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Air-drying is an exercise in embracing your natural texture, says Jon Reyman, founder of Spoke & Weal salons in New York City, Chicago, and California. So start by assessing whether your hair tends to be soft and fine or coarse when dry (regardless of whether it's straight or curly). Then follow these guidelines.

If your hair is soft:

Build volume in your air-dried mane by “shampooing twice, conditioning at the ends only, and using light-hold stylers like dry shampoo, beach spray, or mousse, which don’t contain oils,” Reyman says. Paul Labrecque, owner of the Paul Labrecque salons in New York City and Philadelphia, adds: “Turn your head over and shake your hair a bit while it’s drying to lift the roots and make them less flat.”

YOUR AIR-DRY ARSENAL

Apply **1/ Living Proof Perfect Hair Day In-Shower Styler** (\$24, livingproof.com) after cleansing and conditioning, then rinse lightly for hold without buildup. Or try **2/ L’Oréal Paris Advanced Hairstyle Air Dry It Ruffled Body Mousse** (\$5, at drugstores) to add texture while air-drying. You can also use dry shampoo, such as **3/ John Frieda Luxurious Volume Volume Refresh Dry Shampoo** (\$7, ulta.com) or **4/ Ouai Dry Shampoo Foam** (\$28, theouai.com), once hair has dried, for extra body.



If your hair is coarse:

Keeping your hair from getting big (and by extension, frizzy) is a challenge when air-drying. Reyman says to “shampoo once, condition all over, and use a combination of a light-hold product to set the hair and an oil or cream styler to shrink and soften strands.” Adds Labrecque, “Keep your hands off your hair entirely until it’s dry, or you’ll disturb the curl pattern and introduce frizz.”

YOUR AIR-DRY ARSENAL

The lightweight polymers in **5/ Bb. Don’t Blow It Thick H(Air) Styler** (\$31, bumbleandbumble.com) help enhance bounce, while plant extracts add hydration so hair air-dries smoothly. Especially frizz-prone? Apply **6/ Redken No Blow Dry Bossy Cream** (\$24, redken.com), which contains quick-dry polymers, to damp locks.

Save your scalp

We asked Kristina Goldenberg, M.D., a dermatologist and cofounder of Goldenberg Dermatology in New York City, to shed light on the scalp-heat connection.

What does consistent heat styling do to your scalp?

Repeated exposure to heat styling can burn the scalp and damage hair follicles. This may lead to scarring and even permanent hair loss.

Can it make skin conditions like eczema and psoriasis worse?

Absolutely. If heat styling causes a burn to the scalp, skin cells can get damaged and flake off like dandruff. Patients with psoriasis may find their symptoms are exacerbated, because localized heat generates inflammation.

What’s the maximum number of times per week to blow-dry?

Once or twice a week is best, depending on your hair’s health. Start with a lower heat setting, increase slowly, and use a brush with widely spaced bristles, which disperse the air.

Heat cheats

If you can’t even face your natural texture, there are simple hair hacks that can help you achieve the look you’re after—sans dryer. To make curly hair straight, Labrecque suggests wrapping it in Velcro rollers while it dries. The larger the curler, the straighter the hair will get. To add texture to straight hair, Reyman advises a double knot: one on top of your head and one in the back. Undo when your hair’s dry for body and wave.