

# Manicure Checklist

By Zoe

- Supplies.** You'll want to have everything you need at your fingertips:
  - Nail polish
  - Topcoat
  - Base coat
  - Nail buffer
  - Emery board
  - Callous and cuticle remover
  - Cuticle pusher
  - Moisturizer
  - Clippers
  - Bowl of warm water
  - Face cleanser
  - Cotton balls
  - Cotton swab
- Clean.** Use nail polish remover to thoroughly clean off any polish left on your nails from the last manicure. Try and keep the remover away from your cuticles, and avoid soaking your nails in the solution as it will dry your skin out. If you have sensitive skin, use a remover that doesn't have the harsh acetone chemical in it.
- Shape.** Use your clippers and gentle emery board to clip and shape your nails. Choose a round or square edge for your nail. Stay away from metal file as they will splinter your nail. Take your buffer and smooth out the sides and tops of your nails. Don't over buff your nails, or your polish won't adhere.
- Soak.** Prepare a bowl of warm water and a few drops of face cleanser for your fingers to soak in. Face cleanser is recommended because it is gentle and won't over dry your cuticles. Limit the soaking time to three minutes.
- Remove cuticles and hangnails.** Applying cuticle remover for only a few seconds will help you cut away the thickened skin around the nail. Using gentle motions, push back the cuticle away from the nail with your cuticle pusher. Be careful during this process. You don't want to cut into the sensitive areas around the free skin you'll be clipping. It will hurt, and damage your skin.
- Moisturize.** Use lotion, cream or oil to massage into your cuticles and all over your hands to rejuvenate and hydrate the skin. Afterwards, take a cotton ball with a little polish remover on it and remove the moisturizer from the nail.
- Polish.** Apply a base coat to your nail first. It will help strengthen your nail. Next, apply a layer of color. Let it dry before putting another layer on top. So, that's two coats of color polish you're applying before your final top coat layer. The final layer adds shine.
- Clean up.** It's impossible not to make a mistake or two during this process. Dip a cotton swab into some polish remover. Remove errant polish from your fingers.

- Dry.** Kick back, relax and watch your favorite show on TV while your nails dry. Give it a good thirty to forty five minutes before you return to your everyday activities.
- Touch Up.** Every few days, apply a layer of top coat to your nails to keep them looking pretty.