

The Ultimate Nail Salon Safety Checklist

Use this guide before and during your appointment to ensure your health and safety are protected. A beautiful manicure is never worth the risk.

Part 1: Before You Book

- ☐ **Check Reviews:** Look for recent reviews mentioning cleanliness, sterilization, or hygiene.
- ☐ **Verify License:** Check your state's cosmetology board website to ensure the salon and technician are licensed.
- ☐ **Book an Appointment:** Avoid walk-ins during peak hours to ensure proper cleaning time between clients.

Part 2: First Impressions (The Vibe Check)

- ☐ **Overall Cleanliness:** The salon looks and feels clean. No visible dust, nail filings, or hair.
- ☐ **Air Quality:** The air is fresh. A strong, overwhelming chemical smell is a major red flag for poor ventilation.
- ☐ **Licenses Displayed:** State licenses for the salon and technicians are visible and current.
- ☐ **Clean Restroom:** The condition of the restroom often reflects overall cleaning standards.

Part 3: The Tools & Station (CRITICAL CHECKS)

- ☐ **Metal Tools:** Ask: "Do you use an autoclave to sterilize your metal tools?"
- ☐ **Sealed Pouch:** The technician opens a sealed sterilization pouch containing metal tools *in front of you*.
- ☐ **New Files & Buffers:** The technician uses a brand new, untouched file and buffer for your service. They should be discarded or given to you afterward.
- ☐ **Disinfected Workstation:** The table, lamp, and armrest have been wiped down with disinfectant before you sit down.
- ☐ **Pedicure Tubs:** The tub has been scrubbed and disinfected. Using a disposable plastic liner is the best practice.

Part 4: The Technician's Practices

- ☐ **Hand Washing:** The technician washes their hands with soap and water before starting your service.
- ☐ **New Gloves:** The technician puts on a fresh pair of disposable gloves for your service.

IMMEDIATE RED FLAGS (Leave if you see these):

- Technician reuses files, buffers, or wooden sticks.
- Dirty, cluttered workstations.
- Metal tools are taken from a jar of blue liquid ("barbicide") without proper pre-cleaning, or from a UV box (they don't sterilize).
- Pedicure tubs are just rinsed with water between clients.

Your health is your priority. Never be afraid to ask questions or to leave if you feel uncomfortable.