroughly with a fingernail brush before any service. Hand sanitizers are an option when hand washing is not accessible, but they do not clean the hands. They cannot remove dirt or debris from hands and underneath the nails. They kill a few of the bacteria on skin, but not all of them. Hand sanitizers do give clients peace of mind, though. Clients like to witness Manicurist using hand sanitizers and a lot of clients prefer to use them as well. Keep a high-quality, professional hand sanitizer at your station and extend some to your clients. Let them witness you utilizing it, and they will have a higher degree of assurance in the cleanliness of your services. Do not use hand sanitizers in place of hand washing—there is no substitution for appropriate hand washing.

*Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. If clean, running water is not accessible, as is common in many parts of the world, use soap and available water. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol to clean hands.*

## Abrasives

Choose a medium grit (180 to 240) for natural nail preparation and initial forming. Select a medium grit for smoothing out and a fine buffer (350 grit or greater) for final buffing. A three-way buffer is employed to make a high shine on the enhancement when no polish is worn. Whenever you avoid putting the

product on too thickly, 180 grit is commonly adequate to frame the nail enhancement. Avoid using coarser (lower-grit) abrasives or aggressive processes on newly implemented enhancement products, as they can harm the newly produced nail enhancement.

## Nail Forms

Nail forms are put under the free edge and applied to expand the nail enhancements beyond the fingertip for extra length. Nail forms are often made of paper or Mylar and coated with adhesive backs or are constructed of pre-shaped plastic or aluminum. Each of these forms is disposable, except the plastic and aluminum forms, which can be properly cleaned and disinfected.

## Nail Tips

These are preformed nail extensions constructed from ABS or tenite acetate plastic and are accessible in a broad assortment of shapes, styles, and colorations, including natural, white, and clear.

### CAUTION

*Acid-based nail primers are very efficient but can result in serious—and sometimes permanent—damage to the skin and eyes. Never utilize acid-based nail primer or any other corrosive material without wearing protective gloves and safety eyewear.*

## Dappen Dish

The monomer liquid and polymer powder are each poured into a particular holder called a dappen dish. These dishes must have narrow openings to minimize evaporation of the monomer liquid into the air. Do not use open-mouth jars or other containers with large openings. Those types of containers will dramatically increase evaporation of the liquid and can permit the product to be contaminated with dust and additional debris. Dappen dishes must be covered with a tightly fitting lid when not in use.

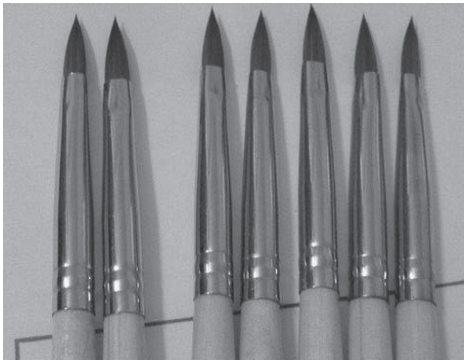
Each time the brush is dipped into the dappen dish, the leftover monomer liquid is contaminated with small amounts of polymer powder. Therefore never pour the unused portion of monomer liquid back into the original container. Empty the monomer liquid from your dappen dish after the service and wipe it clean with a disposable towel. To avoid skin irritation or

sensitivity, do not contact skin with the monomer liquid during this method. Wipe the dish clean with acetone, if necessary, before storing in a dust-free location.

The better way to discard small amounts of monomer liquid is to blend it with small amounts of the powder designed to cure them. (This is secure for quantities ranging between less than a half-ounce of monomer liquid to quarts or gallons.) They should never be disposed of in the trash or poured down the drain. Small quantities left behind in a dappen dish can be wiped out with a paper towel and disposed of in a metal trash can with a self-closing lid. Make certain to avoid contact with your skin during the procedure and have the trash disposed of several times during the day so that vapors do not vaporize and break loose into the salon atmosphere.

## Acrylic Nail Brushes

Sustaining too much monomer liquid upon your brush may increase the danger of accidentally touching the client's skin and may stimulate the hazard of acquiring skin irritation or sensitivities.



The most beneficial brush for use with these types of processes is composed of sable hair and is usually an oval or round style application brush. Odorless monomer liquid calls for less liquid, and a flat brush holds less liquid.

Synthetic and less costly brushes do not pick up sufficient monomer liquid or do not let go of the liquid the right way. Pick out the brush shape and size with which you feel the most comfortable. Avoid excessively large brushes (sizes 12 to 16), since they can hold extravagant amounts of liquid and change the mix ratio of the powder and liquid.

## Safety Equipment

### Safety Eyewear

Safety eyewear should be practiced to protect eyes from flying objects or accidental splatters. There are numerous types and styles. You can get additional information by researching the Internet or contacting a local optometrist, who can also assist you with both nonprescription and prescription safety eyewear.

## Dust Masks

Dust masks are organized to be worn across the nose and mouth to prevent inhalation of immoderate amounts of dust. They provide no protection from vapors.

## Protective Gloves

Both disposable and multiuse assortments of protective gloves can be bought. Many types of materials are used to make these gloves. For a lot of salon-related applications, gloves constructed of nitrile polymer powder function better.

## Storing and Disposing of Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Products

Store monomer liquid and polymer powder products in covered up containers. Store all primers and liquids separated from one another in a cool, dark area. Do not store products near heat.

After a service, you must throw away used materials. Use each portion on one client only. To dispose of small quantities of leftover monomer liquid, cautiously pour it into a really absorbent paper towel and then place it in a plastic bag. Avoid skin contact with the monomer liquid and never pour it straight into the plastic bag! Should skin contact come about, wash hands with liquid soap and water. After all used materials have been collected, seal them in a plastic bag and throw away the bag in a closed waste receptacle. It is critical to remove items soiled with enhancement products from your manicuring station after each client. This will help conserve the caliber of the air in your salon. Dispose of these items accordant to local rules and regulations.

## Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Maintenance, Crack Repair, and Removal

Regular maintenance helps prevent nail enhancements from lifting or cracking. If the nail enhancements are not regularly maintained, they have a greater tendency to lift, crack, or break, which increases the risk of the client developing an infection or having other problems.

When a cosmetologist has a client with a piece or section of the monomer liquid and polymer powder enhancement that has broken, lifted, or cracked, it is repaired by filing the area and adding monomer liquid and polymer powder to it. This is called a crack repair.

Proper maintenance must be performed every two to three weeks, depending on how fast the client's nails grow.

If you choose to offer nail enhancement services to your clients, proper maintenance is a critical skill for you to learn. Do not let clients go too long without having a proper maintenance service, or you will have many more repairs to perform when they return. Proper maintenance is both safe and gentle to the nail unit and will not result in injury or damage. In the maintenance service, the nail is thinned down, the apex of the nail is removed, and the entire nail enhancement is reduced in thickness.

## **Areas of Concern for Building Properly Structured Nail Enhancements**

Nail enhancements should not only look good, but they should also remain strong and healthy while your client is wearing them. Several areas of the nail must be considered when the nail enhancement is being built to accomplish this. Paying particular attention to the following areas of the nail enhancement will help you to create the look your clients' desire and also provide them with the best and longest-lasting nail enhancements.

The apex, also known as arch, is the area of the nail that has all of the strength. Having strength in the apex allows the base of the nail, sidewalls, and tip to be thin, yet leaves the nail strong enough to resist frequent chipping or breaking. The apex is usually oval shaped and is located in the center of the nail. The high point is visible no matter where you view the nail.

The stress area is where the natural nail grows beyond the finger and becomes the free edge. This area needs strength to support the extension.

The sidewall is the area on the side of the nail plate that grows free of its attachment to the nail fold and where the extension leaves the natural nail.

The nail extension underside is the actual underside of the nail extension. The nail extension underside can jut straight out or may dip, depending on the nail style. The nail extension underside should be even, matched on each nail. Undersides should match in length from nail to nail on all fingers. The tip should fit the nail and finger properly, and the underside of the nail extension should be smooth, without any glitches.

The thickness of the nail enhancement should be rather thin if a client is to wear it comfortably while going about her day. The enhancement should graduate seamlessly from the cuticle to the end of the nail extension, so you do not feel an edge. The sidewalls and tip's edge should be credit-card thin.

The C curve of the nail enhancement depends on the C curve of the natural nail. In the salon, a 35 percent C curve is the average. The top surface and bottom side should match perfectly.

To make sure the lengths of the nail extension and enhancements are appropriate and even, be sure to measure the length of the index, middle, and ring fingers; these should be the same length. The thumb and pinkie fingers should also be in proportion and match.

## **Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Nail Enhancement Removal**

There will be circumstances when your client feels that she wants to have her monomer liquid and polymer powder nail enhancements removed. Do not worry. The procedure is simple: You soak the enhancements off of the nail using acetone or the manufacturers suggested removal solution, remove the enhancement, and complete the service.

## **Odorless Monomer Liquid and Polymer Powder Products**

Odorless monomer liquid and polymer powder products are nail enhancement products that have little odor. These products do not necessarily have the same chemistry as all other monomer liquid and polymer powder products. Rather than use ethyl acrylic these products rely on monomers that have little odor. Even though these products are called "odorless," they do have a slight odor. Generally, if a monomer liquid does not

produce a strong enough odor that others in the salon can detect its presence, it is considered to be an odorless product. Those that create a slight odor in the salon are called “low odor.”

In general, odorless products must be used with a dry mix ratio (equal parts liquid and powder in bead). If used too wet, there is the risk of the client developing skin irritation or sensitivity. This mix ratio creates a snowy-appearing bead on your brush. After it is placed on the nail, it will slowly form into a firm glossy bead that will hold its shape until pressed and smoothed with the nail brush. Wipe your brush frequently to avoid the product sticking to the hairs. Do not rewet your brush with monomer liquid. This will change the mix ratio, which can lead to product discoloration, service breakdown, and increased risk of skin irritation and sensitivity. Without re-wetting your brush, use the brush to shape and smooth the surface to perfection.

Odorless products harden more slowly and create a tacky layer called the inhibition layer. Once the enhancement has hardened, this layer can be removed with alcohol, acetone, or a manufacturer-recommended product. It is always best to use a plastic-backed cotton pad to avoid skin contact with the inhibition layer, since repeated contact with this layer can lead to skin irritation and sensitivity. The inhibition layer also can be filed away, but avoid skin contact with these freshly filed particles.

## Colored Polymer Powder Products

Polymer powders are now available in a wide range of colors that mimic almost every shade available in nail polish. Nail artistry with colored polymer powder is limited only by your imagination. Some professionals use colors to go beyond the traditional pink and white French manicure combinations and offer custom-blended colors to their clients. They maintain recipe cards so that they can reproduce customized nail enhancements that clients cannot get from anyone else. As with all customized techniques, clients are willing to pay a few dollars more for the special service.

## Salon Safety Guidelines for Nail Technicians

### BASIC SALON SANITATION

1. Nail technicians should always clean both their hands and their clients' hands or feet before every service. Some states allow the use of waterless hand sanitizers, but if hands are dirty or contaminated, they should be washed with liquid soap and running water first. Cleaning hands reduces the risk of spreading germs from client to client.
2. All implements (including individual implements that a client brings in or that are left in the salon), equipment, and materials that come in contact with a client must be properly cleaned (sanitized) and disinfected prior to servicing each client. Before any tool or file can be used on a client, it must be properly cleaned and disinfected.
3. If any metal tool or hard piece of equipment has come into contact with blood, body fluid, infection, or an unhealthy condition, it must immediately be cleaned and disinfected (rather than continuing to use it on the same client). If a nail file or other porous item [See sidebar on porous and non-porous items.] comes into contact with blood, it must be disposed of immediately. (There may be local, state, or federal regulations regarding items that come into contact with blood.)
4. Store clean and disinfected tools in a clean container or lined drawer (labeled “disinfected”) that is separate from soiled or used tools and files (so you never get confused and pick up a dirty implement).
5. In addition to the disinfection protocol, you should keep records of the cleaning and disinfecting of foot spas.

6. Sanitation is an often-misunderstood term. Sanitizing means “cleaning to remove all visible residue or debris.” Proper cleaning is the first step in safety, but it must be followed by disinfection, which involves describes the use of chemicals to destroy germs on non-living surfaces. Salon disinfectants include EPA-registered, hospital-level, liquid disinfectant products that are virucidal, bactericidal, and fungicidal; that are 10% bleach..
  7. Use clean towels and/or manicure mats for each client.
  8. Products such as creams, lotions, scrubs, paraffin wax, masks, and oils must always be used in a sanitary manner that pre-vents contamination. For example, paraffin and nail oils should not be applied with a brush (or spatula) that has touched the skin. To avoid product contamination:
    - Dispose of used or remaining product between clients.
    - Use single-use disposable implements to remove products from containers for application or remove product with a clean, disinfected spatula and put product into a disposable or a service cup that can be disinfected.
    - Use an applicator bottle or dropper to apply the product.
  9. If blood or body fluid comes in contact with any salon surface, the nail professional should put on protective, disposable gloves and clean it with an EPA -registered, hospital liquid disinfectant or a 10% bleach solution. In case of an accidental cut, clean with an antiseptic and bandage the cut.
- in case of a spill or reaction, and proper disposal. Also, be sure to follow local, state, and federal regulations for chemical disposal.
2. Have a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) on file in your salon for every product used in the salon that could cause injury or harm. MSDS include important information about reactions, spills, ingredients, and disposal of chemicals. Make certain that the information on the MSDS is read and understood by all salon workers. Most states require MSDS to be available upon request by an inspector, and a fine might be levied for salons that don’t have them, so keep MSDS for all of your products in an easily accessible location. Many manufacturers have MSDS on their websites that can be easily downloaded.
  3. Proper ventilation in nail salons is essential for client and worker safety and comfort. Make certain that your ventilation system provides fresh air intake as well as exhaustion of stale air. Air control in the salon reduces your exposure to airborne particles and bacteria as well as reduces your inhalation of product vapors, creating a healthier work environment.
  4. Use a ventilation system that directs airborne debris (like filing dust) away from the breathing zone (the two foot square area between your mouth and nose and your work area) of you and your client. A mask can also be worn for further protection.
  5. Use a metal trashcan with a lid (a self-closing trashcan is ideal) to reduce vapors from soiled material getting into the salon. This also reduces odor.
  6. Smoking should never be permitted in a nail salon, nor should lighted candles be used anywhere nail products are used. Store all nail care chemicals in closed containers, always from any sources of heat or ignition.

## Product Safety

1. Read and follow manufacturers’ instructions for products used in the salon. Labels include information about how to use the product safely, expiration dates, and safety precautions to be followed

## Items to Dispose or Not

There are two kinds of tools commonly used in the nail salon: non-porous (which can be disinfected and are generally reusable) and porous (which are one-time-use only). Know what each implement you use is, as it directly affects your ability to comply with state laws and keep clients safe.

Porous items are made of cloth, wood, or other absorbent materials. Porous items include most nail files, orangewood sticks, cotton, paper mats, towels, and buffer blocks.

- All porous items are single-use items and must be thrown away after one use.

Items that the manufacturer designs to be disposed of after one use are called “disposable” or “single-use”. These items must be properly disposed of after one use on a single client. Reusing these items is considered an unsanitary, improper and unprofessional practice.

- Towels, chamois, buffing bits and similar items can be cleaned in a washing machine with regular detergent at the end of each day.
- Non-porous items are made of hard materials like metal, plastic, or glass, and include nippers, scissors, combs, metal or fiberglass-backed files, and drill bits.
- All non-porous tools can be (and must be) disinfected even if they do not contact blood or unhealthy conditions. These are all multi-use items.
- To clean a non-porous item, clean all visible debris then completely immerse the tool for 10 minutes in an EPA-registered disinfectant, bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts water).
- Other items that are not designed to touch skin, and are used in waterless products such as nail polish, acrylic monomer and powder, or light-cured gels, do

not spread germs and do not need to be disinfected. Brushes that are used to remove debris from a foot spa, tub, or basin must be properly cleaned and disinfected between each use.

- If you are not sure that a file or tool can be safely cleaned, disinfected, and used again, throw it out. Don't risk your business or your clients' safety to save a few pennies.

## What Nail Techs Need to Know About Disinfectants and Detergent Cleaners

You don't have to be a scientist to stay compliant on salon sanitation (although it seems like it). This is a simplified guideline for understanding the product claims and terms used with salon disinfectant products.

- 1) Any EPA-registered liquid disinfectants used in the salon must have these qualities:
  - Must have the words “bactericidal, fungicidal, and virucidal” and “hospital” on the label.
  - Must be mixed, used, stored, and disposed of according to manufacturer's label instructions. (It is against federal law to use an EPA-registered disinfectant contrary to its label.)
  - Must be prepared fresh every day and replaced immediately when the solution becomes visibly contaminated.
  - Are ineffective when proper cleaning is not performed before use.
  - Require complete immersion in the correct amount of disinfectant for 10 minutes after cleaning of all visible residues. Complete immersion means enough liquid to cover all surfaces of the item. Note: If the disinfectant manufacturer's label requires a different immersion time for soaking, you should always follow the label's instructions.

- Spray disinfectants are for cleaning surfaces only and are not adequate for disinfecting tools and pedicure equipment in the salon.
- 2) EPA-registered hospital “one-step” cleaner/disinfectants may be used for disinfecting pedicure equipment if:
    - They are EPA-registered, hospital, bactericidal, fungicidal, and virucidal and have the words “one-step” on the label.
    - Tools and equipment are first cleaned of large amounts of residue.
    - Are used exactly as described by the manufacturer’s instructions.
  - 3) All bottles and containers (other than the original manufacturer’s container) containing any disinfectant must be properly labeled, listing the contents, percentage solution (concentration), and date of mixing.
  - 4) Chelating surfactant detergents (this is a type of cleaner recommended for pedicure spa units) break down residue from pedicure products and are effective in hard water. Hard water contains calcium and magnesium ions, which can inactivate disinfectants and create residue films that are difficult for ordinary detergents to remove.
  - 5) You must record the time of each cleaning procedure in the salon pedicure cleaning log. Keep a log available to show clients. It demonstrates that you regularly clean and disinfect your pedicure equipment to ensure the customer is protected. Read and follow the instructions provided with the pedicure equipment to ensure proper use.

### Your Professional Responsibility

1. Recommend that clients seek medical advice if they have any questionable nail conditions. Never be intimidated by a client who wants a service done against your professional recommendation. It’s helpful if you have a professional referring relationship with a local dermatologist, internist, and podiatrist.
2. Inform your clients of their responsibility for proper nail care between salon visits. [NAILS Magazine’s website has Client Handouts that can be downloaded and shared with clients. The topics range from how to care for their acrylic nails to how to deal with aging skin.]
3. Observe proper hygiene and grooming yourself, and maintain a professional attitude at all times.
4. Strive to obtain continuing education annually from manufacturers and/or generic industry sources, regardless of whether it’s required in your state.



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Please use the area below to complete the True or False Test questions:

1. Modern day monomer liquids and polymer powders come in numerous colorations, including variances of more common pink, white, clear, and natural. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Nail enhancements are constructed by blending together liquids and powders that are normally referred to as acrylic nails. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Poly means many, so polymer means a substance formed by combining many small molecules (monomers) into very long chain-like structures. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Polymer powder is created by applying polymerization, also known as curing or hardening, a chemical reaction that produces polymers. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The mix ratio generally assures suitable set and utmost strength of the nail enhancement. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The monomer liquid will be mixed with polymer powder to build the modeled nail. \_\_\_\_\_
7. The monomer liquid and polymer powder are each poured into a particular holder called a dappen dish. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Store monomer liquid and polymer powder products in covered up containers. . \_\_\_\_\_
9. Smoking should never be permitted in a nail salon. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Tools and equipment are first cleaned of large amounts of residue. \_\_\_\_\_

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