

False eyelashes are the latest beauty trend

Once the preserve of pop princesses, false eyelashes and extensions are now enjoying a renaissance

By Alice Hart-Davis



Going to new lengths: false eyelashes have gone from pop princess favourite to beauty necessity
Photo: GETTY

They used to be a joke, the preserve of drag queens and ageing dolly-birds who'd never quite got over the Sixties, but right now, false eyelashes are enjoying a renaissance. At first, it was a stealthy return; make-up artists sneaked the odd clump of them in among celebrity lashes, and the names of women who could do spellbindingly good, yet natural-looking, eyelash extensions were traded excitedly by the fashion-and-beauty brigade.

Then, somewhere in the past 18 months, the last vestiges of stigma fell away and having improbably long, thick and fluttery eyelashes has become not just a one-off look for a party, but a necessity for everyday make-up. You can blame pop princesses for much of it – at this spring's Brit awards, Duffy looked as if she could barely open her eyes, so loaded down were they with falsies. But now false lashes have become so acceptable that even the ultra-stylish Michelle Obama wore them on her visit to Britain – and not bespoke extensions, but a strip of gloriously obvious stick-on lashes.

Among those pop-princesses, Girls Aloud have a lot to answer for. They, and particularly the doe-eyed Cheryl Cole, are all serial offenders when it comes to false-lash-overload, so it is only fitting they have collaborated with Eylure, Britain's leading lash brand, to produce a range of their own.

You can find these (each band member has put her name to a different style of eyelash) in Superdrug, where sales of false lashes are up 110 per cent on last year to a point where 4,000 packs of lashes are now sold every day.

Tesco's false-lash sales have almost doubled, too, and it must mean that thousands more of us are increasingly confident at applying the things. But for the thousands who aren't, the nail bar Nails Inc has developed a sideline in false lashes. "Get Lashed" counters are starting to appear at many of their branches across the country, where you can try out eyelash extensions, get a simple strip of false lashes glued on or indulge in more exotic arrangements such as having clusters of falsies embedded among your own lashes (see box, below right).

The move is part of a wider trend. On Thursday, Selfridges opened a 'groom lash lounge' in its beauty hall (strip lashes from £10; extensions from £80). Lash-extension specialist Nouveau Lashes www.nouveaulashes.co.uk is expanding apace, and at the Westfield shopping mall in west London, you can have your eyelashes enhanced at the Powder Lounge in Topshop www.thepowderlounge.co.uk

Finding the best people to do the job takes a bit of research. If money's no object, try Sue Marsh, who can be found at Cosmetics à la Carte in Knightsbridge (19b Motcomb Street, London SW1; 020 7235 2236). A favourite with supermodels, she performs exceptional extensions and eyelash perms.

Should you prefer to stick with your own eyelashes, you could boost their growth with Latisse, a new potion containing a drug that prompts eyelashes to grow longer, thicker and darker. It has been approved for sale in the US by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration), and, one day, will reach Britain. For now, it's only on sale in the US at about \$120 a bottle. Where's the catch, you might ask? For blue-eyed Brits, one possible drawback is that it might tint your irises brown, and that the change will be permanent.

Will women stop at nothing for their eyelashes? It seems not. But then, like a well-shaped eyebrow, longer, darker, more luscious lashes have the potential to transform your face, and at a fraction of the cost of most surgical or semi-surgical procedures.

Now, where's that eyelash glue?

LASH KNOW-HOW

- Trim the strip of false lashes to the right length for your eyelid before you start.
- Most false lashes have a self-adhesive strip, but most experienced wearers prefer to run an extra line of eyelash glue along the lashes before positioning them (let it dry for 10 seconds before you press them into place), to prevent one end flapping loose halfway through the evening.
- If the union of false and real lashes doesn't look seamless, apply liquid eyeliner over the top, to hide the join.

- For a less startling look, use individual lashes, set among the outer edges of your eyelashes.
- Girls Aloud Eylure lashes cost £5 at Superdrug.
- Get Lashed at Nails Inc salons (for locations, call 020 7529 2340). From £9 for strip lashes, to £30 for false-lash extensions.
- No 7 heated eyelash curler, easier than heating your curler with a hairdryer, £11.74 at Boots.
- Gosh Wonder Volume Mascara, with plastic brush for extra coverage, £8.37 at Superdrug.
- Max Factor False Lash Effect Mascara, for pure volume from roots to tips, £10.99.
- Shu Uemura Precise Volume Mascara has a gel formula for less clumping, £17.50 (020 7235 2375)

FIVE EYELASH DIVAS

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<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/fashion/beauty/5286601/False-eyelashes-are-the-latest-beauty-trend.html>