

Example 4: Dye graying roots black with the Ancient Sunrise® two-step process of henna and indigo

To dye any color of hair, even gray roots, a perfect raven’s wing black, Melissa uses the two-step process of Ancient Sunrise® henna first, followed by Ancient Sunrise® indigo. The root application is identical to the previous root directions, except that it is done in two sessions. First, the roots are dyed with henna, and then washed. Then the roots are dyed with indigo, and then washed.¹ This is time consuming, but this technique dyes hair blacker than a black cat, and it’s completely natural looking!



Two months after Melissa dyed Catherine’s light brown, graying hair black with the two step Ancient Sunrise® henna – indigo technique, Catherine’s roots had become obvious.

Catherine’s gray hair had grown faster than the brown hair.² Indigo did not bind well to some of the roots, and after sixty shampoos, these roots were a coppery henna color instead of black. Newer growth of hair had shed more indigo than older growth, and was a warm black rather than absolute black. Two applications of henna and indigo may be required to saturate light-colored hair enough for it to stay truly black. Catherine set aside two afternoons for Melissa and Maria to dye her hair. Catherine washed and dried her hair. Melissa mixed Ancient Sunrise® henna.

¹ Follow henna and indigo two step mixing instructions in Chapter 7, Mixing and Testing Your Henna Mix.

² Melanin, the pigment that colors your hair, is metabolically expensive for your hair follicle to produce. White hair grows faster than pigmented hair because the follicle can devote its energy to growing rather than producing color.



Melissa begins to section Catherine's hair. She winds the sections into little bundles, so the paste application process will go more easily. It is very difficult to comb through and separate hair if there is a mess of paste in it.



Repeated applications of henna and indigo will build up the depth of color. Melissa mixed 300g of henna powder into paste, enough to apply halfway down Catherine’s hair. Melissa applies the henna and indigo dyes farther down the length of Catherine’s hair so her hair will stay blacker longer.



Catherine’s hair is waist-length, so twisting the sections into little buns keeps the hair manageable during sectioning and paste application.



Melissa sections Catherine’s hair one section at a time, and applies henna. When each section has had henna applied down to the scalp, Melissa strokes the henna toward the tips. Then, Melissa lays the section back and out of the way so she can apply paste to the next section.



Melissa lays more hennaed sections of Catherine's hair out of the way, until the entire quarter section is completely hennaed.





Then Melissa strokes and pushes more henna on to the sections to make certain all of the hair is saturated with henna paste. If Catherine could purr, she would do so, because having henna applied and massaged into her hair feels very pleasant.





Melissa strokes a hennaed section all together and twists Catherine's long hair it into a knot.



One section out of the way, Melissa continues to apply henna to each of the other sections of Catherine's hair.



Melissa wraps Catherine's hennaed hair with plastic wrap.



Catherine takes a nap and shampoos the henna out of her hair after four hours. Without the wrap, the henna paste would dry; dry henna paste is very difficult to shampoo out of hair. The henna stains her gray roots vivid henna red, and is now ready for an Ancient Sunrise® indigo application.





With the henna shampooed out, and the hair clean and dry, Maria begins to section and clip Catherine's hair for the Ancient Sunrise® indigo application.





Maria mixes 100g of indigo powder into paste a time and begins to apply it to sectioned hair. She paints one section, pushing the indigo paste down to Catherine's scalp, and part of the way down her hair.



Maria parts a new section of hair.



When the new part is dropped down, Maria paints indigo paste onto the hair so both sides of the section will be saturated.



Maria continues sectioning and applying indigo paste up the back section of Catherine's hair.



Maria applies indigo section after section up the back of Catherine's hair. The indoxyls molecules begin to oxidize; you can see the surface of the indigo paste turn dark blue.





When Maria has completely saturated all of Catherine's hair, she wraps it with plastic wrap. This slows down the oxidation so the indoxyl molecules have the best chance to penetrate the hair. Plastic wrap will also keep the hair warm and moist for better dye penetration.



Catherine leaves the indigo in her hair for about two hours before shampooing it out.



After shampooing and rinsing, Catherine's greying light brown hair is sleek and black! It is not necessary to re-dye the full length of the hair every time roots show. Only re-dye roots or an area that needs more color. A full length dye once or twice a year is usually sufficient to maintain shiny, healthy hair.



Ancient Sunrise® Henna for Hair Chapter 9, Graying Hair and ‘Doing Your Roots’

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