



Which Hair Extensions are Right for You?

Our web editor put three common methods to the test.

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Every bride wants gorgeous wedding-day hair. While plenty of brides rock short hair (and look fabulous!), most recent brides we've asked told us they spent a year or more growing out their locks before the big day — and other brides took a shortcut and added hair extensions instead. But contrary to popular belief, extensions aren't just for adding length; they can also double or even triple your thickness. If you have thin hair (like me), growing it out doesn't automatically mean that it's going to look great on your wedding day. As you can see in my "before" picture below, my natural long hair looked like it needed a good six inches chopped off of it, despite getting regular trims while growing it. Length is no substitute for thickness!



In a quest to get celeb-status hair, I decided to test out the most common methods of hair extensions from one of the leading brands, [SHE by SO.CAP.U.S.A](#) (visit [socapusa.com](#) for more info, or call 877-855-4247 to schedule an appointment at one of the 10,000+ participating salons nationwide).



Here, a guide to the various methods:

Clip-in Extensions

Many brides opt for clip-ins because there's no commitment required; you just add in the clips when you want longer locks and remove them when you're done. SHE by SO.CAP.U.S.A has more than 90 different shades available, so it's easy to find a match for your hair color — and if you somehow can't find a perfect match, these human hair extensions can also be dyed.

To avoid applying them too high and having them visible, my stylist, Nadina Pitaro, shared this trick: Use the tail-end side of a comb and slide it underneath your hair at various points near the crown of your head. When you can see the tail through your hair, you've gone too high — your extensions will be seen through your hair, because there isn't enough on top to cover it.

Tip: Teasing your roots helps the extensions stay in place — it gives the clips something to grip. One caveat is that the extensions can feel heavy throughout the day, due to the metal combs used to hold them in place. But if you're looking for longer/thicker hair just for the wedding day, these are the perfect solution.

Time commitment: 30 minutes; your stylist will show you how to apply the extensions properly and ensure that the color is a perfect match.

Cost: \$399 and up.

Removal: Gently brush your hair to remove tangles; hold the hair near the root and brush starting from the bottom. Then, remove the clips starting with the piece nearest your crown, working your way down to the nape. Once removed, brush out the extensions, adding a little Argan oil to keep them looking healthy and shiny. Keep them stored in their box until your next use.

Tape-in Extensions

More permanent than clip-ins but not as long-lasting as strand-by-strand bonds, these are a good compromise for a bride who doesn't want to worry about applying extensions on the morning of her wedding. You can have tape-in extension added about two weeks before the big day, and they'll last you well through your honeymoon. Plus, the strands are reusable — your stylist will just need to apply more adhesive.





How it works: One-inch strips are added to your hair, sandwiching your real hair between two strips and using a heat tool to bond the pieces together. They're applied close to your root to prevent them from being visible — but if you feel tugging after application, speak up and your stylist can move the too-tight strand lower.

One drawback: If you have oily or very fine hair, these extensions may not work for you — two of my strips fell out within the first week of application. Most people can use tape-in extensions with no problems, though, so definitely talk to your stylist and get his or her opinion first.

Time commitment: About one hour.

Lasts: Four to six weeks.

Cost: Starting at \$600.

Removal: An alcohol solution is sprayed onto the bonds to quickly dissolve the adhesive.

Strand-by-Strand Bonded Extensions

The most permanent option, these extensions will last four to six months with proper maintenance. Small bunches of hair extensions are bonded to your natural hair using keratin and a heat tool. Your stylist will apply an average of 120 150 individual pieces to your hair, depending on your current thickness (I had about 90 in my hair)

Keep in mind, though, that regular maintenance appointments are required. You'll need to visit your salon every six weeks where any pieces that have fallen out will be replaced. Be honest with yourself about whether you're willing to make the additional time and money commitment. Although I'm not the type to visit a salon regularly, this was absolutely my favorite method tested. The extensions are virtually weightless; after a few days, you'll forget you're even wearing them. It did take a bit to get used to sleeping on them — you can feel the bonds when you lay down, and you'll need to sleep with your hair in a loose ponytail or braid to prevent tangles. My stylist Pitaro also recommended a special looper brush, which prevents snags.

Time commitment: About four hours for the initial application; two-week follow-up appointment, then maintenance appointments every six weeks.

Lasts: Four to six months.

Cost: Starting at \$800. You'll also need to buy additional hair for maintenance appointments (about \$100 for 1 pack).

Removal: An alcohol solution and a tool are used to break the bonds without damaging your natural hair. Extensions will also naturally fall out as our hair does (the average person loses 100 strands per day — so when all of the strands connected to a single bond fall, the bond will fall out with your natural hair)

