

Hot Hybrids



The colour Gel Polish manicure has become one of the most popular

and favoured in-salon nail coating treatments to date. **Sonette van Rensburg** talks about this hot nail trend

This innovation in nail services is by no means a completely new trend. It is, however, a clever reinvention of soak-off gels that can be applied like a polish.

Colour soak off gels have been available for many years, and although application was fairly easy, nothing compares to the new hybrids which cure quicker and soak off faster, giving the client the benefit of a gel's durability along with the ease-of-use of a polish. This is of particular benefit to those clients who are apprehensive about wearing nail enhancements.

According to Danny Haile, CEO of Hand and Nail Harmony - one of the first companies to spearhead the Gel Polish trend - these products have huge market potential and one of their biggest plusses is that they help prevent chipping: "So many clients have fresh polish chipping after only a few days, but with these, you'll be getting good coverage for three weeks after application."

Technology

If you look up the word hybrid it means "mixture, amalgam or fusion", and that is exactly what a Gel Polish is. In fact, Douglas D Schoon, the mastermind behind CND's Shellac, was the first to use the word hybrid to describe the Gel Polish, because it combines and utilises technology from both nail polish and UV gel. "That was my idea and driving force when



I began development of Shellac," he says.

The differences between Gel Polish hybrids and traditional soak off gels is that they incorporate a combination of ingredients and specific solvents which lower the product's viscosity, allowing a thinner polish-like application and a quicker soaking time. These solvents are known as "volatile solvents," and are also used to regulate the viscosity in nail enamels. The result is a unique brush on gel which can be cured under a UV or LED light.

Properties and benefits

The greatest advantage of using a Gel Polish system is that it emits a low odour with no unpleasant fumes. It is therefore the ideal service to

LCN X-Tame does not contain any solvents and can be easily and gently removed with a non-acetone LCN nail polish remover.

offer in any salon or spa environment. Some of the other benefits include:

- Ease of application
- Long lasting colour that lasts up to 3 weeks
- No chipping or peeling
- Quick, easy removal
- No damage to the natural nail
- Long lasting shine

As this material is a light cured gel product, it has superior wear on all types of surfaces, can be easily applied to a natural nail surface or enhancement coating, and can last anything from 10 up to 21 days. When it comes to weaker nails, Antoinette Oosthuizen of Angelic Nails recommends, the client stick to nail enhancements, and rather apply the Gel Polish on top of the enhancement for a longer lasting colour. →

Curing with LED

"There is a lot of confusion about LED Lamps, and whether they can be used to properly cure any type of UV curing nail product. The answer is no. It is true that all LED lamps create UV light and will "harden" UV curable products, but unless the LED lamp was specifically designed to properly cure this particular UV nail product, don't expect to achieve a "proper cure". Traditional and LED nail lamps both cure UV nail products by emitting low levels of UV light. It's not surprising that these have differing ranges of UV wavelengths and widely differing intensities. Even two different brands of LED nail lamps will differ in wavelength and intensity.

Too little UV exposure results in under curing; too much exposure results in over curing and these can lead to service breakdown and increase the potential for skin sensitivity issues.

**Source: Douglas D. Schoon - product chemist, author and RD Director at CND.*

Not only can Gel Polish be applied to achieve a long lasting one colour effect, but it can also be used to create custom colour coatings, and achieve beautiful nail art designs. The finish can be adorned with crystals and decals, which can be sealed and encapsulated under the Gel Polish top coat.

It is also important to remember that because gel polishes are light curing, they are UV-reactive and therefore should not be left open, in direct sunlight or anywhere near other UV light sources, as this will reduce the shelf-life of your product causing it to thicken and spoil.

Application

A consultation prior to application is also vitally important, as this will determine your client's needs and colour preference. Also don't forget or underestimate how important natural nail preparation is prior to any nail enhancement service, including Gel Polish. This will help to prevent problems from occurring and assist the application to last longer. For best results, the nail plate needs to be clean and dry. Some systems may recommend removing the shine from the nail plate with a light grit buffer followed by the use of a nail sanitiser and the application of a bonding agent. It is also important to mix the Gel Polish properly prior to application. This should be done by rolling the bottle gently in the palm of your hands so as not to form any bubbles. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions when applying product and curing the nails. Please take note that although some products may be

RIGHT: Angelic Nails Gel Polish is formulated to offer a thin application, providing the client with the option to buff off and fill or soak off.

thin enough to apply a third coat, you need to make sure you do not apply the Gel Polish too thickly with each coat as this could lead to chipping.

Also remember to seal the sides and free edges with each coat to prevent, lifting, peeling or chipping. When sealing the edges always brush over the surface again to smooth down any product to prevent the gel polish from pooling at the free edge.

Removal

One of the main characteristics of these new brush-on gel polishes has been their ability to reduce soak-off times.

A Gel Polish system removal procedure is a quick and easy process, and allows you to remove and replace your client's long lasting gel polish colour manicure in minimal time. Gel Polish services or applications should not and do not cause any harm or damage to a clients natural nail plate. The same as for any Nail Enhancement service



BELOW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Gelish was the first brand of brush-in-bottle gel-polish, invented and patented by Hand & Nail Harmony's founder Danny Haile.

ProGel by SuperNail, the Gel Polish range distributed by Leonelda Products, features SuperBond - a non-acid, non-curing gel bonding agent formulated to achieve the strongest adhesion and maximum wear of gels and gel polishes.

InstantVarnish by Colleen Bezuidenhout is a cost effective, locally produced Gel Polish range that offers a long-wearing, chip- and tear-free result.

SoPolish, supplied by Brisian distributors, offers a thin, no-smudge application with a high gloss shine.

or coating, which is applied to the natural nail, it's not the product that does the damage it is the improper application and removal thereof.

There are two ways to remove a gel polish application and that is either through the traditional soaking method or by wrapping each individual nail with cotton wool soaked in acetone and wrapped in foil.

Please note that not all Gel Polish systems need to be soaked each time. Should the client wish to have the same colour, they have the option to refill or touch up.

Marketing your service

Make sure you know what you are talking about when promoting this new service. Attending regular →



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NAILS



CND offers Shellac Remover Wraps which have been specially designed to neatly soak off the Gel Polish in just ten minutes.

training will ensure that you are knowledgeable and keep up to date with the latest trends and technology available and will certainly give you an upper hand on the competition, ensuring that you attract more customers.

Make sure you hone in on all the features and benefits of your Gel Polish system to gain client interest. Display and leave leaflets or brochures around your salon, update your website and Facebook page, and send out emails which feature the benefits of using a Gel Polish application.

• Up-sell

Remember Gel Polish is the perfect solution for clients who want a long lasting colour manicure. So, this is a great opportunity to up-sell this service to polish customers, along with their manicure or pedicure service.

Another great add-on service is to apply the new translucent Minx coatings and layering options over the Gel Polish, offering your clients a truly unique look. The greatest benefit is that once the Minx coating comes off, the gel polish coating remains, providing the client with two different looks.

• Pricing

Be sure to price your Gel Polish service accurately by factoring in the higher cost for a brush-on gel polish, the use of a UV or LED lamp, additional preparation products, and your time. Also don't forget that your client's will not be coming every week for a re-polish, so make sure you account for the extra week between visits. The service should range from at least R100-R180. Charging anything below this price will not be beneficial for your business or the industry.

• Special Offers

Offer your clients special combo deals, such as applying Gel Polish to hands and feet or combining it with a special wrap treatment.

Now that you know more about this ever growing trend and the choices available, what are you waiting for? Get your clients hooked on this popular and fabulous service and boost your salon's revenue! **PB**

The mani-Q Colour system by Young Nails protects the natural nail from chipping and breaking and causes no damage to the natural nail when removed by a professional technician.



Sonette has been in the nail and beauty industry for 24 years. She consults with salons, spas and training salon professionals in all aspects of nail and beauty technology, basic salon skills, client relations and perfecting technical skills. email: sonettevr@gmail.com