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Eyebrow experts share tips on shape and technique

ROBIN L. FLANIGAN • APRIL 19, 2010

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Eyebrows do for the [eyes](#) what a frame does for a picture, according to Deanna Netti Cahill, who, as owner of Brow Diva in Pittsford, has earned a national reputation for her services and line of brow-grooming tools.

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"They should complement your eyes, not detract from their [beauty](#)," she says. "Brows are very, very, very important."

With several ways to shape and maintain eyebrows — tweezing, sculpting, waxing, threading — it can be tough to know where to start. And, for that matter, when to stop.

Eyebrow transplants, anyone? (Yes, they do exist.)

While many women pluck stray strands at home, it can be wise to leave waxing to the pros.

"You could definitely hurt yourself easy doing that on your own," warns Therese Oaks, a licensed aesthetician and [skin care](#) specialist at Scruples Hair Design & Body Spa in Webster, where eyebrow waxing is \$14.



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Amita Vyas of Pittsford threads the brows of Loren Jacob of Rochester at Amita's Spa in Loehmann's Plaza in Brighton. (CARLOS ORTIZ staff photographer)



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Debbie Iaculli of Honeoye Falls has her eyebrows waxed and shaped at Brow Diva in Pittsford. (CARLOS ORTIZ staff photographer)

"They send people to school to get a New York state license for a reason. It takes practice and finesse and skill to be good at waxing."

Oaks describes waxing as a quick and easy alternative to the "tedious, painful and time-consuming" act of tweezing. She strongly urges women to make sure they get a consultation with every appointment to report any changes. Some medications prescribed for [acne](#) or wrinkle treatments, for example, can cause the wax to lift a layer of skin. Oaks finishes her sessions by applying antimicrobial lavender on each brow.

Netti Cahill, who describes eyebrow sculpting as more about art than upkeep, uses a combination of tweezing and hard wax on her clients. Most return every three to six weeks for maintenance, depending on their individual rate of [hair growth](#).

"I use one of the more expensive waxes that are made to stick to the hair and not the [skin](#), so it's more gentle," she explains. "You can sit back and relax." Brow Diva services run \$27 to \$50.

For do-it-yourselfers who prefer tweezing at home, Netti Cahill says to step away from the mirror. Standing too close makes it easier to overtweeze — and never use a magnifying mirror. Eyebrows should start directly above where the nostril meets the bridge of your nose. And try not to tweeze more than once a week.

Those with [sensitive skin](#) might consider an ancient form of hair removal known as threading, which has been steadily gaining Western followers over the last several years.

"There are no side effects, it's much faster, it's painless, it lasts longer and is most precise," claims Amita Vyas, owner of Amita's Spa in Brighton, who says that in India, where she grew up, "every second girl knows threading." The technique uses a twisted loop of thin, pure cotton thread to capture hairs then pluck them from the root, without pinching the skin.

Vyas, who charges \$12 for both brows, recently opened a second location in a kiosk at The Marketplace mall in Henrietta. She watched passers-by look on nervously — alarmed by the popping sound the thread makes — before coming up with a new sales pitch: "I tell them, just come and try it and then you decide. Now people come and bring their friends."

Robin L. Flanigan is a freelance writer in Rochester.