

# The Most Common Curling Iron Mistakes

And how to solve them, straight from the pro.



Getting the perfect curl is trickier than it sounds. Maybe you assume that the longer you keep your curling iron to your hair, the longer your curl will last (not so!). Or, perhaps you're holding your hot tool at the wrong angle. No matter the conundrum, there are plenty of reasons why your curling iron might be one of the most intimidating tools in your beauty cabinet. Whether your desired #hairgoals are curls, waves, or something in between, we talked to the hair pros on how to unravel the mysteries behind using this classic hot tool. Read on to discover the 12 curling iron mistakes you're definitely making — and exactly how to fix them to achieve dreamy hair days, *every* day.

**You're not considering your hot tools an investment.** "Invest in a high-quality curling iron with modern technology (like a digital temperature reader), instead of a cheap hairstyling tool," says My Hair Doctor founder Guy Parsons. "Not only will you need to replace a cheaper tool more often, but it also doesn't distribute heat evenly, so there can be 'hot spots' on the iron. These create damage to parts of your hair. With an analog heat setting, you won't know what temperature you're putting on your hair or where the hot spots are. With a digital reader, you get even heat distribution, so you're not frying certain parts of your strands."

**Your curling iron is the wrong size.** "Using a curling iron with a smaller circumference results in tight curls instead of loose waves. Opt for an iron that's perhaps 1¼" or 1½" — using a larger barrel will give you a looser wave, while using a smaller barrel will give you a tighter wave," says Guy.

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**You're hair isn't 100% dry.** "Even if your hair is just slightly damp, curling it could damage your strands," says Guy. "Finish it off with a blow-dryer and do a quick blast of the cool setting to make sure it's completely dry."

**Your tool is on the wrong heat setting.** For most hair types, staying around the 400 degree mark is a good rule of thumb. Finer hair types can go down 10-20 degrees, and denser, coarser hair types can dial it up a few degrees. Double-processed hair should stick to around 350 degrees and color-treated hair should use a lower temperature to extend the life of hair color. For natural

or textured hair, start off around 420 degrees and use a lower heat setting (375 degrees) for quick touchups.

**You're not using a heat protectant.** "The best way to keep your hair safe from damage is to always start with a heat protectant," says Guy. Try the My Hair Doctor D-Tangle & Style Spray ,it's heat activated and features anti-breakage technology to safeguard hair."

**You're curling in the wrong direction.** "If you're going for relaxed waves, you always want the curls to go away from your face," says Guy "When your hair is curled towards your face, it looks more like banana curls or vintage waves. Consider an iron that rotates in both directions like the Beachwaver, so that you can get a consistent wave on both sides."



**You're clamping the ends.** "If you want a more lived-in curl or wave, leave 1-2" of the ends of your hair out of the clamp. People often curl the ends, which gives you more of a traditional, formal look," says Guy.

**You're not holding it at the ideal angle.** "If you hold your iron horizontally, you will get a tighter, bouncier curl. Holding it vertically will give you a more trendy, beachy wave and holding it diagonally gives you more volume at the root," says Guy.

**You're holding the curling iron on hair for too long.** "Fine hair doesn't require as much time as coarse, thick hair. Try lightly tapping the hair while it's still wrapped around the iron; if it seems too hot to touch, you can release the hair. 10 seconds is a good rule of thumb for most hair types, with a little less time for fine hair,"

**You're not sectioning your hair.** "Bring all of your hair forward and section it from the bottom layer up. Use a strong, dent-free hair clip to make the sections clean and even. This will save you time and give you even curls all the way around the head," says Guy.

**You're curling too much hair at a time.** "Some people think that to get a loose wave, you need to take very large sections, but the type of wave you achieve is actually determined by the technique you use to curl. It's ideal to take 1" by 1" sections so that you create the structure and the curls last longer. If you want to soften the wave, you can run your fingers through the curls or brush them out once they cool,".

**You're not letting your curls cool before touching them.** "Always let the hair cool undisturbed. Once you release a curl from the iron, move on to the next section and let the last curl cool. Once you've completed

your whole head and the curls have had time to settle, you can arrange them," says Guy. "Gently picking up curls by the ends of the strands and loosely shaking them ensures a soft, natural look."