



Alopecia Ireland Wig Buyers Guide

Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow!

Losing your hair is an extremely stressful event, however by choosing the right wig you will become more comfortable with your hair loss. Most wigs, regardless of type and make, are very realistic looking and no one need ever know you are wearing one. In fact you may notice that people will even compliment you on your hairstyle without ever knowing the difference. The most important things to remember when choosing a wig is to make sure the hairstyle and colour suit you and that your wig is a good quality one.

Wigs

There are many different types of wigs, the main things you need to consider when choosing a wig are:

- Ready-made versus Custom-made
- Base/Cap Type
- Hair Type
- Hairline
- How the wig attaches to your head?!
- Wig Care

Ready-made versus Custom- made

Ready Made

Ready-made wigs are very popular and are the most widely available form of hair prosthesis. The cap is usually made in a 'regular' size with some wigs available in petite or large. The back of the cap usually consists of an adjustable elastic band and hooks and eyes (similar to those found on bra straps) which allow the wearer to create a comfortable fit. These wigs can be made with synthetic or human hair and are a very affordable form of hair replacement.

Custom Made/Vacuum Fit

Custom-made hair systems are an excellent option for those with total hair loss. A plaster mould is taken of your scalp and a perfect cap fit is achieved. This create what is known as a vacuum fit wig, where the cap of the wig forms a vacuum seal on the head, when ensures that the wig does not come off unless you take it off! However these wigs are expensive and can take up to four months to make.

Supplex/Duplex and Dermalite Wigs

These custom made wigs are less expensive than the suction wigs. The use human hair and have a transparent rim which moulds to the head holding it in place. These wigs are a great option but have been reported to get hot and sweaty as they do not breath.

Base/Cap Type

Most custom-made wigs have a cap made from a soft durable silicone material. However, ready-made wigs have a breathable net base and you have a choice as to which type of base you want to have.

Machine Made

Machine-made wigs are crafted on a special sewing machine, and are made of hair wefts attached to a pre-constructed base. They are also referred to as "cap less" because there is no mesh foundation to attach the hair to. Machine-made caps are the most durable. Machine-made synthetic wigs are low cost, easy to maintain and easily accessible.

Hand Tied

A hand-tied wig cap is a slightly stretchy mesh net on which hair, synthetic or human, is tied, or knotted, by hand into the mesh netting of the wig cap. These provide a more natural looking scalp and hairline.

Monofilament

The monofilament top wig cap is the most natural looking wig cap available. It is a combination cap, which allows for the natural scalp colour to show through, this gives the impression of an extremely natural looking head of hair. The hair is hand tied into the monofilament fabric and gives the illusion of hair growing out of the scalp. The entire wig may be hand tied, or the wig may have a monofilament top with wefted sides and back.

Hair Type

Synthetic

Synthetic hair wigs are very low maintenance, reasonably priced and are readily available. Synthetic wigs, however, do not have a very long life and tend to become frizzy and stiff. They cannot be exposed to extremes of heat i.e. hairdryers, curling tongs etc. as they will only frizzle. Synthetic works best with shorter styles as longer hair takes more wear and tear, thus shortening the life of your wig. Synthetic wigs are great if you don't want to spend much time styling your hair or if you wish to change your style/colour often.

Human Hair

Human hair wigs are great simply because they have a more natural appearance, movement and flow than synthetic hair. Human hair can be cut, styled, coloured or permed to suit you. Human hair does require a lot of care, however it is worth the hard work!

There are different types of human hair available, processed and unprocessed human hair. The processed human hair is usually of Indian, Chinese or Indonesian origin. This type of hair is chemically treated to make it appear more like unprocessed European hair and is the less expensive type of human hair.

Unprocessed human hair is usually of European origin and has a tangle free finish and requires less chemical styling. This is the most expensive type of human hair.

Blends

There are wigs available that are a mix of human and synthetic hair. These are less popular as they are deemed to have the worst properties of both hair types. They need to be styled, yet cannot have heated styling instruments used on them. They are difficult to manage and best avoided.

Hairline

The hairline is the most important aesthetic consideration when choosing a wig. Most ready-made wigs have at least a light wispy fringe to hide the hairline. However you can get ready-made wigs without a fringe, although these can sometimes look a little unnatural.

With custom-made vacuum wigs, you can have a very natural fringe-less hairline. In fact the hairline is almost imperceptible to the eye and the hair can be tied up in many fantastic hairstyles.

How the wig attaches to your head?!

Wig clips and combs

For people with partial hair loss, Clips are attached to the underside of the wig. Not recommended for those with fragile hair.

Tape

Double-sided adhesive strips, also available in a roll. The tape is comfortable, secure and easy to remove. The tape works best on bare skin. The wig must have tape tabs in order to give the tape something to hold onto (these may be on the wig already or can be added for you).

Vacuum Wigs

Vacuum wigs allow an airtight vacuum seal, without the need for tape.

Wig care

-washing your synthetic wig

Before washing, gently brush wig to remove tangles. Dilute wig shampoo in dish of cold water and gently soak for three to five minutes, and then gently dip up and down. Do not rub. Rinse thoroughly in cold water, and then pat out excess water with a towel. Do not brush or comb until thoroughly dry. Allow the wig to dry at room temperature, the original style of the synthetic hair

(straight or curly) will come back once wig is dry. Do not use a hair dryer, straightener, or curling iron. Avoid excessive heat, particularly from opening an oven door. Sudden bursts of heat will damage your wig. Also be careful about getting close to an open flame or gas burner.

-washing your human hair wig

Before washing, gently brush wig to remove tangles. Rinse hair in direction of hair. Gently wash with shampoo, rinsing thoroughly. Dilute conditioner in dish of water and dip ends of hair in. Rinse thoroughly. Allow the wig to dry naturally, using blow dryer may cause unnecessary frizzing. Once hair is completely dry, style as normal.

-storing your wig

It is best to keep your wig on a wig stand, in order to keep the shape of the wig and to prevent tangling. Wig stands are available in Styrofoam, hard plastic or folding stands for travel.

Whatever type of wig you decide to wear, you will look good as long as you feel comfortable and confident while wearing it!

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