

## **How to Get the Darkest Color Henna Tattoos**

Everyone wants super dark color from their henna tattoos. I want to help you achieve this. There are many factors that contribute to the color you ultimately get from henna. I'm going to address most of them here.

### **1. The Henna Product Itself**

Mixing your own henna from powder is capable of giving you the darkest longest lasting color. Use a high quality powder such as our ORa Organic Raj henna and the Beachcombers Super Simple henna recipe.

### **2. What Part of the Body You Henna**

Henna takes best on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. The further away from the feet and hands you get, the lighter the stain. The thinner the skin, the fewer layers of skin cells there are for the henna to stain, therefore you get a lighter stain. That's okay, you can still do henna on the back or the torso, just know that it will be much lighter and not last as long.

### **3. The Skin Itself**

Henna takes best to clean dry skin. Lotions, sunblock, or even water will be a barrier between the henna and the skin. Self-tanner can be exceptionally difficult for henna to bond with.

### **4. The Warmth of Your Skin while the Paste is on the Skin**

The warmer your skin, the darker your henna stain. Don't crank your air conditioning, and try to keep your body temperature up. Sit in the sun, have a glass of wine or hot tea, or wrap up in a blanket if you are cold!

You can keep the henna area warm with a seal and wrap, though this is completely optional. If you are doing the other things on this list, this step is not needed. Instructions are on our DIY page.

### **5. How Long You Leave the Moist Henna Paste in Contact with the Skin**

The longer you leave the wet henna paste in contact with the skin, the darker and longer lasting the color. Ideally shoot for 4-6 hours. Overnight is even better!

Optionally, use a sealer such as a lemon sugar sealer. This will help you develop a nice crust on top of the henna while keeping the underside (that's in contact with your skin) of the henna moist.

### **6. How You Remove the Henna Paste**

Don't use water to remove the henna from your skin. Either gently scrape it off with your fingers or use a little olive oil to remove the henna paste. Avoid water on the henna for the rest of the day.

### **7. How Well You Care For the Henna Tattoo**

Henna is a permanent stain. It doesn't fade away, your skin cells exfoliate off. Anything you do to avoid exfoliating the skin where your henna tattoo is located, will help your henna last longer. Avoid water, cleaners, and anything else that may exfoliate the skin as much as possible (within good hygiene limits).

***REMEMBER... your henna will start off light, but will come up to full color over a couple of days. Be patient!***

## **Beachcombers Henna Powder Mixing Instructions (for skin use)**

One hundred grams of henna powder will easily yield 75-200 henna tattoos depending on design size. It's common for experienced henna artists to get over 300 designs from 100 grams of henna.

*If you are new to henna, do not mix the entire bag of henna at once.* Only mix 1/4 or 1/3 of your henna at a time, so you can play with your henna recipe to find what works best for you.

In order to create the best possible henna mix for you, it helps to understand why you add these specific ingredients. You need...

- **Quality Henna Powder**

For henna to be used on the skin, you must use fresh high-quality body art quality henna (BAQ). Never use hair henna and never use random henna powder that you find at a grocery store. Hair henna is a lower quality henna powder and nearly always has metallic salts or chemicals added to it (even if it claims to be all natural). Random henna powder from a questionable source is rarely stored properly and not fresh. You can be confident when you buy from us! We KNOW henna!

- **Lemon Juice** (bottled lemon juice is fine)

Obviously, you need some sort of liquid to make your henna powder into a paste. Lemon juice is a great acidic liquid that allows the lawsone dye molecules to be released from the henna in a slow controlled fashion. A nice slow controlled dye release leads to a stable henna paste that doesn't demise too quickly.

If you use something other than lemon juice, the dye release time can be drastically different. Water or tea will release dye MUCH quicker, potentially leading to a less stable paste.

- **Sugar**

Adding sugar to your henna powder is optional. Sugar makes the henna stay wet against the skin longer, stick to the skin better, and makes the henna more flexible thus helping you achieve a darker stain. It also helps give your henna a great consistency. You may find that you like more or less sugar with different brands of henna.

Sugar is not absolutely needed (especially in more humid climates), so try mixing your henna without sugar to see if you like it or not. Here in Florida, I only use about a teaspoon to a tablespoon of sugar per 100 grams, but I know people in Arizona that use 1/4 cup of sugar (4 tablespoons!). The more sugar you use, the less lemon juice you need.

- **Lavender & Tea Tree Oils**

Both lavender and tea tree oils have monoterpene alcohols which will help release more of the lawsone dye in henna resulting in a darker stain. Adding these oils also adds a lovely scent to henna.

Essential oils are very strong. Use the minimum amount of oil you need to create a good mix. Never add more than 1 ounce (30mL) of oil per 100 grams of henna powder.

If you are a henna hobbyist, 1/3 ounce (10mL) is fine per 100 grams of powder, but if you are looking for professional quality stains, use 1 ounce (30mL) of oil per 100 grams of henna.

## ***Practice Makes Perfect!***

Henna is like cooking. It can take some time to get it perfect, yet you still get to have some fun getting to your perfect henna mix. Relax and have fun with your henna!

These printable instructions have plenty of room for you to make notes. Save those notes for the next time you mix your henna to help yourself develop the PERFECT henna mix for you.

## Super Simple Beachcombers Henna Recipe

### 1 Step Henna Recipe

*If you are new to henna, do not mix the entire bag of henna at once. Only mix 1/4 or 1/3 of your henna at a time, so you can play with your henna recipe to find what works best for you.*

100 grams quality henna powder  
Lemon Juice (1-1 1/2 cups or so)  
Sugar (none or up to 2 Tablespoons)  
Equal Parts Lavender & Tea Tree Oils (1/3-1oz)

1. Put henna, sugar, essential oils, and lemon juice in a bowl and mix until you reach a thick mashed potato consistency. I use a glass mixing bowl as it cleans up easily and doesn't stain or retain scent.
2. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing the wrap down on top of the henna until it touches the paste.
3. Set aside to await dye release. If you use the henna right away, it will NOT leave a stain. Dye release time vary according to the type of henna you use, what you mix the henna with, and the temperature. The warmer it is the quicker the dye release. Colder temperatures require longer time.

**ORa Rajasthani:** generally 6-16 hours

**Jamila Henna:** generally 24-36 hours

**General Henna:** generally 4-24 hours

4. Check for dye release every 4-6 hours.

Place a dot of henna on the heel of your hand and wait exactly 5 minutes then wipe it away. If you have a nice orange stain, you have achieved dye release.

When checking dye release, check it for the exact same amount of time and on the same part of the hand EVERY time, so that you learn what color good dye release looks like on YOUR skin.

5. Once dye release has been verified, add more lemon juice to reach the consistency that you personally like. You are looking for something along the lines of stirred yogurt or really thick cake batter. Ideally, the henna should slightly ribbon off your spoon forming peaks that very slowly slump. Try different consistencies to see what you like best. You may prefer a thicker or a thinner henna.
6. Once your consistency is perfect, strain your henna if you wish (straining is optional). Put the henna paste in individual cones and freeze until you are ready to use.