

NEW  
GROWTHRELAXED  
HAIR

# Smooth Transition

The journey from relaxed to natural tresses can be a bumpy ride as you learn how to work with two different hair textures. While you might be tempted to run for the first pair of scissors in sight, don't give in. Instead, consider what our curl pro has to say about making the switch **BY NYKIA SPRADLEY**

## STYLING ESSENTIALS FOR THE IN-BETWEEN PHASE

**L'ORÉAL PARIS**  
Advanced Hairstyle  
Sleek It Serum-Spray  
(\$5, Walmart).

**THE MANE CHOICE**  
Deep Conditioning  
Mask (\$18, the  
manechoice.com).

**DEVACURL** No-Poo  
(\$20, Sephora).

**CAROL'S DAUGHTER**  
Transitioning 1-2-3  
Kit (\$40, carols  
daughter.com).

**MISS JESSIE'S**  
Transitioner's Magic  
(\$22, miss  
jessies.com).

**CURLS** Blueberry  
Curl Control Paste  
(\$10, Target).



## EXPERT TIPS

### ▶ TAKE CARE OF YOUR CURLS

Going from relaxed to natural demands lots of patience. "It's crucial that you find a stylist you can trust," says Shai Amiel, a Los Angeles stylist known as The Curl Doctor. Look for someone who understands the different textures of your hair. At-home maintenance is just as important as what your hairdresser does. Invest in a moisturizing or protein-rich conditioner, especially if hair has been damaged. "Curly hair tends to be drier, so plenty of hydration helps," says Amiel.

### ▶ GET STYLE SAVVY

As your relaxer grows out, avoid straightening alternatives like keratin treatments, which could end up altering your curl pattern and prolonging the process. If the hair that has been relaxed won't curl the same as the new growth, pin curls can help to encourage a pattern: Wrap small sections of damp hair around your fingers and secure with a double-pronged clip. When the hair dries, remove the clip. You should have a nice waveform without using any hot tools.

### ▶ DON'T FEAR THE SHEAR

"The Big Chop is really fun. It's so liberating and exciting to have a new hairstyle," says Amiel. Your hair will probably be a lot shorter than anything you've ever had, so it will be much easier to wash and style. If your relaxed strands are damaged, recovery may require more than one trim and a lot more care at home. "The haircut is like an intense workout and hair care products are your diet," says Amiel. "They're equally important to get the look you desire."