

Instant EXPERT

Savvy solutions for smart women



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Healthy nails in 15 minutes

Nails looking ragged and dry? Time for a mani-makeover



NEATEN NAILS

An acetone-free polish remover like **OPI**

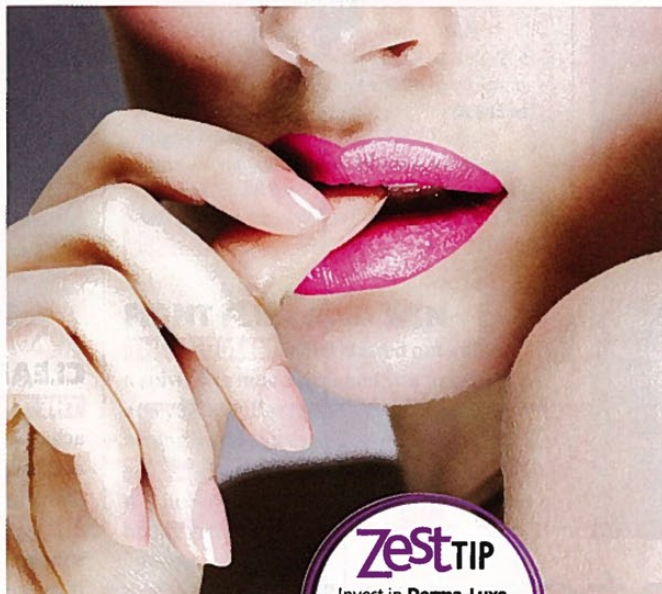
Acetone Free Polish Remover with Aloe Vera, £7.10, (1)

will cleanse without damaging the nail bed. The quickest way to do it? David Barton, international nail guru, recommends three clean sweeps: 'Place the cotton pad onto the nail, apply pressure, then drag it down towards the tip,' says David. 'This breaks down the colour without it bleeding onto the surrounding skin or inflaming the cuticles.' Then it's time to shape up. 'Choose any file with a fine grit - glass, crystal or emery. Start at either side and file in towards the centre, mirroring the shape of your cuticle.' Buffing will then seal the end of the nail to prevent peeling. 'But buff just once every six weeks; otherwise you'll weaken the nail,' he adds. **Ms Manicure Block Party 4 Way Buffing Block, £1.99**, makes quick work of a file-and-buff, with all you need for a smooth, shiny nail in an instant.



MOISTURISE CUTICLES

You need to replace the vital moisture that life takes out. **Lanolips Rose Balm Intense For Very Dry Hands & Nails, £8.99, (2)** contains medical grade lanolin and vitamin E for concentrated moisturisation. Soften cuticles with **Jessica Phenomen Oil, £12.55, (3)** gently massaging them back from the nail. 'If you don't keep cuticles soft, they'll dry out and split, causing white spots to appear down the nail,' David advises. 'It's a myth that



ZestIP
Invest in **Derma-Luxe Washing-Up Gloves, £2.39** - no latex and a natural moisturiser mean super-soft hands!



white spots are a sign of calcium deficiency. Massaging them will help and increase circulation.'



TAKE A PILL

A diet rich in calcium, essential fatty acids and vitamins ensures healthier nails. But as a little cheat, take an **Imdeen Hair & Nails Capsule, £23.49 for 60**, with water. Since nails grow up to 1.2mm a week, improvements in strength and colour can be seen in just four to six weeks. Easy!



PAINT AND PROTECT

'Squeak' each nail with polish remover to clear excess oil, then seal the nail with **Nails Inc Air Street Oxygenating Base Coat, £12**, which contains fortifying vitamin C

and calcium. 'A base coat gives extra structure to the nail, as well as anchoring colour and preventing stains,' explains David. 'If you don't use one, moisture can get in between the layers of the nail, then evaporate causing the nail to peel.' Paint on your colour using David's neat three-stroke routine: one down the centre and one either side. The new colours from **Orly Precious, £8.75 each, (4)** are free from formaldehyde and toluene so are a good option if you are concerned about unnecessary chemicals. Add another drop of Phenomen Oil to each nail to nourish and reduce drying time, then apply **No7 Protect & Perfect Intense Day Hand Cream SPF15, £11.50, (5)** to protect your skin from sun damage and winter chapping. ☑