



BEAUTY

# COLOUR BY NUMBERS

*Can you dye your hair younger? Colourist to the stars Nicola Clarke thinks so  
– and here she tells us how, whether at home or in the salon*



*Few things are more* ageing than badly dyed hair. It can drain a face, block-cover greys and add years to a complexion. But in the right hands, colour can have the opposite effect, seeming to lighten and lift the face and bring a healthy glow to cheeks. According to Nicola Clarke, creative colour director at John Frieda, the difference between the two is simple: it's all a question of mimicking the tones you once had.

"It doesn't matter about trends or

what's fashionable, the secret to anti-ageing your hair colour is

to have lots of different tones," says Nicola, who wields the tinting brush for Kate Moss, Kate Winslet, Cate Blanchett, Gwyneth Paltrow, Paloma Faith, Carey Mulligan, Dakota Fanning and Queen Rania of Jordan. "One solid colour is very ageing. It makes no difference if

you're a redhead, brunette or blonde, the key is to have multi-dimensional colour. You need your colourist to imitate the colour you had when you were very young. If you look at natural hair colour close up, it is never one shade; it is countless super-fine strands of different tones."

For proof, check out the hair of teenagers who have yet to experiment with dye. That's what natural, youthful colour looks like; a multitude of shades. The good news is that a talented colourist can replicate that effect. But the technique goes far beyond adding a few high or lowlights.

"First, most women want to cover their greys," says Nicola. "This means dying the hair all over, taking it back to their base colour or the colour they were at the very roots before they went grey. Only then can you highlight, ombré [gradually change colour] or balayage [hand paint highlights] with a variety of subtly different tones to re-create the look of natural hair."

One celebrity whose hair epitomises this approach is supermodel Kate. Says Nicola: "I have a client in her 60s who brings me pictures of Kate because that is a naturally youthful colour. It has dark roots, then gradually becomes lighter down the lengths of the hair."

### Five Steps To A Younger You

Whether at home or in the salon, if you want to anti-age your hair, Nicola has devised this foolproof five-step process:

1. Dye greys back to your base colour (the root colour you had as a teenager).
2. Add multi-tonal strands with highlights, balayage or ombré.
3. Keep the roots darker, working to lighter tones at the ends of the hair.
4. Make the hair around the face lighter.
5. Add shine and gloss with deep conditioners.

Who would have thought that the dark roots we were so desperate to cover up in our 20s are the same ones we crave once we go grey?

It's proof that they are the key to an age-proof effect. "Darker roots are more youthful as you get older," says Nicola. "It's something I do on Kate Winslet – I stick to her natural colour at the roots to break up the blonde."

Nicola's final colour trick is to keep hair lighter around the face. "It is really youthful to have just a few fine lights around the hair line of the face," she says. "This mimics what happens when we go in the sun and it brings light to the complexion; you see it in the hair of really young children after a holiday." It's a technique that Nicola also recommends for anyone who dyes their hair at home. "Buy two shades of your hair colour: one for your roots, to cover the greys, plus a lighter shade for around your face, which you use just on the first inch of your hair back from your face."

You will need to think about texture, too. "Grey hair feels dryer and coarser, which can be useful if you have fine hair. But it is prone to frizz and fluff, so I always advise my clients against using bleach as this can damage already dry hair," says Nicola. "Instead, go for a tint. That way, you help to keep your coloured hair in good condition – even the most beautiful, multi-tonal colour will not look good without gloss and shine."



Darker roots graduating to lighter tones down the length of the hair – as seen on Nicola's clients (clockwise from far left) Kate Winslet, Cate Blanchett, Kate Moss and Gwyneth Paltrow – are key to younger-looking hair





## COLOUR CODE

Nicola's anti-ageing hair heroes

1. Redken Shades EQ Gloss Salon only; visit [redken.co.uk](http://redken.co.uk) "Great colours that are gentle on the hair and last for 20 washes" 2. Sebastian Penetraitt Treatment Masque, £17.45, from [feelunique.com](http://feelunique.com) "A great protein and moisture mask for coloured hair" 3. Viviscal Maximum Strength Hair Growth Supplements, £29.99 for 30 tablets "Lots of my clients swear by them" 4. Wella Illumina and Koleston Perfect Salon only; visit [wella.co.uk](http://wella.co.uk) 5. John Frieda Frizz Ease Forever Smooth Primer, £9.99, from Boots "Great for smoothing dry, coloured hair" 6. John Frieda Beach Blonde Kelp Help Conditioner Masque, £6.29 "A new lightweight but deeply conditioning mask" 7. Fushi Organics Sweet Golden Almond Oil, £8.50; visit [fushi.co.uk](http://fushi.co.uk). "Wearing lots of almond oil on your hair in the sun will protect it and create your own treatment in the heat" 8. Kiehl's Creme with Silk Groom, £18; visit [kiehls.co.uk](http://kiehls.co.uk) "Perfect for taming fine, flyaway hairs" 9. Philip Kingsley Elasticizer, £29, from [feelunique.com](http://feelunique.com) "Really helps dry, coloured hair; I recommend that my clients apply it then sleep in it" 10. John Frieda Everlasting Blonde Shampoo, from £2 "My go-to shampoo for any hair colour because it brightens all shades and makes them look great"

