CHAPTER 19

Wigs and Hair Additions

Chapter Outline

Why Study Wigs and Hair Additions?

Human versus Synthetic Hair

Wigs

Hairpieces

Hair Extensions

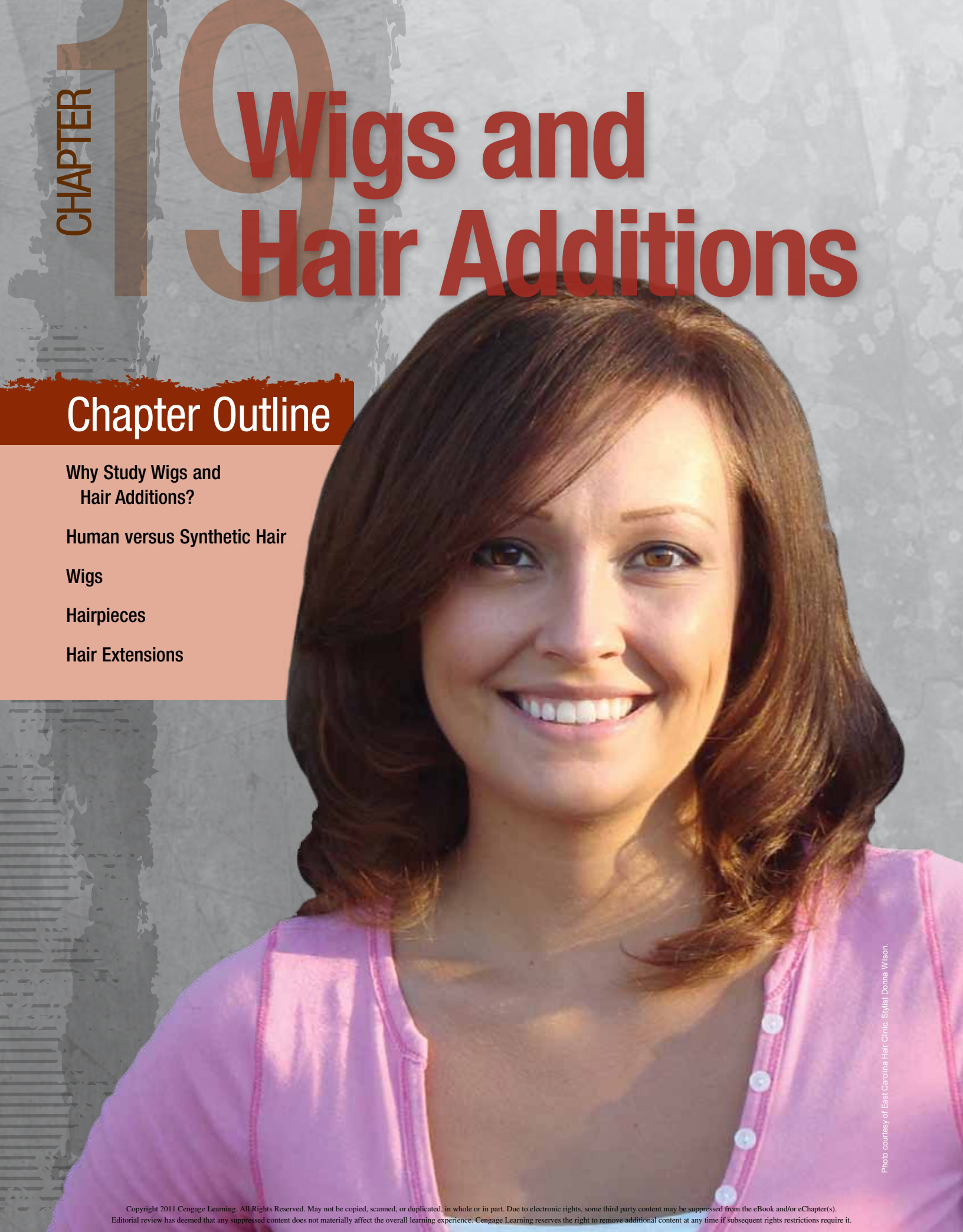

Photo courtesy of East Carolina Hair Clinic. Stylist Donna Wilson.

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Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- ☑ **LO1** Explain the differences between human hair and synthetic hair.
- ☑ **LO2** Describe the two basic categories of wigs.
- ☑ **LO3** Describe several types of hairpieces and their uses.
- ☑ **LO4** Explain several different methods of attaching hair extensions.

Key Terms

Page number indicates where in the chapter the term is used.

block
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bonding
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braid-and-sew method
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cap wigs
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capless wigs (caps)
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fallen hair
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fusion bonding
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From the beginning of recorded history, wigs have played an important role in the world of fashion. The ancient Egyptians shaved their heads with bronze razors and wore heavy black wigs to protect themselves from the sun. In ancient Rome, women wore wigs made from the prized blond hair of barbarians captured from the north. In eighteenth-century England, men wore wigs, called *perukes,* to indicate that they were in the army or navy, or engaged in the practice of law.

In today's fashion-conscious world, wigs and hair additions (a category that includes hairpieces and hair extensions) play an incredibly important role. Working with hair additions can be either a simple retail effort or a highly specialized field. Most clients buy wigs off-the-shelf or on the Internet, and rarely have them custom fitted anymore, although there are some opportunities for stylists to cut, color, and care for wigs. Toupees are often custom-made and fitted, using hair-type matches and a perfect mold or exact measurements of the head. Working with toupees takes years of specialized training, which is why much of the toupee business is found in hair replacement centers.

▲ **Figure 19–1**
Client before getting hair extensions.

Hair additions range from clip-on hairpieces that salons retail, such as ponytails, chignons, bangs, and even extensions, to elaborately applied extensions in which addition strands are attached individually. In the newest technique, single strands of hair are meticulously hand-tied onto individual strands of the client's hair. In any case, moving beyond clip-in hair additions requires specialized training (**Figures 19–1** and **19–2**).

Each hair extension manufacturer has its own attachment method, and normally you must take the manufacturer's class to be allowed to purchase that manufacturer's extensions. Inventory can be a hefty investment. Even carrying clip-on extensions requires stocking a range of styles and colors, but with every woman in Hollywood wearing them, the demand is high.

The income that hair addition services represent ranges from a small amount for a clip-on ponytail or bang to thousands of dollars for human-hair extensions that are fusion bonded strand-by-strand to the client's hair. Additionally, hair-loss clients and medical clients, such as cancer patients, have very particular needs for hair additions, which you can learn if you choose to specialize.

Because there are many options that require additional training, this chapter gives you a simple, basic overview of the many alternatives available in the world of hair additions. It is a gratifying and lucrative specialty open to any cosmetologist who furthers his or her education.

◀ **Figure 19–2**
The same client, transformed with clip-in extensions.

Courtesy of www.GarlandDrake.com. Photography by Dixie Dixon, Makeup by Kay Castro, Hairstyling by Tony Greenleaf, all for Garland Drake.

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WHY STUDY WIGS AND HAIR ADDITIONS?

Cosmetologists should study and have a thorough understanding of wigs and hair additions because:

- The market for products and services related to faux hair has expanded to every consumer group, from baby boomers with fine and thinning hair to young trendsetters.
- Hair extensions, additions, and customized wigs can be some of the most lucrative services in the salon.
- Each manufacturer has its own systems, but if you understand the fundamentals, you can easily work with any company on the market.
- The skills you develop will open many doors, from working behind the scenes on Broadway shows to working with celebrities, who today invariably wear faux hair.

did you know?

In 1989 the Cosmetic, Toiletry, and Fragrance Association (CTFA) founded the CTFA Foundation, a charitable organization, and established the Look Good . . . Feel Better program to help cancer patients deal with hair loss. For more information about working with or helping clients with hair loss due to illness, visit the Look Good . . . Feel Better Web site at http://www.lookgoodfeelbetter.org or call 1-800-395-LOOK.

Human versus Synthetic Hair

What is the fastest way to tell if a strand of hair is a synthetic product or real human hair? Pull the strand out of the wig or hairpiece and burn it with a match. Human hair will burn slowly, giving off a distinctive odor. A strand of synthetic fiber, on the other hand, will either ball up and melt, extinguishing itself (a characteristic of a synthetic like Kanekalon®), or it will continue to flame and burn out very quickly (typical of polyester). In either case, it will not give off an odor.

How can you determine whether real hair or synthetic hair is best for your client? Both have advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages of Human Hair

- More realistic appearance.
- Greater durability.
- Same styling and maintenance requirements as natural hair. Human hair can be custom colored and permed to suit the client, and it tolerates heat from a blowdryer, curling iron, or hot rollers (**Figure 19–3**).

Disadvantages of Human Hair

- Human hair reacts to the climate the way that natural hair does. Depending on what type of hair it is, it may frizz or lose its curl in humid weather.
- After shampooing, the hair needs to be reset. This can be a challenge for the client who intends to maintain the hair at home.
- The color will oxidize, meaning that it will fade with exposure to light.

Hair by Vivienne Mackinder. Photograph by Jill Wachter.

▲ **Figure 19–3**
Human hair additions can add a dramatic touch.

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Hair by Vivienne Mackinder. Photograph by Jill Wachter.

▲ **Figure 19–4**
Synthetic additions can be whimsical.

- The hair will break and split if mistreated by harsh brushing, backcombing, or excessive use of heat.

Advantages of Synthetic Hair

- Over the years, the technology used to produce synthetic fibers has greatly improved. Wigs, hairpieces, and extensions made of modacrylic are particularly strong and durable. Top-of-the-line synthetics like Kanekalon®, a modacrylic fiber, simulate protein-rich hair, with a natural, lustrous look and feel. These synthetics are so realistic they can even fool stylists (**Figure 19–4**).
- Synthetic hair is a great value. Not only is it very realistic, but it is less expensive than human hair. Both style and texture are set into the hair. Ready-to-wear synthetic hair is very easy for the client to maintain at home. Shampooing in cold water will not change the style, nor will exposure to extreme humidity.
- Most synthetic wigs, hairpieces, and extensions are cut according to the latest styles with the cut, color, and texture already set, so all that is required is some detailing, custom trimming, or attachment of the extensions.
- The colors are limitless, ranging from natural to wild fantasy shades. Price is a factor when it comes to color and texture. The cheaper synthetic wigs and hair additions tend to be more solid in color (less tone-on-tone) and the fiber is coarser (polyester based). The higher-end products are a mix of many shades, containing highlights and lowlights for a natural effect.
- Synthetic colors will not fade or oxidize, even when exposed to long periods in the sun.

Disadvantages of Synthetic Hair

- Synthetic hair cannot be exposed to extreme heat (curling irons, hot rollers, or the high heat of blowdryers). However, some synthetic hair is coated with a protein base and can tolerate low heat (lower than 390 degrees Fahrenheit or 200 degrees Celsius). Always check with the manufacturer and perform a test strand on a small section of the actual synthetic piece.
  - Coloring synthetic fibers is not recommended because traditional haircolor will not work on them.
    - Sometimes synthetic hair is so shiny that it may not look natural. Also, if the hair is thick, it will look unnatural on a fine-haired client.
      - Price often has a lot to do with how natural synthetic hair looks. In other words, the most natural-looking synthetic pieces can be expensive. ☑ LO1

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Quality and Cost

There are pros and cons for both human hair and synthetic hair. The bottom line in both cases is that you get what you pay for.

Ultimately, your success in working with any hair addition will be determined by the quality of the product itself. Do not be fooled by imitations. Inexpensive wigs, hairpieces, and extensions may be great for fun moments or to practice cutting on, but in other situations they can look tacky and unattractive.

The more expensive wigs, hairpieces, and extensions are those made of human hair. Pricing varies as follows:

- European hair is at the top of the line. Virgin hair is the most costly; color-treated hair is second in cost.
- Hair from India and Asia, the two regions that provide most of the human hair commercially available, are next in cost. Indian hair is usually available in lengths from 12 inches to 16 inches. Asian hair is available in lengths of 12 inches to 28 inches. Indian hair is usually wavy; Asian hair is usually straight.
- Human hair mixed with animal hair is next in expense. The animal hair may be angora, horse, yak, or sheep. Yak hair is taken from the animal's belly and is the purest of whites. Its natural color lends itself to adding fantasy colors, which attract teenagers. Mixed-hair products are often used in theatrical or fashion settings.
- Human hair mixed with synthetic hair finishes the list. The mix is often half human hair and half synthetic hair. These wigs and hairpieces blend the advantages and disadvantages of both, and can be a good option if chosen in the best color and texture for the client.

There are several important questions to ask when selecting a hair addition for the client:

- Is the addition made of human hair, animal hair, a mix of both, or is it synthetic or a synthetic blend?
- Is the hair colored, or in its natural state (virgin hair)?
- If the hair is human hair, is it graded in terms of strength, elasticity, and porosity?
- Is the cuticle intact? Cuticle-intact hair is more expensive, because the hair has been turned. **Turned hair,** also known as **Remi hair,** is hair in which the root end of every single strand is sewn into the base, so that the cuticles of all hair strands move in the same direction: down. The hair is in better condition, and it is much easier to work with because it doesn't tangle easily. Turning is a tedious, time-consuming process that increases the cost of the hair addition.

FOCUS ON

COST

To the average consumer, the deals at the local beauty supply store may look good. But that apparent deal could be a mix of animal hair and human hair, and one washing could mat the wig into a big ball. The most realistic hair additions, such as those used in film work, cost thousands of dollars. Your client will not necessarily need something of this grade, but you must still pay attention to quality. As a professional, you must educate your client and recommend only well-made products. Remember, when you recommend a product, you put your reputation on the line.

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- Is it **fallen hair** (the opposite of Remi hair), hair that has been shed from the head and gathered from a hairbrush, as opposed to hair that has been cut? Fallen hair is not turned, so the cuticles of the strands will move in different directions. This makes it tangle. In what is called Remi refined hair, the cuticle is partially removed, so that it will not lock and mat. This hair tends to be less expensive than Remi hair.
- Is the hair tangle-free? If the cuticle has been removed, this often means you cannot condition the hair, because it will tend to mat.
- What is the condition of the hair? Has it been bleached? Can it be colored? Has it been colored with metallic dye?
- Will the hair match the client's hair? Is it similar in type and texture? Is the color-match close enough?
- Can the hair be permed?
- If the client is going to maintain her hair at home, will the hair addition last a reasonable amount of time? (Additions should last four to six months in continual use.)

Wigs

A **wig** can be defined as an artificial covering for the head consisting of a network of interwoven hair. When a client wears a wig, the client's hair is completely concealed (100 percent coverage). If a hair addition does not fully cover the head, it is either a **hairpiece,** which is a small wig used to cover the top or crown of the head, or a hair attachment of some sort (**Figure 19–5**).

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▲ **Figure 19–5**
Wigs and hairpieces come in a wide range of styles and colors.

Types of Wigs

There are two basic categories of wigs: cap and capless.

Cap wigs are constructed with an elasticized, mesh-fiber base to which the hair is attached. They are made in several sizes and require special fittings. More often than not, cap wigs are hand-knotted. The front edge of a cap wig is made of a material that resembles the client's scalp, along with a lace extension and a wire support that is used at the temples for a snug, secure fit. Hair is hand-tied under the net (under-knotted) to conceal the cap edge. The side and back edges contain wire supports, elastic, and hooks for a secure fit. Latex molded cap wigs are also available; these are prostheses for clients with special needs.

Capless wigs, also known as **caps**, are machine-made from human or artificial hair. The hair is woven into **wefts,** which are long strips of hair with a threaded edge. Rows of wefts are sewn to elastic strips in a circular pattern to fit the head shape. Capless wigs are more popular than cap wigs as they are ready-to-wear and less expensive.

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The capless wig is a frame of connected wefts with open areas. To understand the construction of a capless wig, compare a nylon stocking to a fishnet stocking: one has a closed framework (the cap wig), and the other is open (capless). Due to their construction and airiness, capless wigs are extremely light and comfortable to wear (**Figure 19–6**).

In general, capless wigs are healthier, because they allow the scalp to breathe and because they prevent excess perspiration. A cap wig is best for clients with extremely thin hair and for clients with no hair because capless wigs will allow a bald scalp to show through. There are many new innovations that make wigs more comfortable and practical than ever, like lace front wigs, which have an incredibly natural-looking hairline. Today's wigs are so well designed and fashionable that many are bought off-the-shelf for immediate wear. LO2

Methods of Construction

- **Hand-tied wigs,** also known as **hand-knotted wigs**, are made by inserting individual strands of hair into mesh foundations and knotting them with a needle. Hand-tying is done particularly around the front hairline and at the top of the head. These wigs have a natural, realistic look and are wonderful for styling. The hand-tied method most closely resembles actual human hair growth, with flexibility at the roots. There is no definite direction to the hair, and it can be combed in almost any direction.
- **Semi-hand-tied wigs** are constructed with a combination of synthetic hair and hand-tied human hair. Reasonably priced, they offer a natural appearance and good durability.
- **Machine-made wigs,** the least expensive option, are made by feeding wefts through a sewing machine, then stitching them together to form the base and shape of the wig. They have the disadvantage of the wefting direction, which restricts styling options. Another favorable characteristic of these wigs is their bounce-back quality; even after shampooing, the style returns.

It is important to be aware of the artificial growth patterns of a wig. Wig construction will determine the direction in which you style the hair. The most flexible and versatile of all patterns is the hand-tied wig. Machine-made wigs are sewn in a specific direction, offering no versatility. If the client likes the style, this is a good thing; if not, the wig is not right for the client.

Taking Wig Measurements

In recent years, working with wigs has become a specialty among salon professionals. As a result, salons have become less and less likely to carry an inventory of wigs, or even to carry a wig catalogue. However, it is advantageous to have a basic understanding of wigs. Here is an overview: The creation of a custom-made wig begins with taking the client's measurements. Use a soft tape measure, keeping it close to the head

FOCUS ON

CLIENT CARE

Although many clients wear wigs for fun and versatility, others have experienced hair loss due to a serious illness or treatments such as chemotherapy. Be attuned to your client's emotional state about his or her well-being, and be sensitive to the possibility that some clients will need a private consultation.

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▲ **Figure 19–6**
A capless wig.

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without pressure. Always keep a written record of the client's head measurements, and forward a copy to the wig dealer or manufacturer. Each manufacturer has its own form to fill out, which notes the measurements required. Most manufacturers ask for precise specifications of hair shade, quality of hair, length of hair, and type of hair part and pattern. Higher-end companies ask you to include a sample of the client's hair with the order.

If the wig is ready-to-wear, no measuring will be needed because it can be adjusted by tightening or loosening the straps or the elastic in the nape. Ready-to-wear wigs are more common today. But still, many wigs need to be adjusted to the head and custom styled or trimmed to suit the client.

Blocking the Wig

A **block** is a head-shaped form, usually made of canvas-covered cork or Styrofoam, on which the wig is secured for fitting, coloring, and sometimes styling. Canvas blocks are available in six sizes, from 20 inches (50 centimeters) to 22 inches (56.25 centimeters). The block is best attached to your work area with a swivel clamp, which allows for greater control. However, today most wigs are cut and finished while on the client, and then cleaned and stored on a drying rack. A block is best used for practicing on a wig.

Putting on the Wig

One of the most important steps in the wig service is instructing the client on how to put on the wig. Start by educating the client on the correct method for preparing her hair. The client's skill at securing her hair under the wig cap and making it flat and even will determine how well the wig sits on her head. If the wig does not fit properly—for instance if it is too large and does not have tightening straps or elastic—you can create a small fold or tuck and sew the wig along the inside to create a seam. To shorten the wig from front to nape and remove bulk, create a horizontal tuck or fold across the back. To remove width at the back, create a vertical tuck and sew it in place. Keep in mind that sewing the wig to create a customized fit is a highly specialized art.

Cutting Wigs

When cutting a wig, generally your goal is to make the hair look more realistic. As you know, natural hair has many lengths. Even when hair is cut to one length, internally there are various stages of hair growth. Hair that is one-month old and hair that is years-old exist on the same head. The stylist should try to achieve this natural look in the wig. The most effective way to do this is to taper the ends when cutting the wig. The more solid the shape, the more unnatural the hair will look.

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When cutting and trimming wigs, you can follow the basic methods of haircutting—blunt, layered, and graduated—using the same sectioning and elevations as on a real head of hair. Or you may do what many top stylists prefer to do, which is to cut free-form on dry hair. The wig should be placed on the block for cutting, but the comb out and finishing should be done on the client's head.

If you use free-form cutting, always work toward the weight. Vertical sections create lightness. Diagonal sections create a rounder beveled edge. Horizontal sections build heavier weight (**Figures 19–7** to **19–9**).

To use this visual approach, begin by cutting a small section and observe how the hair falls. Your next step will be based on how the hair responds.

Draw a diagram of the silhouette or have handy a photo image for reference. These will work as a kind of blueprint for you to follow.

Free-form cutting is usually done on dry hair, which allows you to see more easily how the hair will fall. When the hair is wet, it can be hard to judge how the hair will fall.

To practice wig cutting, buy two inexpensive ready-to-wear wigs in the same style. Take a photo for reference purposes. Draw a diagram of the sections, indicating how you are going to cut the wigs. This way, you can rehearse your plan before even picking up the shears.

Begin your practice with the shadow cut. Trim the wigs following the original design that has been precut into the wig, but cut the first wig wet. Then air-dry it and evaluate the style. Trim the second wig, following the same style, but this time cut it dry. Take photos of both results, and evaluate the looks you have achieved with both dry and wet cutting.

You will discover that the wet cutting method was more controlled and technical, while the dry cutting method was freer and more abstract. Often, the more abstract method results in a cut that looks more realistic.

Repeat the above exercise with a razor, thinning shears, and standard haircutting shears using the tapering method only. Compare the results.

▲ **Figure 19–7**
Free-form cutting with vertical sections.

▲ **Figure 19–8**
Free-form cutting with diagonal sections.

▲ **Figure 19–9**
Free-form cutting with horizontal sections.

Styling the Wig

The important thing to remember when you are styling a wig is that you must never lose sight of the big picture. Some stylists get overly involved in the wig, as if it is a creation that exists apart from the client. This is the wrong approach. A great stylist works with the total person, not just the head. When you have finished styling the wig, step back and ask the client to stand up and walk around so that you can check for balance and proportion and make corrections accordingly.

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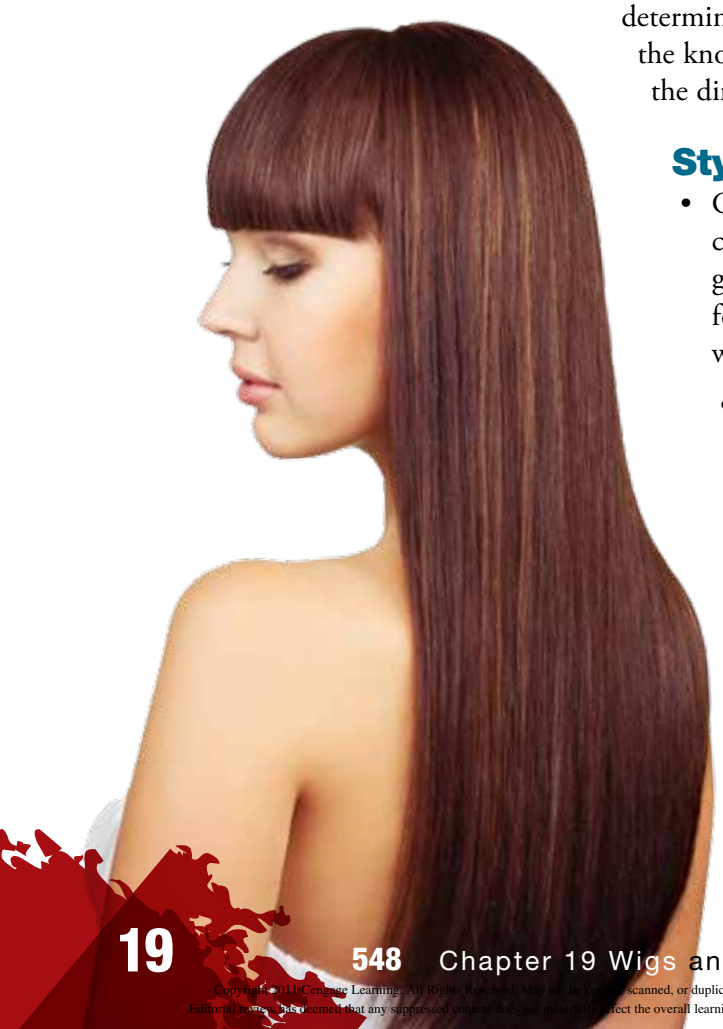
Most of the hair you will be working with is chemically treated, so it needs to be handled gently. You will achieve the best styling results by following these guidelines:

- When using heat on human hair, always set the styling tool on low.
- Treat the hair gently; do not pull it or otherwise treat it carelessly.
- Traditionally, brushes made with natural boar bristles have been regarded as best for use on human hair. The brush's soft bristles are preferable to sharp-edged synthetic bristles, which can damage hair. Today, however, you will find many synthetic brushes that have smooth, rounded plastic teeth, more like combs, and they are excellent and economical choices. Keep in mind that the key with any brush or comb is to be gentle because hair can be easily damaged.

Use a block when necessary for coloring, perming, setting, and basic cut outlining. The comb-out and finishing touches for most modern cuts should be completed on the client's head in order to achieve proper balance and personalization (**Figure 19–10**).

Remember that most clients come into the salon looking for a natural look. Making a wig look believable is very challenging, and to do it well is truly an art form. The areas that must appear the most convincing are the crown, the part, and the hairline. Sometimes, crowns and parts look more natural when they are flat to the head; other times a more natural look is attained by adding volume to these areas. This will be determined by the style. A general rule is to follow the direction of the knotting and weave, as preset by the wig maker. If you fight the direction, the results may look odd.

▼ **Figure 19–10**
A natural-looking style.



Styling Tips for the Hairline

- Choose styling products that have been formulated for color-treated hair. These will work the best, and they are gentlest to human hair. There are also specialized products for wigs. Just remember that whatever you put into the hair will eventually have to be shampooed out.
- If the wig does not have a natural-looking hairline or a lace front, backcomb gently around the hairline. The fluffy effect softens the hairline.
- Release the client's hair around the hairline, and cut and blend it into the wig hair.
- The best test to gauge how realistic the wig looks is to use the wind test. This test simulates the wind blowing the client's hair away from her face. Gently blow around the client's face with a blowdryer set at cool and low. Observe how the hairline looks. Does it seem realistic? If so, point out the results to the

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client, who may be feeling insecure about whether the wig looks natural enough (**Figure 19–11**).

When styling a wig, do not try to make it look perfect. Little imperfections help achieve a realistic look. Use your hands rather than a brush for a more natural look (**Figure 19–12**). Do not plaster the hair down, because it will look artificial.

Cleaning the Wig

Clients who bought off-the-shelf wigs may bring them to a salon for cleaning, reshaping, and styling. To clean any wig, always follow the manufacturer's instructions. If shampooing is recommended, use a gentle shampoo, such as one you would use for color-treated hair, or use shampoo specially developed for wigs. Avoid any harsh shampoos with a sulfur base, such as dandruff shampoos. Soak, then gently squeeze the wig and use a drying rack for drying. If you are cleaning a wig made of human hair, you should also condition it.

Coloring Wigs and Hair Additions

All synthetic haircolors used for wigs and hairpieces are standardized according to the 70 colors on the haircolor ring used by wig and hairpiece manufacturers. The colors range from black to pale blond. Because most commercially available hair originates in either India or China, the most common natural color level is 1, or black. It is very difficult to lift level 1 to level 10. (See Chapter 21, Haircoloring, for a discussion of hair color levels.) At the other end of the spectrum is white yak hair, which is an excellent base for adding color. Yak hair is especially good to use with fantasy colors that appeal to some younger clients.

If you are going to custom color the hair, use hair that has been decolorized (bleached) through the lifting process, not with metallic dyes. Be sure to check with the manufacturer.

The principles that guide the coloring of natural hair also apply to the art of coloring wigs and hair extensions. As in all disciplines, you must first learn the rules before you break them. Good colorists are not afraid to make mistakes, because they have worked hard to learn the basics and know how to correct mistakes.

When coloring a wig, first check to see if the cuticle is intact. Hair in which the cuticle is absent is very porous and will react to color in an extreme manner. Always strand-test the hair prior to a full-color application. Use semipermanent, demipermanent, glaze, rinse, or color mousse products. Use permanent haircolor on human hair wigs unless the hair is porous, in which case semipermanent color is the better choice. (See Chapter 21, Haircoloring, for more detail.)

When coloring a human-hair wig or hair addition, conduct regular color checks every five to ten minutes. Remember that the hair you are working on did not come from one head, but from many different

▲ **Figure 19–11**
The wind test.

▲ **Figure 19–12**
Style with the fingers for a natural look.

CAUTION

Harsh handling will damage wig hair, and—unlike hair on the human head—wig hair will not grow back. If you treat a wig carelessly, it will have a short life, so remember to be gentle.

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Working with wigs and toupees requires special tools, many of which are sold by the wig manufacturers. Special tools needed for wigs include the following:

- Boar-Bristle Brush
- Cloth Measuring Tape
- Duckbill Clips
- Hair and Bobby Pins
- Neck Strip
- Specialized Needle and Thread
- Specialized Shampoos and Conditioners for Wigs
- T-shaped Pins
- Wig Block
- Wig Caps

Special tools needed for toupees include the following:

- Block
- Clips
- Specialized Adhesive
- Specialized Needle and Thread
- Specialized Shampoos and Conditioners
- Specialized Tape
- T-shaped Pins

heads, so it may be unpredictable. Often, it is easier to color the client's hair to match a hair addition than to color the addition itself.

Perming Wigs and Hair Additions

If you want to perm human hair to match the client's natural wave pattern, you need to know how the hair was colored. Was it decolorized (bleached) or dyed with metallic dye? Do not perm hair that has been colored with a metallic dye.

The permanent wave must be performed with the hair additions off the client's head. For wigs and hairpieces, cover the head form with plastic to protect it from the chemical solutions, pin the wig securely to the head form, and perm as you would a natural head of hair. Perm extensions as they lie flat. (See Chapter 20, Chemical Texture Services, for perming procedures.)

Hairpieces

In eighteenth-century France, women wore towering hairdos complete with extensions and various apparatuses such as springs to adjust the height. Some of these coiffures were 3-feet high and had elaborate visual elements worked into them such as model ships or gardens. These styles were often untouched for weeks at a time. The bad news is that they sometimes attracted vermin. The moral of this story is that sometimes it is best not to get swept up in current trends or passing fashions. Always be aware of the strength of classic design. Keep it simple, remembering that less is more, and try not to let yourself get carried away.

Hairpieces are an important area of hair additions (**Figure 19–13**). They sit on top of the client's head, covering a portion of it, or clip onto another area, such as the nape. They are usually attached by temporary methods. (They are not worn during sleep.) Some, like wiglets that conceal a thinning top, can also be attached with a braid-and-sew technique.

There are many different types of hairpieces, including integration pieces (which are attached with a semipermanent method), toupees (which can be complex and challenging to work with), and fashion hairpieces. Fashion hairpieces include falls, half wigs (falls on a cap that attaches with combs an inch or so behind the hairline and can be used with a headband or with the natural hair combed straight back to conceal the attachment site), wiglets, chignons, bandeaus (falls with a headband attached), cascades (clip-on top curls), ponytails, bangs, and fillers (which add volume to fine hair). Many of the newest fashion

Photography from the Gabor Collection, supplied by Eva Gabor International.

▲ Figure 19–13
Hairpieces can look very natural.

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hairpieces simply clip on with pressure-sensitive clips, claw clips, or combs. Here, only the major types are covered, to give you a general overview. Working with hair additions and hair replacement systems is a specialized art, and many manufacturers have their own attachment systems and training.

The client's hair can be prepared in a number of ways before the hairpiece is attached. It can be tied into a ponytail or bun or twisted into a French twist. It can be blended with the hairpiece or serve as a base for it.

Integration Hairpieces

An **integration hairpiece** is a hairpiece that has openings in the base, through which the client's own hair is pulled to blend with the (natural or synthetic) hair of the hairpiece. These hairpieces are very lightweight, natural-looking products that add length and volume to the client's hair. If your client is wearing hair extensions and would like a change, the integration hairpiece can be a good alternative. It is also recommended for clients with thinning hair, but not for those with total hair loss, as the scalp is likely to show through (**Figures 19–14** and **19–15**).

▲ **Figure 19–14**
Integration hairpiece.

▲ **Figure 19–15**
An integration hairpiece is easy to wear.

Toupees

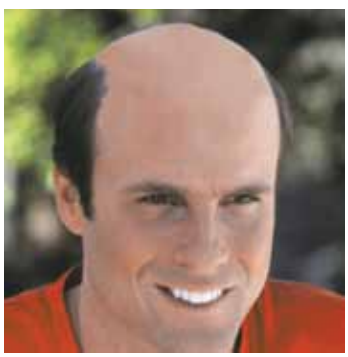
While men usually are the clients for toupees, women can also wear these hairpieces. A **toupee** is a small wig used to cover the top and crown of the head. The fine-net base is usually the most appropriate material for the client with severe hair loss. There are two ways to attach toupees: temporary (tape or clips) or semipermanent (tracks, adhesive, or sewing).

Most wearers of toupees prize the confidence gained from wearing an authentic-looking hairpiece and are prepared to pay a high price for it. The best toupees are custom designed. The top manufacturers offer in-depth instruction for those interested in learning this specialty service (**Figures 19–16** and **19–17**).

Fashion Hairpieces

Fashion hairpieces are a great salon product for special occasions or for use as fashion accessories. They include ponytails, chignons, cascades, streaks, bangs, falls/half wigs, and clip-in hair extensions.

These hairpieces vary in size and usually are constructed on a stiff net base. They are attached, temporarily, with hairpins, clips, combs, bobby pins, or elastic. Three of these attachment methods are illustrated here.



▲ **Figure 19–16**
Male hair-enhancement client.

▲ **Figure 19–17**
The same client fitted with a toupee.

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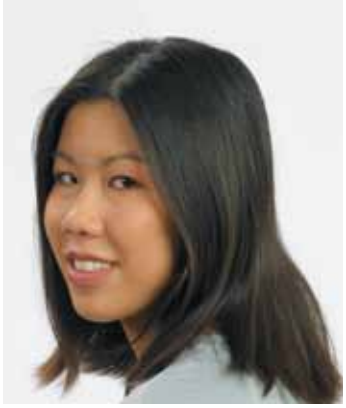

▲ Figure 19–18
Client before fitting with a wraparound ponytail.

- The wraparound ponytail is a long length of wefted hair that covers 10 to 20 percent of the head. It is used as a simple ponytail or in chignons. It is particularly useful for the client who can just get her own hair into a ponytail (**Figures 19–18** to **19–22**).
- A cascade of curls is attached with combs (**Figures 19–23** to **19–27**).
- A hair wrap is mounted on an elastic loop. It is further secured to the client's own hair with hairpins (**Figures 19–28** to **Figure 19–31**).

LO3

▲ Figure 19–19
Client's own ponytail.

▲ Figure 19–20
Attaching the hairpiece.

▲ Figure 19–21
Wrapping the band around the ponytail base.

▲ Figure 19–22
Same client with a new, much longer ponytail.

▲ Figure 19–23
Client before fitting with comb-attached curls.

▲ Figure 19–24
Brushing the client's hair into a ponytail.

▲ Figure 19–25
Attaching the combs.

▲ Figure 19–26
Adjusting the hairpiece.

▲ Figure 19–27
Cascade of curls.

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▲ Figure 19–28
Client before fitting with a hair wrap.

▲ Figure 19–29
Brushing client's hair into a ponytail.

▲ Figure 19–30
Securing the hairpiece with hairpins.

Hair Extensions

Hair extensions are hair additions that are secured to the base of the client's natural hair in order to add length, volume, texture, or color. Extensions can be human hair, synthetic hair, or a blend of the two. They are either wefts of hair or strands (small bundles of hair); the latter are attached one-by-one and are usually pre-bonded or keratin-tipped. Unless they are clip-in extensions, they are applied with semipermanent attachment methods.

Hair extensions represent an increasingly popular salon service, not only for clients who are looking for something different but also for those who have naturally fine hair or who suffer from hair loss. Hair extensions are extremely popular among celebrities, who never seem to have thin hair and who seem to magically grow their hair long overnight.

Manufacturers generally offer their own method of training in the attachment of hair extensions, but there are certain general guidelines to keep in mind:

- Start by deciding whether you are adding length, thickness, or both.
- Know which final style you are striving to achieve, and map it out. Sketch or visualize a placement pattern.
- As a general rule of thumb, stay 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) away from the hairline at the front, sides, and nape, and 1 inch away from the part.
- With very thin hair, you must be careful that the base does not show through.
- Curly hair tends to expand and can give the illusion of being thicker than it really is. When working with curly hair, you will need to

▲ Figure 19–31
An easy, dressed-up look.

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FOCUS ON

SHARPENING YOUR SKILLS

In order to achieve a natural look, it is crucial that you blend the client's hair with the hairpiece. You must match both the color and the wave pattern. If the client has naturally wavy hair, it is wise to find a hairpiece with a wave pattern that matches the client's. To match the color, use the color ring. Most hairpieces come in many colors, so it is relatively easy to match to the client's hair. You cannot color a synthetic hairpiece, so any custom coloring to achieve a match must be performed on the client's hair.

determine whether you are matching the curl or whether you wish to add another curl pattern to the hair.

- Straight thin hair and curly thin hair may have similar density, but curly hair will appear thicker. This means you may not need to put as many extensions in curly hair as in straight hair.

As you now know, there are many different ways to attach hair additions. When it comes to extensions, methods include braid-and-sew, simple bonding (also known as *fusion bonding*), linking, and tube shrinking.

The most important professional approaches to hair addition and extension services should be practiced—always in the following order:

1. Safety for the client's own hair.
2. Comfort—there should be no pulling or pinching; avoid excess tension on the natural hair.
3. Security—make certain the additions will not fall off. If they are attached with a semipermanent method such as braid-and-sew, bonding, or fusion bonding be certain that they will last several weeks before they are removed or require readjustment to accommodate the natural hair's growth.
4. Style and fashion.

Braid-and-Sew Attachment Method

In the **braid-and-sew method,** hair extensions are secured to client's own hair by sewing braids or a weft onto an on-the-scalp braid or cornrow, which is sometimes called the track (**Figure 19–32**). The wefts can also be attached by creating a track, using fiber filler. The filler and hair from the scalp are braided together, using an underhand braiding technique. The filler helps grip the client's own hair and creates a longer-lasting braid, to which you attach the weft. The angle of the track determines how the hair will fall. You may position braids or tracks horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or along curved lines that follow the contours of the head. The braid-and-sew method can also be used to attach hairpieces.

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▲ **Figure 19–32**
Cornrow braid.

Partings are determined according to the style you have chosen. The size of the sections is determined by the amount of hair that will be added to the head. Plan the tracks or braids so that the ends will be hidden. It is best to position them 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) behind the hairline to ensure proper coverage.

When sewing on the extension, use only a blunt, custom-designed needle, either straight or curved. These blunt ends will help avoid damage to the hair and will protect you and the client as well. Extensions can be sewn to the track using a variety of stitches.

- **Lock stitch.** Cut a length of thread that is double the length of the weft being sewn. Pass the needle through the weft to connect

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▲ Figure 19–33
Sew weft to braid.

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▲ Figure 19–34
Wrap thread around needle.

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▲ Figure 19–35
Form lock stitch.

it to the track (**Figure 19–33**). Pull the thread through to create a loop. Pass the needle though the loop and wrap the thread around the needle (**Figure 19–34**). Pull the loop tight to form a lock stitch to secure the ends of the weft to the track (**Figure 19–35**). This stitch can also be used over the entire length of the track in evenly spaced stitches.

- **Double-lock stitch.** This stitch is much like the lock stitch, but the thread is wound around the needle twice to create the double lock. It is used in the same ways as the lock stitch.
- **Overcast stitch.** This simple, quick stitch can be used to secure the entire length of the weft to the track. Pass the needle under both the track and the weft, and then bring it back over to make a new stitch (**Figure 19–36**). Moving along the track, repeat the stitch until you reach the end of the track. Complete with a lock stitch for security (**Figure 19–37**).

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▲ Figure 19–36
Finished overcast stitches.

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▲ Figure 19–37
Completed line of overcast stitching.

Advantages of the braid-and-sew method include the fact that, if done correctly, it is a very safe technique (**Figures 19–38** and **19–39**).

It requires no special equipment, and with practice, you can do it fairly quickly. Drawbacks include the fact that if there is too much tension on the braid, the client's real hair can be damaged. Also, this technique is not appropriate for clients who have extremely damaged hair, clients who have baby-fine hair (because breakage can occur), or clients who don't keep their scalps clean.

Courtesy of www.GarlandDrake.com. Photography by Raymond Drake.

▶ Figure 19–38
Before braid-and-sew extensions.

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▶ Figure 19–39
After braid-and-sew extensions.

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Bonding Method

In the **bonding** method of attaching hair extensions, hair wefts or single strands are attached with an adhesive or bonding agent. The adhesive is applied to the weft with an applicator gun. This gun is not like those available in crafts stores; it is a tool created specifically for bonding.

For bonding, the natural hair should be at least 4-inches long. Bonded hair sits snugly on the head, and is fast to apply. There is, however, a certain degree of slippage. Generally, the bonding product lasts from two to four weeks, depending on factors such as the frequency of shampooing, the oiliness or dryness of the scalp, and the quality of the products used. This means that the client will need to be on a maintenance program that requires salon visits as often as every two weeks.

The bonding procedure generally begins by sectioning off the hair at the nape. Measure the first weft against the parting, ¼ inch to ½ inch (0.6 to 1.25 centimeters) from the hairline (**Figure 19–40**). Lay the weft on a flat surface and carefully apply adhesive along the base (**Figure 19–41**). Use a consistent amount of adhesive—too much will ooze on the head, and too little will fail to adhere. Lightly press the weft against the clean parting (**Figure 19–42**). Hold for approximately twenty seconds, gently tugging to make sure that the weft has adhered. (You may use a blowdryer, set on low to medium heat, to help seal the bond.) Proceed to the next section, working upward on the head, until the desired length and volume are achieved.

Care must be taken when bonding to avoid working too close to the crown and the parting, or the weft will show through. Working 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) away from the hairline will also keep the wefts from showing. Remember that hair is not a static material; it has a natural swing, and it moves. When the wind blows, it should be the hairline that shows, not the wefts.

▲ Figure 19–40
Measure weft against parting.

▲ Figure 19–41
Apply adhesive to base of weft.

▲ Figure 19–42
Press weft to parting.

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Bonded wefts are removed by dissolving the adhesive bond with oil or bond remover. The same technique can be used with loose hair or wefts that are cut into very small sections. This is called strand bonding.

Two advantages of bonding are that it can be offered at a very affordable price and the service does not take much longer than the average haircut appointment. Also, the client can shampoo with the wefts in, as long as it is done gently. One drawback of bonding is that some clients may have an allergic reaction to the ingredients in the bonding adhesive. Always perform a patch test prior to the application of bonded extensions, especially when using a latex-based adhesive. Also, bonding is not appropriate for clients who have severely damaged hair, or those who do not have enough natural hair to hide the wefts. The wefts cannot be exposed to oils or they will slide off. In general, bonding should *not* be used to attach wefts that are longer than 12 inches to avoid excessive heaviness and the possibility of pulling on the client's natural hair and scalp.

Fusion Bonding Method

In the **fusion bonding** method of attaching extensions, extension hair is bonded to the client's own hair with a bonding material that is activated by the heat from a special tool. This method, while expensive and extremely time-consuming, harmonizes with the client's natural hair with no uncomfortable or unattractive attachment sites. The bonds are light and comfortable to wear, the hair moves like real hair, and the hair is easy to maintain (**Figures 19–43** and **19–44**). The attachment lasts up to four months, almost twice as long as other methods. Removal is quick and painless. The fusion method requires certification training, because it is manufacturer specific.

Some fusion-bonding procedures involve wrapping a keratin-based strip around both the client's hair and the extension or applying the bond to the extension first with a special gun-applicator. Today, many of the extensions or addition strands are pre-tipped or keratin-tipped. In fusion bonding, natural strands along a parting are selected and then isolated with a hair shield (**Figure 19–45**).

▲ **Figure 19–43**
Before fusion bonding.

▲ **Figure 19–44**
Fusion-bonded extensions.

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▲ Figure 19–45
Select strands.

▲ Figure 19–46
Position pre-tipped strand with natural hair.

▲ Figure 19–47
Apply heating tool to bond.

The extension strand is positioned under the natural hair and near the base (**Figure 19–46**).

The heating element is applied until the bonding agent on the pre-tipped strand has softened (**Figure 19–47**).

Then bond is rolled between the fingers, creating a bead that captures and holds both the natural hair and the extension strand (**Figure 19–48**).

One advantage of fusion bonding is that the client's hair will dry more quickly than when bonding full wefts because there is less bulk. By using extensions in slightly different colors, you can create the illusion of depth and dimension or a highlighted effect. This method also allows for styling versatility. Drawbacks include the fact that the technique is time consuming and the fact that the pre-tipped extensions are expensive. Some suppliers will take back the extension hair and re-tip it, which saves costs and reduces waste; others will not. Applying the adhesive or bonding material yourself avoids this issue, but can be messier and even more time consuming.

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Linking

In linking, a hook is used to pick up a small amount of hair off a parting. A link is slid on close to the scalp with a special tool. Then, an extension or special addition strand is inserted into the link (**Figure 19–49**). Once the extension and the natural hair are captured in the link, the link is pinched flat with pliers. Removed properly with a removal tool (pliers), the extensions can be reused.

To use a linking method of attachment, the natural hair should be at least five-inches long. Advantages are styling versatility and the fact that the integrity of the natural hair can be maintained, if the procedure is done properly. Drawbacks are that this method is expensive and time consuming. Also, the metal links can oxidize (rust).

Tube Shrinking

In tube shrinking, the client's hair and the addition strand are inserted into a tube, which is then heated to shrink it. This method requires special tools and training.

As with all semipermanent attachment methods for hair extensions, various problems can arise. Usually, these problems are caused by the stylist or the client and not the material. Stylists must follow a logical placement pattern carefully, pay attention to natural growth patterns, and provide complete home-care instructions. Clients must follow home-care instructions carefully to keep the hair neat and clean. They must also return to the salon regularly for maintenance. ☑ LO4

Retailing Hair Addition Products

Simple hairpieces are a great retail product for the salon. They can be displayed in fun, creative ways. Because they are fairly easy to attach and remove, they almost sell themselves, particularly to younger, more adventurous clients. Retailing hair additions and related home-care products can mean substantial additional income for you. Offering hair-addition services can be lucrative for the highly trained stylist.

Whether retailing hair goods or offering hair-addition services, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Identify the client's needs.
- Explain why it would be worthwhile for the client to make the investment.
- Describe the features and benefits of the products you recommend.
- Discuss product performance and cost.
- Choose high-quality hairpieces and extensions.
- Always believe in your recommendations and stand by your products.
- Price services according to time spent on the service, materials, your expertise, and what the local market will bear.

▲ **Figure 19–48**
Roll the bond between your fingers.

▲ **Figure 19–49**
Linking.

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To be the best, work only with the best. Work with one or two companies that offer a good range of human and synthetic hair, high-quality products, good customer service, and first-rate support, as well as product education through training, seminars, and videos. Always stick with companies that stand by their products.

A Final Thought: Practice, Practice, Practice

Working with hair additions can be one of the most exciting, challenging, and lucrative areas of cosmetology. But to become skilled at this work, you need to take specialized, formal training and practice continually. The more you do, the better you will become. The better you become, the more you will be able to help people look good and feel good about themselves. There is a great satisfaction in being able to do this, particularly when working with people who have suffered the trauma of hair loss and may have given up hope that they could look good again (**Figures 19–50** and **19–51**).

▲ **Figure 19–50**
Before hair extensions.

▲ **Figure 19–51**
Post-extension transformation.

Courtesy of www.GarlandDrake.com. Photography by Dixie Dixon, Makeup by Kay Castro, Hairstyling by Tony Greenleaf, all for Garland Drake.

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Review Questions

1. What are the main advantages and disadvantages of human hair and synthetic hair?
2. What are the two basic categories of wigs?
3. What are three types of hairpieces and how are they used?
4. What are five methods for attaching hair extensions? Describe each one.

Chapter Glossary

block	Head-shaped form, usually made of canvas-covered cork or Styrofoam, on which the wig is secured for fitting, cleaning, coloring, and styling.
bonding	Method of attaching hair extensions in which hair wefts or single strands are attached with an adhesive or bonding agent.
braid-and-sew method	Attachment method in which hair extensions are secured to client's own hair by sewing braids or a weft onto an on-the-scalp braid or cornrow, which is sometimes called the track.
cap wigs	Wigs constructed of elasticized, mesh-fiber bases to which the hair is attached.
capless wigs	Also known as *caps*; machine-made from human or artificial hair which is woven into rows of wefts. Wefts are sewn to elastic strips in a circular pattern to fit the head shape.
fallen hair	Hair that has been shed from the head or gathered from a hairbrush, as opposed to hair that has been cut; the cuticles of the strands will move in different directions (opposite of turned or Remi hair).
fusion bonding	Method of attaching extensions in which extension hair is bonded to the client's own hair with a bonding material that is activated by heat from a special tool.
hair extensions	Hair additions that are secured to the base of the client's natural hair in order to add length, volume, texture, or color.
hairpiece	Small wig used to cover the top or crown of the head, or a hair attachment of some sort.
hand-tied wigs	Also known as *hand-knotted wigs*; wigs made by inserting individual strands of hair into mesh foundations and knotting them with a needle.
integration hairpiece	Hairpiece that has openings in the base through which the client's own hair is pulled to blend with the hair (natural or synthetic) of the hairpiece.
machine-made wigs	Wigs made by machine by feeding wefts through a sewing machine, and then sewing them together to form the base and shape of the wig.
semi-hand-tied wigs	Wigs constructed with a combination of synthetic hair and hand-tied human hair.
toupee	Small wig used to cover the top or crown of the head.
turned hair	Also called *Remi hair*; the root end of every single strand is sewn into the base, so that the cuticles of all hair strands move in the same direction: down.
wefts	Long strips of human or artificial hair with a threaded edge.
wig	Artificial covering for the head consisting of a network of interwoven hair.

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