

MAKEUP | EYES

## I Got a Lash Lift — Which Is Basically a Perm For Your Eyelashes

BY SABLE YONG @SABLETOOTHIGRE  
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My eyelashes are not unlike my high school academic history — always between a B+ and an A-. Not bad, but they could be way better if they'd just applied themselves more, you know? I have a good amount of lashes, but they're quite straight and indecisively directed. Some point downward and some lazily curve slightly upward — it's a sad bouquet. I've done [lash-enhancing serums](#), lash extensions, and own about a dozen mascaras in rotation at any given time. I can't remember a time I left the house without having wielded a lash curler first. Lashes are just my *thing*, and I'm very particular about my things.

That said, when presented with the opportunity to perm my lashes into a perfectly curled formation, I initially bristled. Memories of the smell of perming chemicals in my youth (perms were big in the '90s, too) made my eyes water and my head dizzy. The thought of putting that on my eyelashes just seemed very wrong. Lash lifts (aka lash perms) are not necessarily new to the beauty world but they have a dodgy reputation based on the concept alone.

In fact, when I mentioned that I was going to get a lash lift, several colleagues raised their brows like "are you *sure*?" For reference, I am the *Allure* staffer who got [lip injections](#) for the first time on Facebook Live, so one would think that a lash lift would be much less eventful, but apparently slathering your eyes in perming lotion sounds much more alarming than injecting your mouth full of synthetic dewdrops.

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## The Process of a Lash Perm

I visited [Sugarlash Pro](#), a company that specializes in lash lifts and lash extensions to get my eyeball fringe into shape. The way a lash lift works is this: You're lying down with your eyes shut, and a lash technician tapes your lower lashes down so they don't get tangled up in the mess of the perming site. Then a silicone pad that acts as a sort of "curling rod" as well as a guard is fixed to your upper eyelid with a gentle adhesive so it stays put. The sloped shape of it serves to give your lashes a curved shape to form to when slathered in perming lotion. The length of your lashes is what determines what size silicone shield the technician will choose for you. Since my lashes are on the short side, I used a small one. My lashes were brushed back to lay against the curve of the shield with that gentle adhesive so they all lay flat, awaiting the curling chemicals.

Now, about those chemicals: There are three of them. The perm lotion softens the bonds of my lashes' natural pattern, the setting lotion is what makes them take on the shape of the silicone shield, and the nourishing lotion conditions them so they feel silky soft. Each lotion is applied and then left to marinate for about 10 minutes. Does it smell like a perm? Faintly. Does it sting? No. Then again, you're supposed to keep your peepers firmly shut the entire time. That said, my lash technician assured me that I would not go blind if a tiny bit leaked into my eye (but it wouldn't be pleasant either). Luckily, everything went down smoothly.

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On top of the lash lift, I also requested a tint to make my lashes appear darker and shinier. The entire process took about 45 minutes, even though I was told it would take around an hour. It wasn't uncomfortable and I kind of nodded off a bit in the middle of it.

# My Disney Princess Results

When everything was done and the silicone shields were peeled off my lids, I was given a hand mirror for the big reveal. As for my reaction, I believe my immediate words were, "Oh, shit."



My underachieving little lashes were glossed up and standing at attention like a bunch of show ponies. They looked like goddamn falsies. I was so impressed because I didn't realize that despite their lack of length, all it took was a curl's trajectory with a slight dye-job for them to look like doll lashes. My whole face appeared tremendously more "on" just by the addition of curled and darkened lashes, and I was aghast at this epiphany in my medium-young life.

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The one tricky bit is that I was not to get them wet for 24 hours right after the perm — a rule we are all familiar with thanks to *Legally Blonde*. I was also not to crush them by sleeping on my face, which is certainly not the most difficult aftercare guideline I've ever come across.



*BEFORE*



*AFTER*

## So, Is It Worth It?

A lash lift will set you back roughly \$150 (depending on where you go). I was told the perm would last about eight weeks (longer than **lash extensions**, mind you), with the curl gradually drooping as the expiration date approaches. I'm on week four now and they're still quite curled, but I've noticed the tint has faded a bit. I still wear mascara, which *really* makes my lashes look mega long and voluminous. However, my dream of waking up with rich-girl lashes and batting them like a Disney princess was now my real life, and let me tell you: It rules.