Troubleshooting: I Missed a Spot.

If you didn't get your application perfect, it's easy to fix. Even redoing a whole application won't harm your hair at all.

If you missed a spot doing two-step black, like this henna red spot left from applying indigo over henna, just reapply indigo paste to that spot within 48 hours and leave the indigo on the spot for two hours.

If you did not mix the henna and indigo pastes together evenly, you may have spotty henna red and brunette hair. If that is the case, repeat the application process; stir the henna and indigo together more thoroughly.

If gray roots are still showing in a place or two, just reapply your mix to that spot and leave it on for a few hours.

Troubleshooting: I Want to Slightly Change My Hair Color

You can adjust your hair color slightly to the red or to the brown if you make a gloss with henna, henna and indigo, indigo, and conditioner. The chemistry of these mixes using conditioner will not facilitate dye uptake, but if a barely perceptible adjustment is what you want, then a gloss may work for you.
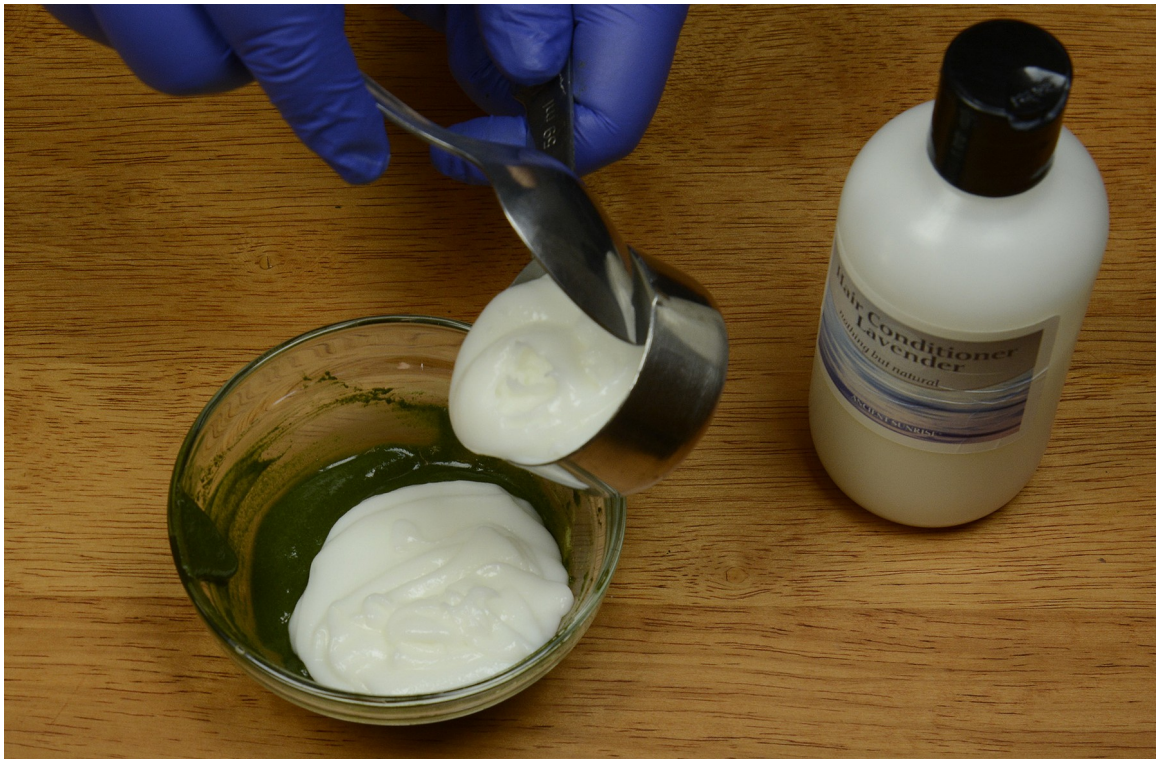
If you want more of a change in color, you can re-dye your hair at any time. Additional applications of henna will not harm your hair: it is not necessary to let your hair 'rest' as may be recommended with oxidative chemical dyes.

If you need to tone down the redness of your hair, an indigo gloss may make the difference that you want. It is not unusual for some indigo to wash out of hair, just as indigo fades out of blue jeans over many launderings. Indigo does not bind to hair as readily as henna. An indigo gloss may refresh the color slightly without taking up the time of a complete re-application. To make an indigo gloss to darken your hair, you will need a brush, a measuring cup and spoon, water, and hair conditioner.

Add some water to the indigo powder, and stir into a paste.

Add a quarter cup of conditioner and stir it into the indigo so the mixture is smooth and creamy.

Catherine's light brown and gray hair was dyed black with the two-step henna and indigo. Her hair had lost some of the blackness after many shampoos. She asked Maria to mix and apply an indigo gloss to refresh the color without doing an entire two-step application.

Maria mixed the indigo, water, and conditioner, and began to comb it through Catherine's freshly shampooed hair. Gloss may be applied over either dry or wet hair.

First, Maria combs the indigo gloss through Catherine's hair.

Then, Maria takes a handful of the gloss and begins to apply it to the rest of Catherine's hair. She strokes the gloss through the hair, and works it thoroughly into the hair.

When Maria has saturated Catherine's hair with indigo gloss, she twists up her hair, wraps it with plastic wrap, and shampoos her hair half an hour later. The blackness is refreshed!

You can mix a henna gloss by mixing two heaping tablespoons full of dye released henna paste with a quarter cup of conditioner, and apply in the same way. If you have henna paste saved in the freezer, use that.

You can mix a henna-indigo gloss by preparing a small amount of henna-indigo paste in the usual way.[1] Mix two heaping tablespoonsful into a quarter cup of conditioner, and apply in the same way.

Troubleshooting: My roots didn't take up enough color

People often have dye resistant roots because their hair is strong and healthy near the root. Hair that has been growing for a year, two years, or more, is often weathered like old rope. Weathered hair takes up dye much more readily than newly grown hair. Newly grown hair will

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[1] For complete instructions on mixing henna-indigo paste, see Chapter 7, Mixing and Testing Your Henna Mix

take up henna more easily than it will take up indigo; roots may appear redder than the tips of the hair in a henna-indigo mix.

There are several things you can do to compensate for dye resistant roots. The first thing to try is to reapply your henna and indigo to the areas that don't have enough color, and see if that gets you to the shade you want. Once you have the color you want in the ends of your hair, it's only necessary to dye the roots and newer part of your hair as it grows in.

Your hair might not take up henna and indigo if you haven't shampooed out all the body oil and hair care products. Your hair has to be as clean as possible before you dye it. If you apply oil or deep conditioning treatments to your hair, do those AFTER you apply your henna and indigo, rather than before.

If you mix one teaspoonful of salt into 100 grams of indigo, it will 'rough up' the scales of keratin slightly, and the indigo may bind to your hair more easily.

As hair grows out, it dries out and weathers like a fraying rope.

Hair that is weathered takes up dye easily. New growth may resist dye.

Indigo does not stain hair as easily as henna and the bond is not as secure[2]. Many shampoos after dyeing hair with a henna-indigo mix, some indigo may fade from the new growth.

After the henna-indigo two-step process, the weathered hair will retain blackness retain blackness more than newer growth.

If you apply heat to your hair as you dye it, you may get better uptake. Covering your hair with plastic wrap and a woolly cap will keep your hair warm and moist, and that will help. If you need to nap under an electric blanket, that will help more. If you have a bonnet hair dryer, that may help most.

Stylists often prepare resistant hair for chemical dyeing with a 'soap cap.' This is a mixture of clarifying liquid shampoo and a hair lightener. This 'roughs up' the cuticle so that dye molecules

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[2] Indigo slowly fades from hair after many shampoos just as blue jeans slowly fade after years of washing.

can penetrate the hair more easily. If you're having a difficult time getting your henna, cassia, and indigo to stain, a 'soap cap' will help prepare your resistant hair for natural dyes too. A soap cap is structurally damaging to your hair and may bleach out some of the color so use it only as a last resort.

Troubleshooting: I mixed my paste and it's too runny

The only way to fix runny henna, cassia, or indigo is to add more henna, cassia or indigo powder. If you try to thicken your paste by simmering it, you will ruin your paste. If you try to thicken your paste by adding flour, you will ruin your paste.

Always have extra henna, cassia, or indigo powder on hand. Even if the extra powder is old, you can stir that in to thicken it up, and it won't ruin your paste.

Troubleshooting: I Mixed My Paste and It Is Too Thick

If your henna, cassia, or indigo paste is too thick to spread into the hair easily, just add some more liquid. Freshly mixed indigo paste may thicken in the bowl while you're applying it. If it becomes too thick to spread easily over the hair, add more water.

Troubleshooting: I Mixed My Henna, Got Interrupted, and Forgot About It

As soon as you realize you're not going to be able to apply the henna when you thought you would, put your henna in the refrigerator or freezer. You can keep your henna in the refrigerator, ready to use, for a week. You can keep your henna in the freezer, ready to use, for a year. If you accidentally leave your henna sitting out on the counter, it will still be just fine for two days.

Ancient Sunrise® Henna for Hair Chapter 12 Troubleshooting

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339 Tallmadge Rd. Kent, Ohio, 44240

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