

How to Treat Damaged Nails — Practical A4 Checklist

Daily routine

- Keep nails short and softly rounded; fix snags the moment they appear.
- File in one direction only; one or two gentle passes per edge.
- Apply cuticle oil morning and night; massage into the plate and folds for 30 seconds.
- After every handwash, use hand cream, then a thin occlusive balm.
- Wear lined gloves for dishes, cleaning, and garden tasks.
- Limit sanitizer; rinse and moisturize after use whenever possible.

Weekly rhythm

- One polish cycle max, then one week bare for recovery.
- Once per week, buff ridges lightly with a fine buffer; stop at the first sign of heat.
- Photograph nails under the same light to track chips, splits, and growth.
- Replace worn files; aim for 240–320 grit.

Removal day protocol

- Use quick acetone contact only; no long soaks.
- Avoid scraping under the plate; lift product gently when it loosens.
- Finish with oil, then balm, then a rest day without color.

Salon visit guide

- Ask for thin strengthener layers; avoid aggressive prep.
- Use silk or fiberglass wrap for a single split rather than full overlays.
- Schedule longer gaps between appointments to reduce removal frequency.

- Protect skin with SPF or UV gloves during lamp curing.

Nutrition and hydration

- Eat protein at each meal; add leafy greens and beans for iron and folate.
- Include nuts or seeds daily for zinc and healthy fats.
- Drink water through the day; set two hydration reminders.
- Discuss biotin or silicon with a clinician before starting.

Tool kit to keep on hand

- Fine glass file, cuticle oil pen, rich hand cream, small balm, cotton-lined gloves.
- Travel duplicates in bag and car for on-the-go care.

Red flags to act on

- Pain, heat, or swelling around the fold.
- Persistent splitting after eight weeks of routine care.
- Green, brown, or yellow debris under a lifted edge.
- Rashes after gels or acrylics.

One-line mantra

- Condition, seal, protect — every time you wash your hands.