

Example 5: Catherine Dyes her Graying Light Brown Hair ‘Black Cat’ Black with the Two-Step Henna-Indigo Process



Catherine has graying brunette hair, about waist length, and has decided to dye it as black as a black cat. Black oxidative hair dye is the most sensitizing and potentially hazardous to health of all oxidative hair dyes; safely dyeing hair black with Ancient Sunrise® henna and indigo is a challenge, but it is a challenge worth meeting if you want to have black hair. Maria, the stylist begins by mixing 500g of henna for Catherine’s waist-length hair the previous day.¹ Maria begins to section Catherine’s freshly washed and dried hair.



¹ Complete instructions for mixing henna for the two-step process of henna-indigo black are in chapters 7, Mix Ancient Sunrise® Indigo Paste to Dye Hair Black with Ancient Sunrise® Henna, then Indigo



Maria begins by applying henna paste to one ¼” section of Catherine’s hair at a time, making certain that both sides of the section are thickly coated with Ancient Sunrise® henna paste, from the roots to the tips.



Maria rolls the sections up, one at a time, to get them out of the way of the next section. The first time a person use any Ancient Sunrise® product, it should be applied to the whole length of the hair to establish consistent base color and condition. Ancient Sunrise® henna will strengthen hair damaged by previous chemicals or neglect, and will even out unfortunate chemical color results. Once the full length of the hair has been brought to the desired color, just touch up roots as they grow in.²

² For complete instructions on doing two-step henna-indigo black roots, see chapter 9, Example 4



Maria continues to section and apply henna to Catherine's hair. It doesn't really matter where you begin your sectioning and application, as long as you eventually cover ALL the hair evenly with Ancient Sunrise® henna paste.





Maria separates and draws out each new section of Catherine's hair, then pushes henna paste down to the scalp, and pulls henna paste out to the ends of her hair. Henna is good for the scalp: it eliminates dandruff!³ Henna is good for the ends of the hair: it strengthens them!



Never be stingy with henna paste. There is no good way to “stretch” henna paste to make it cover more hair than it really can without loss of quality. Mix plenty, and freeze any henna that you have leftover in case you need to do touch ups or dab on roots that show through.⁴

³ To read about health benefits of henna for hair, see Chapter 13, Henna and Your Health

⁴ To read complete instructions on how much henna paste to mix for different lengths of hair, see chapter 7, Mix your Paste



Maria continued to apply Ancient Sunrise® henna paste to Catherine's hair until it was entirely covered, scalp to ends. Then, Maria wrapped the hair in plastic to keep it moist and warm. Catherine covered her hair with a scarf, and took a long nap. She kept the henna in her hair for six hours to get a deep stain.



With added gentle heat, such as napping under an electric blanket, or lying down and reading a book outside in the summer on a hot day, henna will stain hair sufficiently in two or three hours. Many people leave henna in overnight, because their days are very busy. If you sleep or nap with henna, make sure your head is well supported so you don't wake up with a kink in your neck.



Catherine shampooed the henna out of her hair, and went back to see Maria to have the indigo applied on the following day. Do not wait more than 48 hours to apply indigo after henna.



Catherine's gray hair is now dyed with henna. The lawsones have not yet oxidized, so the henna color hasn't darkened. During this 48-hour period, indigo applied over henna will produce black.



Maria sections Catherine's hair so she can begin without delay. Maria mixes 100g of indigo with CMC powder and then mixes the powder with water.⁵ Maria mixes only as much indigo powder as she can apply in less than half an hour so the indoxyls will not bind with oxygen before they have a chance to stain the hair. The indigo paste tends to thicken as it sits, so Maria adds more water from time to time.



⁵ For complete instructions on mixing indigo for the two-step henna-indigo process, see chapter 7 , Mix Ancient Sunrise® Indigo Paste to Dye Hair Black with Ancient Sunrise® Henna, then Indigo



Maria applies the Ancient Sunrise® indigo paste to a section of Catherine’s hair, down to the scalp and then strokes the paste out to the tips. Then, she rolls the section up to get it out of the way of the next section of hair.





Gradually, Maria coats all of Catherine's hair with indigo paste.



Yes, this is a lot of indigo paste, but the full length only needs to be done once or twice a year.



As the indoxyls bind with oxygen and form indigo, you can see the paste turn from green to dark blue. The dark blue oxidized paste will not stain hair, only the indoxyls in the green paste will stain the hair.



Maria wraps Catherine's hair with plastic wrap to slow down the oxidation so the indoxyls will keep staining the hair; Catherine goes off to take a long nap.



After letting the indoxyls in the indigo paste gradually migrate into and bind with her hair for two hours, Catherine's hair is shampooed and dried. Catherine has black, black as a black cat, black as midnight hair! The texture is sleek and heavy, with shimmering highlights.



Ancient Sunrise® Henna for Hair Chapter 8 How to Henna Your Hair

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