

- **Caring for wigs 101! Everything from which wig care products to use, how to wash a wig, and tips on buying a wig that works for you!**

Welcome to the Alternative Hair Alchemist podcast. Now whether you're suffering hair loss from chemo, alopecia, or your hair is simply thinning out, I know exactly what you're going through. You see your scalp shining through and you're terrified, you're going bald.

That is not a good feeling. But the good news is we found each other and I'm here to help you with all of that. Hi, I'm Debra Heim, I am a certified alternative hair specialist and the owner of Very Best Little Hair House.

I have been wearing wigs myself for over 20 years. And I know firsthand wigs shopping, along with the stigma and shame that goes along with hair loss doesn't help. But I'm here to change that.

I'm here to help you feel inspired, educated and empowered about everything about alternative hair. From the shame and stigma all the way to wigs toppers. Why not all wigs are created equal?

I have so much to say and so much to share with you and I am excited that you're here. So take a deep breath, feel the love I'm sending your way, it's time to find and love yourself again. Let's do this.

This is Deborah Heim Welcome to the alternative hair Alchemist Podcast. I'm Deborah Heim I'm an expert in helping you find your dream alternative hair. I have a shop with myself and my husband, who is also John Renaud course certified. And together, we work in a one-on-one situation to help you find your dream hair.

And I can tell you nine times out of 10 it will not be the hair that you come through the door thinking that you want, we find almost everybody we find a very individual solution. And it's very rarely something that they think that they want when they come through the door.

And one of the things I want to say is that I have learned the most from either by wearing a wig myself, or by helping other women find wigs and wear those. And when I say women, I mean men as well, but very few compared to the majority that we get of women.

And when I say wigs, it might be a topper. But again, for the most part, when I use those terms, that's what I'm referring to. And so you might be one of those people that wears fashion wigs for fun, and that's fine. But I am gearing this podcast toward the woman that wants to look natural in alternative hair that wants to look like herself only better.

And let me tell you when you find that right alternative hair, the ripple effects through your life, you just can't believe it. And I'm an example of that, and I have fun with it. Every day I wear a different wig, I have gotten to the point of being shame-free stigma-free, I have no fear. And whatever I can do to help you get there, I'm going to try and do that.

So this might not be a popular thing for me to say. But if you want to look better in a wig, sometimes the simple choice is choosing the better wig. Now, I know a lot of people will limit themselves as far as well, I can't spend this much or whatever.

And it's not a statement about how much you can spend. But what you want to do is find the best solution for you no matter what that is. And once you get the better wig, taking better care of it will make it last longer. And the overall result is good.

When you buy a better wig, take care that it look better, you're gonna feel better. And there's a little bit of strategy involved in wig-wearing to go through life, especially if you're a professional. And I'm going to try and give you some hints on how to do that.

One of the things I see that women do is trying to make a wig that is not right for them to work. And spoiler alert along the way, you're gonna find wigs that are a mistake, I want you to get to the point where you can accept that and move on.

I see a lot of women got hung up on the money they spent on mistakes. But it's going to happen along the way. If you could see my closet in the mistakes. I could have a law degree in the amount of money and time and disappointment that I wasted along the way. And I'm trying to help you avoid doing that. But along the way, you're going to have a couple of missteps.

And you need to detach from any shame or insult. God forbid if somebody were to ask you if that's a wig or whatever. It's not an insult. Just take the information for what it's worth. You probably there's something you need to tighten up on either the one you're wearing or your choice for the next one.

Now with better wigs, they generally cost more than your widely available cheap solution. But you know what it's okay for you to put yourself first in this area. I see, when people come to my shop, often they're concerned about that.

But as we go along and I show them the differences between wigs, certain wigs are constructed to be parted a certain way, certain wigs will give you more versatility, we have all the way from classic cap to hand-tied that can look initially very similar.

When you're looking at the picture of a wig, it may look very similar, but when it's on your head, the better wigs generally have more versatility for parting. And that's just a better choice if you want to look slightly different in your wig every day.

Like I said, I'm not making a statement on how much you should personally spend. But I want you to know that you are worth it, hair or no hair, you're beautiful and alternative hair if it's going to help you feel even more so than I'm here to help you do that.

Okay, so when you get your better wig and you want to take better care of it, I'm going to give you some tips, and some of them may sound extremely basic. But you know what, sometimes with alternative hair logic tends to go out the window.

I hate to say that, but one of the basic mistakes I see is combing. Now when you're combing your wig, use either your fingers preferably. But if not, I prefer a wide-tooth comb. Everybody has different schools of thought on that. But I will tell you this short, I think it's like four inches long, we give one to everybody that visits our shop, you can use it on natural hair or your wig. That is the best comb that I have found for making your wig last, when you were combing it, don't get impatient. Synthetics do tend to tangle a little bit, especially at the back of the neck. And that can get frustrating.

But the better care you take when you are combing your wig out, it will make it so much less frizzy. As you go along. When I take off a longer wig, I will flip it almost upside down or inside out and start combing and working the tangles out from the bottom up to the base of the neck. And then sometimes I just use the comb sideways to comb through any of the tangles.

I loosely comb it out. And then I park it until I wear it the next day. One of the things that can make your wigs last longer is having more than one of them. And I talked about this in my book. It's a strategy that I found. It's like I know you're probably thinking Why can't even get one wig and now she's saying more than one. But yeah, I really do recommend that because when you have two or if you're like me, I'm like Moira Rose on Schitt's Creek.

If you saw my house, I have hooks the whole way around. Because I love wigs. I was born to wear wigs. So I have no shame about that. Some women like purses, I like wigs, although I like purses too. But anyway, so when you have more than one, I rotate the wear. And it results in you having to wash your wigs a lot less frequently.

And that's the next thing that I want to talk about. I found along the way that I tended to over wash my wigs. Along the way, I noticed that the longer I went between the shampoos just by doing very little to it as possible. My favorite product on a wig is water or nothing. I think that the more you do to a wig, the more like the products can coat it or what have you.

And shampoos are great. And then you also want to be careful with the products you use on your wig. And I'll talk about that in a second. But the less you do to a wig, the better. In my experience, I'm telling you when I first opened the shop and I wasn't as vigilant about taking care of my wigs. I got a few months, six months at best.

Now with paying attention to combine with rotating selection with taking care of them. And I'm going to give you some other tips too. I easily get a year. In fact, if you've seen Instagram, sometimes if I put up a picture of myself in a wig, I will tell you, this one's a year old. And I try to do that to be an example to you that sometimes if you invest in a better wig, it's going to look better, it's going to last longer, and you're going to feel better about yourself the whole time.

So I am an advocate of choosing the best wig for yourself. Now for making a wig last. One of the things that you might want to pay attention to is the length. Friction is the enemy of a wig. Any place where the hair will rub, that's where you're going to see wear first. So a choice for you to choose a longer-lasting way

It might simply be choosing a shorter one, I tell everybody in my shop, the longer ones are going to tear up a little bit more faster. It's inevitable. Like myself, I prefer some length for more than one reason I like the versatility of clipping it up, and what have you. And think about that, when you clip it up, you're avoiding the friction.

So I tend to get a lot longer wear out of my longer synthetics by doing things like that. Not only does it look great, people have no idea it's a wig when you're doing something as simple as wearing a clip into it. But it also helps the longer wigs last longer.

With longer wigs, I think I see women do this during the winter, when you have a longer wig and you put your coat on on top of the wig, and then you flip your hair out, which is something that I have seen women that have had naturally long hair all their life. And then when they have to go over two alternative hair, it's something you don't think about, but something as little as that as your coat on top of your wig.

That type of friction can start some where and tear. So you kind of have to think about it as you go through the day. At least I do. As far as the wig. When I go to the bathroom, I will take a moment to at least finger comb it, I will come the back of the nape to keep that as tangle-free as possible. And like I say, I will clip it up.

I just think it looks cute. And it's also more convenient. Oh, and don't discount a shorter wig. Just like No, no, I'm not doing that because I know I did it myself. But there came along with the shop, there was a magazine article, I wanted to wear this one wig that happened to be shoulder-length, or above. And that was the first time I actually really enjoyed a short wig. But I'll tell you, the movement on a shorter one can be really amazing.

If you do the head toss the hair moves, especially if it's a good wig. It became addicting in itself. And I also noticed with the shorter length wigs, one of the things I didn't have to worry about I carry, usually a heavy purse because I gotta carry everything with me because I'm just like that, but the shoulder strap on your hair for the first time I got a really long wig.

That was something that I never realized when I had hair on my life. But when you have waist-length hair, it can be a little work to keep up with. So if you have waist-length here, I'm jealous of you. But of course I can buy mine. But uh, you have a lot of things to deal with that I didn't realize. So sometimes that's another point, you don't realize there won't be things about a wig as you go along that you don't realize until you wear it.

So that's going to happen. So, you know, if you get a wig, that's a mistake, just try and learn from it. I learned the most from wigs that simply didn't work because it teaches you what you want to look for to avoid the next time. Now, that is something that you might want to take a look at. Because sometimes when women come into my shop, and they're bringing wigs that didn't work for them, they will bring in four or five similar wigs.

And I guess if something isn't working for you on the front, it's not likely that something just as similar might work either. And I guess this is hard to explain on just an audio format, I might have to do a video or something about that. Sometimes slight differences can make all the difference in the world. But I see sometimes too many trying to get the effect of something that isn't working for you. And I guess if you want help with that in person, that's what we do in our shop. I mean, it's, I hope, if nothing else, that I've intrigued you about coming out to our shop, because we really are experts in finding what the right solution is for you. When you are in my shop.

It's not just that you're going to try wigs on but like say you get it down to the choice of two or three. I know the questions to ask you to help you make the better decision as to what is the better wig for you. And I can fast forward you through years of errors just in one person visit.

Now at this point, we haven't expanded into video consoles but look for that in the future because I plan on doing that too. Okay, so let me address care before I go any further. I talked about a tendency to over shampoo that I had. When you're using products.

It's an individual choice but what we do at our shop when you come we give you a care kit because I remember when I was shopping, nobody told me how to take care of a wig. So when you leave our shop, you're gonna be supplied with the basics.

We like Henry Margu shampoo. It's very a nice shampoo I've watched. We've given it out to women and on their initial visit and then when they come back wearing their wigs that they wore in but washed in the the shampoo, it makes a huge difference in the world. One of the things

I'm a real stickler about using products that work. So that is the shampoo that we recommend at the shop. Although there are good others. I mean, I'm sure there's a million opinions out there. But if you're starting out, I can't say enough about the Henry Margu products, we also use their finish, which is spray, which I instruct everyone at the shop, use the hair spray, fix it up as little as possible. Because when you're trying to look natural in a wig, the movement is just very nice.

So when you tend to spray it down, not only does it coat up your wig, but it will like shellac it into place. And sometimes I see women with the wigs that are like hair sprayed into like where the whole thing turns when they turn their head.

So that's a reason but we give the hairspray in case you have a special occasion. At least you know, if you use this it will wash out of your wig. We also use their spray conditioner revitalized. Although there are many, many good spray conditioners that are very light. Another favorite of mine is Envy Renu and repair With my longer wigs and on the initial wear I will spray the nape of the neck and the ends with renu and repair. So that's a good one.

But above and beyond the most miracle worker of any of the products that I have seen and that we do give you when you come to the shop is Belle Madame Balm. That is their conditioner. And you can use it a couple of different ways.

After your wig get shampooed. But sometimes I skip the shampoo and I will use the balm, you wet your wigs down or you put your a little bit of balm in the water and soak your wig for a while. Sometimes I will wet my wig down and just coat it with the balm and let it sit for 5-10 minutes, you can do that sitting in the balm water, then you take it out and you don't even need to rinse it, you just roll it up in a towel, give it a shake and let it air dry.

So out of the products, that is the selection that I have found that I personally use to keep my wigs looking as nice as possible and not getting as gunked up. But as I say products are an individual thing. Don't be afraid to try a product. But my point is, is that sometimes we're looking for solutions in a product form, when really it's a matter of how you take care of it.

So I guess it's about time for me to wrap this up. You get me started on wigs and I can talk forever when we get a shipment into the store. As far as I'm concerned. It's Christmas morning, there is a picture that you may see of the shop, you'll see there is a picture of a little girl on the wall in a long wig. That's me, that's me, that's my first wig that came from the JC Penney catalog.

I think it was about six or seven years old, I have a sock-it-to-me shirt, which is that's a show that your grandma and I used to watch was Laugh-In in the 60s and early 70s. But anyway, when I was little, I never really had good hair to begin with.

And I wanted that feeling of hair. And, you know, it's like I knew I was meant to do this when I was at that age. So I am shame-free stigma-free I on my best natural hair day. It doesn't compare to how good I can look or feel in a wig.

Now hair or no hair, whatever way you want to go. You're beautiful, that's not the point. What I'm trying to say is that if alternative hair can help you feel that great. I'm all for it. So thanks for listening, any show ideas or if you want to get in touch, you can go to Verybestlittlehairhouse.com join the email list. We are about to start email listing.

I am a huge hater of spam emails, I promise I won't do that to you. You can also find the Wise wig Advice Group attached to our Facebook page. That is a group that I moderate that other wig wearers are in there, I will tend to put videos or share things from the vendors in there first. It's a place where we don't do any sales in there.

And I'm very vigilant about no kind of promotional stuff. But I will share videos that have been helpful to me. But that's another safe place that you can feel comfortable to talk about alternative hair and it's a private group. We are [@VeryBestLittlehairhouse](https://www.instagram.com/VeryBestLittleHairhouse) on Instagram. And also I have an Alternative hair Alchemist podcast group attached to the Facebook page.

But as of yet there's not a lot of action in there. But anyway, those are the ways to get in touch and I hope to hear from you. My next episode is planned for all of a sudden hair loss if you're facing chemo

And the theme of it will be hair today gone tomorrow. Oh, I'm sorry, I couldn't resist. So anyway, tune in for next time and we'll be addressing sudden hair loss. Bye bye.

If you love this episode and want to connect with me, please go to my website and drop me an email.

Very bestlittlehairhouse.com so we can get in touch. And until next time, remember that you are beautiful, perfect and loved just the way you are.