

All hands on deck: A guide to hale nails

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Do unclean nails turn you off? Well, here's an expert guide on how to clean and groom your nails for the summer season.

Don't use nail polish that contains harsh chemicals, as it damages your nails.(Getty Images/iStockphoto)

Want to make a great first impression? Then don't forget to tend to your nails, as they are the first thing one notices when you shake their hand. Dirty and unkempt nails are a sure-shot turn off. As the temperature soars, your nails tend to expand and become brittle. Here's your guide to grooming them for summers:

Clean hands equal to clean nails

The most essential part of nail care is cleaning them regularly. Trim your nails and remove the dirt beneath. It is essential as we eat with our hands; you don't want the dirt to contaminate your food. However, while cleaning, don't over rub or scrub them, as it might expose them to an infection or make them brittle. Just be easy with them.

Moisturize and scrub your nails

Dry nails can cause brittleness. To avoid this, moisturise your nails using a hand cream before retiring to bed every night. Use a nail brush to clean the dirt in and around your nails. And then, scrub them using a solution of hand wash and warm water. Scrub gently and in a circular buffing motion. Regular hand washing and sanitising can, at times, dry your nails, so go easy.

Don't remove cuticles

Cuticle is the translucent skin, alongside the white crescent on your nails, which acts as a protective barrier for your nail beds. They protect the nails against bacteria and dirt. So, don't cut them. Moisturise them and remove only the dead pieces of the skin.

A diet rich in Vitamin E and biotin

For healthy nails, a diet rich in biotin (vitamin B7), iron and vitamin E is essential. A diet lacking in these nutrients can cause your nails to become brittle. Eat beans, fish and nuts for good nail health.

Avoid using hard nail polish

Donâ€™t use a nail polish that contains chemicals, such as toluene, dibutyl phthalate, dimethyl and diethyl phthalate, camphor, and formaldehyde, as they may damage your nails. Opt for water-based polishes instead.

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