

Natural Hair Conditioning

Vinegar rinses can do wonders! The acidity from the vinegar helps take away built up gook stuck to the hair such as those nasty forms of silicones found in many shampoos and conditioners today, helps break down excess oils, and also helps remove extra glycerin from the hair that can leave hair "waxy" feeling for those that use the more natural approach of soap shampoo bars.

It can also actually help condition hair by gently smoothing the hair shaft making it less prone to breakage and giving it a nice shiny appearance

Either apple cider vinegar or white vinegar will do, but many seem to prefer the apple cider. Simply take a clean empty squeeze bottle or cup and dilute with water. After shampooing your hair, evenly distribute this mixture throughout your hair while rubbing it in to make sure all the hair is covered, paying special attention to the areas closer to the scalp. (Be careful not to get any in your eyes- it will sting!) You can leave this on for just a few minutes and then give your hair one more light rinse. Easy peasy! If you still use regular store bought shampoos this regimen can work wonders using vinegar rinses even once every other week, but you can do this as often as necessary. Those that use shampoo bars may use it more often- I, personally, use nothing but shampoo bars and take advantage of vinegar rinses after every wash with excellent results

As for how much to dilute the vinegar mix, I've seen and tried all sorts of combinations. Some say to only use a tablespoon of vinegar to about one quart of water, and I've seen all the way up to 1 part vinegar and 3 part water mixes recommended. I think it's really dependant on what hair type you have and what your normal hair care regimen consists of. Your best bet is to take into consideration what length your hair is to make sure you have enough liquid to fully saturate your hair and start with a tablespoon or two of vinegar. You could experiment from there until you find what your hair likes best. Sometimes I like to be creative with it and substitute water for other liquids such as juices, teas, or milks for the added nutritional benefits that it can give to your hair. The sky is the limit- have fun with it! And yes, we know vinegar does stink! However, the smell of the vinegar fades as it dries- usually taking other bad odors with it. Sometimes adding just a few drops of essential oils to your vinegar rinse can help

Another thing you could do is infuse the vinegar with different herbs or spices such as calendula petals, chamomile, lavender buds, rosemary, parsley, rose hips, etc- many times it will help deal with the temporary smell from the vinegar and all the ones I just mentioned are even excellent for encouraging hair growth. To infuse your vinegar, just take a large clean empty jar and fill to about two inches from the top with the herbs, flowers, or spices of your choice. I tend to prefer materials that have already been dried - using fresh herbs or flowers introduces moisture into the mix and could possibly start growing some unwelcomed ickiness into your mix! Then pour your vinegar into the jar approximately to about one inch from the top of the jar- the less air you have in there also discourages mold or other bacterial growth. Considering the acidity of the vinegar this is all highly unlikely, but it's always better to take the safer route! Store your jar in a dark place, preferably a warm spot, for about 4 to 8 weeks. Try to shake up the jar once a day, or at least as often as you can remember. When her time is up you can use anything from a strainer to cheesecloth to strain the herbs or other materials out of your infused vinegar and voilà- it's ready for use!

You can visit Lisa Chambers' blog for more articles on beauty, health, and more at chambersessentials.com