JAPANESE HAIR STRAIGHTENING: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

Achieve sleek, frizz-free locks with Japanese hair straightening. Here's all the benefits, and maintenance, to know before you book.

by Kate Sidorova-Biryukova & Pernod-Ricard Professional Products Division
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There are endless ways to achieve sleek, straight hair, but if it's straightness' absolutely frizz-free locks you're after, you need to have Japanese hair straightening on your radar. This hair straightening method is nothing new—it first rose to popularity in the early 2000s when pin-straight locks were considered the ultimate beauty ideal. The technique has many loyal fans, thanks to the can transform even the curliest hair into smooth strands.

Kate Sidorova-Biryukova, the CEO and creative director of PARIS DESIGNER SALON in New York City, to get the scoop on all things Japanese hair straightening. While it is one of the best hair straightening techniques for those with frizzy hair, it's important to remember you make a good decision, how to maintain permanent hair straightening, and potential downsides before taking the plunge. Read on for everything you need to know to decide if it's the right choice for you.

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What Is Japanese Hair Straightening?

Japanese hair straightening, also known as Japanese thermal reconditioning, is a permanent hair straightening treatment that originated in Japan in the 90s and became popular in the early 2000s. Much like other well-known hair straightening techniques, Japanese hair straightening is a chemical treatment that uses a stylist's skill to deliver results.

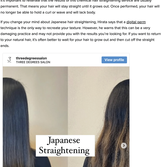
"It's a permanent hair treatment designed to transform curly, frizzy, or wavy locks into sleek, straight perfection," explains Kate. "The treatment not only straightens the hair but also often imparts a smooth and glossy texture."

Hair straightening is a thorough chemical and dry (where your stylist applies a chemical solution containing a strong compound the ammonium thioglycolate (the compound used in chemical perming) and heat treatment process that transforms your hair completely. After the keratin has been broken down, it can be reshaped to your desire, in this case, pin-straight. A stylist will flat iron your hair at the appropriate time and for the new shape.

Once your desired straightness is achieved, a neutralizing solution is applied to the hair to retained perming the new shape and hair's natural health. Now, it's time to your stylist will rinse the neutralizing solution, condition, and style your hair.

Kate explains that it's important to remember that this chemical hair straightening service are usually permanent. That means your hair will stay straight until it grows out. Once performed, your hair will behave exactly as it did before, with its natural curl pattern.

If you change your mind about Japanese hair straightening, Hinata says that a digital perm technique is the only way to reverse your balance. However, he warns that this can be a very damaging practice and may not provide you with the results you're looking for. If you want to return to your natural hair, it's often better to wait for your hair to grow out and then cut off the straight ends.



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Benefits of Japanese Hair Straightening

Hair straightening is a popular choice for those who want to further their Japanese hair straightening. However, Hinata says the best benefits of his signature service go far beyond having straight hair.

"Japanese hair straightening is long-lasting, low maintenance, and remedies—some even claim hair health improvement in the process," he says. Kate adds, reducing split ends and breakage.

If reducing split ends isn't enough to make you want to book an appointment, the additional Japanese hair straightening benefits are worth a look.

Permanent results

As mentioned above, this is a permanent hair straightening service, so the treatment won't wash out after a few months. While this service isn't for those with commitment issues, the permanent results mean you don't have to worry about your hair reverting back to its natural curl.

Frizz-free

Do you want everything from your Japanese hair straightening, but straight hair that's also frizz-free? That may be a job for a chemical service. If frizz and humidity take your straight hair back to its natural curl pattern, it's time to consider a digital perm. Hinata says that a digital perm can be a good option for those who want to have Japanese hair straightening can achieve even the wettest weather.

Reduced split ends

Flat ironing your hair every day can take up a lot of time. Opting for Japanese hair straightening will ensure you wake up with silky, sleek strands every morning and cut the days in no time.

Shiny, reflective hair

If your straightened hair always seems dull, Japanese hair straightening may be able to bring it back to life. Hinata explains that the chemicals used in the process can be reflective, shiny hair.

Expensive

Thanks to your hair's shiny appearance, your hair looks healthier, and stylist, Kate Japanese hair straightening can cost anywhere from $300 to $1000. There is also a yearly maintenance cost for touch-ups every 3 months.

Time-consuming

If you're considering Japanese hair straightening, chances are good you're hoping to cut down on your daily styling routine. While permanently straightening your hair will help you achieve your goal, it's not a quick process. It can take an entire salon appointment. This multi-step process must be done and processed for the best results.

Time-consuming

While Japanese hair straightening can provide sleek, straight hair, it's essential to consider the potential damage it can cause to your hair. Hinata says that the process can be harsh on your hair, leads to dryness, breakage, or other damage, particularly if not applied or maintained properly. Also, Japanese hair straightening, because it's a chemical treatment, unlike keratin treatments, which wash out over a few months.

Maintenance

While your daily styling routine will likely be minimal, you will still need to head to the salon every 3 months for touch-ups. Hinata says that you can prevent the growth the texture of your permanently straightened strands. You will also likely have to make changes to your styling routine and product to maintain your Japanese hair straightening.

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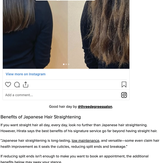

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Downsides of Japanese Hair Straightening

Since Japanese hair straightening offers many benefits, it's important to consider the potential drawbacks before heading to the salon.

Expensive

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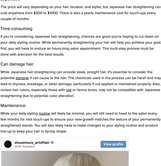
Is Japanese Hair Straightening Right for Me?

Considering the potential downsides, it's essential to consult with a professional stylist. Hinata says that Japanese hair straightening is not suitable for the treatment. During a consultation, your stylist will discuss your hair type and current condition, your desired results, your current hair care routine, and your lifestyle to ensure the treatment is the right choice. The stylist will determine whether or not Japanese hair straightening is right for you.

Japanese hair straightening is ideal for individuals with curly, wavy, or frizzy hair who desire a sleek, straight look," Hinata explains. "It is particularly effective for those with natural curls or those seeking a dramatic transformation.

While thermal reconditioning is a customizable treatment that allows the stylist to adjust the level of straightening based on your hair's unique characteristics, it's not suitable for all hair types. Hinata advises against the service for those with fine or thin hair, as it reduces volume. The service is also not recommended for those with highly colored hair.



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How Do You Care For Your Hair After Japanese Straightening?

Right after your Japanese hair straightening treatment ensures the importance of not washing your hair for at least 48 to 72 hours so as not to disturb the chemical process. Once the three-day period is over, your stylist will advise you on how to care for your hair to keep your newly straighted hair looking and feeling its best.

Use sulfate-free shamps and conditioner

Choose sulfate-free, gentle shampoos and conditioners specifically formulated for chemically treated hair. We like the Sulfate-Free Moisture Shampoo and Conditioner for newly straightened hair that needs a plump look and feel. If you have very thick hair, consider using Moroccan Argan Oil Hydrating Shampoo Sulfate-Free Shampoo and Conditioner for extra moisture benefits.

Incorporate a deep conditioner

Use a deep conditioning treatment once a week to keep your hair hydrated and nourished. Look for conditioning masks or treatments specifically designed for chemically treated hair, like the Lumiere Art of Hair's Ultimate Bead Extreme Repair Hair Mask, to help maintain your mane's healthy appearance.

Minimize heat styling

Avoid using heat styling tools such as flat irons and curling irons, as excessive heat can damage the hair and cause it to revert to its natural texture. If you need to use heat styling tools, turn them to their lowest temperature setting and always apply a heat protectant formula first. We're partial to Redken Acidic Color Gloss Heat Protection Leave-In Treatment, which helps protect hair against heat and provides lasting, moisture-rich shine.

Maintain regular salon appointments

Schedule regular touch-up every 8-6 weeks to remove split ends and keep your hair looking healthy and vibrant. Trimming also helps to maintain the shape of your hairstyle and prevent breakage.

Style with care

Try to step away from hairstyles that pull on the hair or cause breaks, such as tight ponytails or buns. Braids can weaken the hair and cause breakage, so opt for something in chemically treated hair.

The Bottom Line on Japanese Hair Straightening

While Japanese hair straightening is one of the only salon services that can help you achieve sleek, straight hair that's also frizz-free, it's not for everyone. It's a permanent chemical treatment that requires commitment such as time, cost, and hair damage should be carefully discussed with a professional stylist with experience in this technique. The guidance of a professional before, during, and after your service will ensure your hair looks its best for years to come.

Next to read: Is Your Hair Damaged? Here's How To Identify, Manage, And Prevent Damage

Book a consultation with a professional in your area using our salon locator.

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