

How to Get the Darkest Color Henna Tattoos

by Jody of ShopBeachcombers.com

Everyone wants super dark color from their henna tattoos. I want to help you achieve this, but keep in mind henna isn't all about color. It's about connecting (with others or just yourself) and contributing to a positive energy within and around us. Henna can be as powerful as you let it!

Back to dark color henna! There are many factors that contribute to the color you ultimately get from your henna. I'm going to address most of them here.

1. The Henna Product Itself

Mixing your own henna from powder is capable of giving you the darkest longest lasting color. Use a high quality powder such as our ORa Organic Raj henna, Ibis Henna, Lume, or Jamila henna and the Beachcombers Super Simple henna recipe. ~ Recipe Below ~

2. What Part of the Body You Henna

Henna takes best on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. The further away from the feet and hands you get, the lighter the stain. The thinner the skin, the fewer layers of skin cells there are for the henna to stain, therefore you get a lighter stain.

That's okay, you can still do henna on the back or even the face, just know that it will be much lighter and not last as long.

3. The Skin Itself

Henna takes best to clean dry skin. Lotions, sunblock, or even water will be a barrier between the henna and the skin. Self tanner can be exceptionally difficult for henna to bond with. The more base (opposite of acidic) your skin is the darker your henna stain.

4. The Warmth of Your Skin while the Paste is on the Skin

The warmer your skin, the darker your henna stain. I have low blood pressure and I'm always cold. It's harder for me to get good henna color than it is for most people. Don't crank your air conditioning, and try to keep your body temperature up. Sit in the sun, have a glass of wine or hot tea, or wrap up in a blanket if you are cold like me, lol!

The best thing you can do to keep the henna area warm is to seal and wrap your henna design, though this is completely optional. If you are doing the other things on this list, this step is not needed. Dab on a lemon sugar solution to the henna as soon as it's dry enough to touch. Wrap the design in plenty of toilet paper to absorb sweat and then wrap plastic wrap around the top. This can yield crazy-good color!

5. How Long You Leave the Moist Henna Paste in Contact with the Skin

The longer you leave the wet henna paste in contact with the skin, the darker and longer lasting the color. Ideally, I like to see people shoot for 4-6 hours. Overnight is even better!

Optionally, use a sealer such as a lemon sugar sealer. This will help you develop a nice crust on top of the henna while keeping the underside (that's in contact with your skin) of the henna moist.

6. How You Remove the Henna Paste

Don't use water to remove the henna from your skin. Either gently scrape it off with your fingers or use a little olive oil to remove the henna paste. Avoid water on the henna for the rest of the day if possible.

7. How Well You Care For the Henna Tattoo

Henna is a permanent stain. It doesn't fade away, your skin cells exfoliate off. Anything you do to avoid

exfoliating the skin where your henna tattoo is located will help your henna last longer. Avoid water, cleaners, and anything else that may exfoliate the skin as much as possible (within good hygiene limits).

REMEMBER... *your henna will start off light, but will come up to full color over a couple of days. Be patient!*

Beachcombers Super Simple Henna Recipe

This single step recipe keeps mixing henna simple and easy because you add all the ingredients at once. This recipe can be used for any henna, but is best for short dye release hennas (less than 24 hours). This is the recipe I personally use.

- 100 grams quality henna powder
- Lemon Juice (1 1/4 -1 1/2 cups or so)
- Sugar (none or up to 2 Tablespoons - more in dry climates)
- Equal Parts Lavender & Tea Tree Oils (1/3 - 1oz)
One ounce of oil will give you the darkest color.

1. Put henna and sugar into a bowl and mix lemon juice and essential oils into the powder/sugar until you reach a thick mashed potato consistency. I use a glass mixing bowl as it cleans up easily and doesn't stain or retain scent.
2. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing the wrap down on top of the henna until it touches.
3. Set aside to await dye release. Dye release time vary according to the type of henna you use and the temperature. The warmer it is, the quicker your dye release. Colder temperatures require longer time.

ORa or Ibis Rajasthani: generally 6-16 hours

Jamila Henna: generally 24-36 hours

General Henna: generally 4-24 hours

4. Check for dye release every 4-6 hours. Place a dot of henna on the heel of your hand and wait 5 minutes then wipe it away. If you have a nice orange stain, you have achieved dye release.
5. Once dye release has been verified, add more lemon juice to reach the consistency that you personally like. You are looking for something along the lines of stirred yogurt, thick cake batter, or thicker than honey. Ideally, the henna should ribbon off your spoon forming peaks that very slowly melt or slump.
6. Once the consistency is perfect, strain your henna. Put the henna paste in individual cones and freeze until you are ready to use.

NOTE: The colder it is in your house, the longer it takes to release the henna dye. The warmer your house, the quicker the dye release.

See storage information in the Beachcombers henna design book or at the ***Henna Learning Center at www.ShopBeachcombers.com***.

The Easy-Peasy Jody Method

This is essentially the same Super Simple recipe from above, but in a more conversational tone. It's easy to over-think things and stress about the details. "Following" me while I mix henna may help!

I am quite casual about mixing my henna, yet I get great consistent color EVERY time. I used to stress and freak out over every detail! I'd even wake up in the middle of the night to check on my dye release. Once I finally let go of that craziness, I started getting amazing results from my henna.

I don't measure the lemon juice and I don't worry too much about timing. I normally use ORa or Ibis Rajasthani henna with equal amounts lavender and tea tree oils. I can't express how much I love our Rajasthani henna! It's so easy to get great color with it.

Here is a step by step guide to how I actually mix my henna...

In the morning before heading to work, I mix henna, lemon juice, a little bit of sugar, and equal parts lavender and tea tree oil all together to a consistency of thick mash potatoes. For 100 grams of ORa, I use 30mL or 1 ounces of oils, and a tablespoon of sugar (here in Orlando FL we are humid, so I don't need much).

I use a glass mixing bowl because it's easy to clean, doesn't stain, and doesn't retain the scent of the essential oils.

I press plastic wrap down on the henna, and place the bowl in the cabinet under my kitchen island. When I get home from work, I tweak the texture of my henna by adding more lemon juice. Sometimes, as I add the lemon juice (a little at a time), I use a hand beater and beat my paste. If you beat the heck out of your henna paste, it came tame a bit of the "string." It's not absolutely needed, but it's an option you can use.

Once it's the perfect texture (thicker than pancake batter but not as thick as brownie batter), I strain the henna and cone it up. This means I put the paste in individual henna cones that I roll from our pre-cut cello triangles.

I place the cones in a Ziplock bag with a piece of paper that has the date and the ingredients of the mix and put them in the freezer.

DONE!

Make note...if I'm mixing Jamila henna, the time table is a bit different. I'll stretch this out to be at least a full 24 hours and up to 48 hours. Jamila is very forgiving about time. I once forgot about my henna in the cabinet for 3 days and still got awesome results (though I don't recommend that, lol!).

I sometimes mix equal parts Jamila and ORa henna. Since both hennas have drastically different dye release times, I mix them separately and then mix them together just before I strain the henna. This melds the pastes perfectly together to create a little bit of henna heaven!

Find More at the Henna Learning Center at www.ShopBeachcombers.com

Copyright © 2010 ShopBeachcombers.com Inc. No part of this can be sold or traded.
All Rights Reserved Worldwide under the International Berne Convention/US Copyright Act of 1976.

For additional eBooks & Henna Downloads go to www.ShopBeachcombers.com