

How to Create 1940s Hairstyles



'40s Hairstyle

The glamorous hairstyles of Rita Hayworth and Bette Davis are the epitome of 1940s [glamour](#). The '40s were exemplified with curls in every hairstyle. Curls were the definition of polished femininity. These old school styles are still very much en vogue. The side parts and pin curls of yesteryear are deemed to delicate by some to replicate authentically in present day. With a few tips, you can replicate a 1940s hairstyle in your own home.

Difficulty: Moderate

Instructions

Things You'll Need:

- Large pack of bobby pins Comb Ponytail holder Hairspray

1. Step 1

Pin the entire head in pin curls. To do this, comb the hair out in 1-inch sections and roll them around the index finger. Once secured, push the curl to the root of the head with your hand.

2. Step 2

Place two bobby pins in the hair to hold the curl in place. The first [bobby pin](#) should go straight across the middle of the curl to anchor it to the hair. The second bobby pin should go in the hair in an angle perpendicular to the first bobby pin. The end result should appear as if the bobby pins are making the letter "X" on top of the curl.

3. Step 3

Repeat the pinning process until the entire head is pin curled and leave the style to set for at least 8 hours. It is recommended to try this style at night, so that it may set appropriately.

4. Step 4

Remove the pins after the required setting time and gently shape the curls with your finger. This is the basic starting point for any '40s style.

5. Step 5

Comb the hair to one side and bobby pin for a page boy look that is simple yet [elegant](#).

6. Step 6

Pull your hair into a ponytail after making a side part to pull of a '40s school girl look. You can also pull your front bangs out and roll them towards your forehead and then pin them for extra height and a cool '40s rockabilly look.

7. Step 7

Finish with hairspray after you've decided your look. No '40s style is complete without hairspray to hold it all together.



Emulate the hairstyles of the early '40s. These saw a bit more change than fashion did. The styles were often very creative and elaborate and the short haircuts of the 1930s gave way to the popularity of shoulder length, or a bit longer hair.

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- Hair started to be styled with more height, not close to the head as was popular in the 1930s.
 - The finger waves that had been popular since the 1920s became incorporated into more feminine and flirty styles. Finger waves would be styled along the side of the face, leading up to piles of curls. Finger waves were worn as a way to style the hair swept up from the face into a style, rather than showing up as the entire hairstyle.
 - Curls were often tight and well defined. Pin curls were made tight and not brushed through as much as they would be later in the 1940s. There are more variations than there is room to describe here, but a lot of elements in a combined form that were popular through the decade continued into the 1950s hairstyles.
 - The styles were often very creative and elaborate and the short haircuts of the 1930s gave way to the popularity of shoulder length, or a bit longer hair.

Wear 1940s makeup. It was still using some colors that had been popular in the 1930s, however, small changes began to come into vogue.

- Eyes weren't emphasized with dark shadows, rather just some mascara, though mascara was often worn on top and bottom lashes. Eyeliner was generally worn on the top lids, not the bottom.
 - Eyebrows were arched more naturally, but still had an arc to them that could only be achieved with tweezing and shaping, and eyebrow pencil.
 - Lipstick was still darker shades of red, maroon was popular. Mauves and corals were also popular, and Tangee lipstick, the original color-change lipstick, is still available. It was still common to fill in lipstick beyond the lip line, especially to emphasize the curve of the “Cupid's bow” of the top lip to more of a gentle arc.
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Wear more natural and simple makeup that was characteristic during the mid-'40s.

- Eyebrows were to be well manicured, but to a more natural arc, much less stylized.
- Eye makeup was understated, also, mascara being generally worn only on top lashes and eyeliner on the top lids for evening events.
- Rouge was matched to the complexion to be most natural and flattering.
- Lipstick was popular in fire-engine red, or any brighter shade of reds.
- Nail varnish was also often of a similar red, often worn to match the lipstick.

Make this look work with red or pink lipstick, go a tad heavy on the blush, use tans, browns or dark grays on your eyelids to complete your 40's Pin Up Girl look!

Add the hairstyle of the mid-40s. This was the time when most of the hairstyles we think of as the 1940s style began to be worn by everyone.

- Side reverse rolls, worn so that the rolls end closely together on the top of the head, would create a “V” shape, and they were commonly called “Victory Rolls.”
- Pin curls at this time were essential in creating complicated styles. For casual looks, pin curls would be made in even rows, and brushed through for a lovely wavy effect.
- Ribbons, flowers, and snoods were popular hair accessories.



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- Red, coral or pink lipstick suited to your skin tone.

Hair rats are great for the hairstyles, to accomplish rolls and faux bangs

1940's



Rita Hayworth wears gorgeous victory rolls.

Curly hair in the 40's was worn longer (past the shoulders) and carefully rolled. Because of the economic hardships brought about by World War II, many women couldn't afford extravagant fashions, so they counteracted the plainness of their clothing with complicated hairstyles.

For an easily recognizable 40's hairdo, do your hair in victory rolls. The easiest way to achieve this style is with a curling iron. Hair is curled and rolled away from the face, either on the sides (aka "side reverse rolls") or on the top of the head ("top reverse rolls"), and pinned in place. The ends are curled and flow loosely down the back.

Pin curls were another popular way to wear curly hair. They can be done all over the head, or just around the temples and forehead. To get the pin-curl look, separate damp hair into small sections. Curl each section around your finger and secure with a bobby pin. If you're sleeping on your hair, cover it with a [silk scarf](#) to keep the pins in place.

More detailed instructions on styling your hair in victory rolls and pin curls can be found below in "Resources."



1930s

Making Finger Waves

A finger wave may be defined and described as a wave made by wetting the hair, combing it flat, making sharp ridges at intervals over the head, stretching the hair between the ridges, covering with a net, and drying under the electric dryer.



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The Finger Wave.

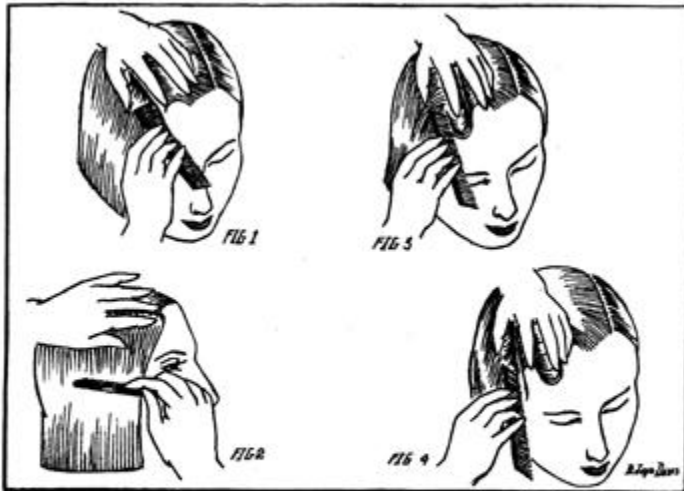
The process of finger waving may be described briefly as follows:

Hair that has been dampened with water is combed out straight and sponged with curling fluid (setting lotion). The first wave should begin an inch or more from the scalp, depending upon personal preference. The hair is pressed down near the part with the left hand and drawn by the comb toward the brow, making a sharp ridge. The comb is pressed upward and should graze the scalp so that every hair will be included in the wave. The comb is not released until the ridge is held firmly in place between the first and second fingers of the left hand and then it is drawn through the hair to the ends. It is advisable to wave around the head instead of downward toward the ends.

To make the second wave the comb is drawn sharply away from the brow, while the first wave is held firmly in place. Continue the wave, working down from the part, around the head. The ends in front of the ear are curled into a flat ringlet.

The hair over the ear is curled in back of it and, when dry, is combed to cover the ear.

A net should be placed over the head and the hair dried before combing the wave. While the hair is drying, the waves can be pressed in more deeply. After the hair is dry it should be combed back from the face, not downward from the part, and pushed upward into waves by the hand and the comb.



FINGER WAVING—STEP BY STEP

Figure 1. Demonstrates the proper manipulation in which the hair is drawn with the comb toward the face in order to form the ridge of the first wave.

Figure 2. Demonstrates the proper position of index and middle fingers of the left hand astride the ridge to prevent the hair from slipping while combing.

Figure 3. Demonstrates the direction of the ridge backward to complete a wave.

Figure 4. Demonstrates the third ridge, which is the beginning of the second wave.

Important Points to Remember in Finger Waving:

The hair must be thoroughly saturated in order to obtain the best results.

The hair should be combed smooth and into the direction it is to be waved. The hair should then be pushed up with palm of the hand to ascertain the direction of the natural wave. The durability of the wave depends entirely upon following the natural wave.

The smoothness and durability of the finger wave is also due to the continual combing. It is necessary that the teeth of the comb penetrate the scalp. This eliminates any straight hair underneath and is accomplished by bringing the comb under the finger and combing the hair until the comb is free.

The amount of hair taken upon the comb should never be over one inch on the sides and 1/2 inch at the crown. One of the chief faults in finger waving is swinging the hair too far. When hair is sparse upon the head, the wave should be swung into position and then the comb should be drawn back slightly, which will allow the hair to cover the bare spaces.

A becoming style should be decided upon and the waves mathematically figured to fit the head, before the wave is begun.

There is a tendency to push the hair up on the head rather than to draw the hair in a tight, straight line. In forming waves,

the finger should always be placed slightly above the ridge to avoid the ridge being formed lower than the one previously made.

The small strands of hair to be made into face curls should be removed before commencing the wave. These are not curled or pinned until the finish of the wave but are moistened with finger wave lotion and shaped to the face.

Finger wave lotion [setting lotion] should never be used too generously or of too thick consistency, as it will flake on the hair and retard the drying action. Thin hair should be set without lotion as it makes the wave too flat on the head.

The finish at the back of the head is as important as the face line and the hair if too short to make into curls, should be waved as far as possible. If the hair at the hair line is too straight and stubborn to curl, the ends should be turned on a warm bob curl iron [curling iron] when the wave is dry.

The nicest finish for the finger wave is pin curls; however, some women prefer the curls rolled on a stick as described in the Wet Mae Murray. If curls are to be rolled up at the lower back section of the head, a heavy cord-two ends of which are held tighly at the front by the patron-will keep the hair hair smooth while the operator is rolling the curls.

The size of the wave is governed by the placement of the fingers below the ridge, as follows:

* To produce a **small wave**, the fingers are not moved after they straddle the ridge, but the hair is drawn along the finger with the fingers still in this position.

* To produce a **medium wave**, the finger is rolled a half turn downward after the fingers have been placed astride the wave.

* To produce a **large wave**, both index finger and middle finger are placed below the ridge and the hair drawn along the index finger.

If the ridges are to be deepened the hair will have to be moistened between the waves. This is accomplished by sprinkling the center of the waves with water on the comb. You may use the index and middle fingers to sharpen the ridge.

Rules for shaping the hair properly around the ears:

* If the wave is directed forward in the section of hair just above the ear, 1/2 inch of hair is included from behind the ear, while if the wave is directed backward at this point 1/2 inch of hair from the front is included.

As a general rule, it is considered much better to wave directly over the ear.

The hair must not be wet.

At the point where the wave reaches the ear, the comb should be tilted slightly backward to control the hair.

In shaping the wave the hair should be held out away from the ear.

Otherwise the forming of the wave is the same. The hair must not only fit well around the ears when waved, must match when dried and combed.

How to do a Victory Roll hair style

By [Aslynn](#), eHow Member



do a Victory Roll hair style

Many women are looking for something new, feminine, sexy... and they are finding it in the past. Classic 1940's Pin Up Girl is a look that is on the rise. These lovely ladies were painted on the side of [aircraft](#) during World War II and appeared in many magazines while their toned down sisters worked the factories back home and in hospitals throughout Ally territory. They shared one similarity more often than not, the Victory roll or curl hairstyle, named for the V shape they made if a lady didn't have bangs or fringe. Easy, versatile, and very stable even in poor weather, this classic, classy hairstyle is perfect for our economy crisis too! Dirt Cheap!

Difficulty: Moderately Easy

Instructions

Things You'll Need:

- Shoulder length hair or longer, without too many short layers around the face
- Hair Pins
- Curling iron or rollers
- Comb or brush
- Hair spray (optional)
- Two Hair Rats (optional)
- Patience (NOT optional)

1. 1



The Victory Roll hair style is amazingly forgiving of ladies of different races, face shapes and sizes and can be adjusted easily to give you the most appealing look for you. Any hair color or cut works so long as you have enough length to "roll". Having drastically layered hair can make this style more difficult, if not impossible. If you have anything close to a "pixie" cut, forget about it! Read this article again in a few months.

2. 2

Lay out your tools. These will include the items listed, but you may also need a straightening iron, spray bottle with water, hair elastics or even a decorative flower, be it real or fake.

3. 3

Decide if you want your Victory Rolls symmetrical or asymmetrical. Do you want one roll or two? Part your hair down the middle or off to the side. Ladies in the 40's did both so just choose one you think will work well with your facial features. Use a comb or parting tool to make a crisp part.

4. 4

Start out by parting your hair just behind your ear and moving up to the top of your head. Once you have done this on both sides you should have 3 sections of hair; right, left and back. Use an elastic or pins to keep the back section of your hair out of the way while you work.

5. 5

If your hair is curly to the point of frizziness, you may need to straighten your hair first. If your hair is very thick and stiff (Asian or red heads for example) it might help to get the curl started with a curling iron.

6. 6

Victory Rolls in shoulder length hair: Choose a side and brush your hair until it is smooth and held high, say near your temple. Spray on a little water or hair spray and run your hair between your first and middle fingers like a curling iron, making your hair flat and about 2 inches wide. Use your other hand to curl it inside itself, rolling it several times if possible. Rotate your fingers and try to keep the ends of your hair inside the Victory Roll curl.

7. 7



Use at least 3 hair pins in the front to hold this Victory Roll in place and add as many as you need down the side closest to your part. As you can see in this photo my hair is a little short to make perfectly smooth Victory Rolls. Don't worry about pins showing, once you raise your head no one will see them. And besides, you bought some that match your hair color, right?

8. 8



Repeat on the opposite side, always curling toward the part. Finish with hair spray to smooth any stray hairs and take a look at your Victory Rolls. Are they in the right place? If one seems off, just take it down and do again, practice makes perfect!

9. 9

Are they too poofy or not poofy enough? If they are too poofy you can literally "squish" them down with your hand pushing the top of the curl back, so it will lay flatter. Not poofy enough may mean you didn't get enough turns into the curl. No problem, take it down and try again.

10.10

Another no no that usually happens with Victory Rolls in shorter hair is "hair tunnel". This is when you get a perfect tube of hair on top of your head that you can see straight through. You should not be able to see any light through your curl, it makes your hair look thin. First, try to "squish" the roll, pressing the top of the curl back. If that doesn't do it, try to roll it again. If that doesn't work your hair may be very thin. That's ok, this is where the hair rats come in.

11.11

If you have very thin hair you can purchase small hair rats to use inside the Victory rolls. These add bulk and can be bought to match your hair color. They can even help you make the rolls easier, just start at step 6, place the rat at the end of your hair, and start rolling like a curler. Be sure to cover the rat with your hair, you don't want anyone to know it is there! Pin in place with as many pins as you need.

12.12

For very long hair: If your hair is past your shoulders you are going to do more of a twist then a roll to get the same effect. The ends of your hair will come out the back of the curl and down the back of your head. Pull up one side of your hair, hold it about 2 inches away from the scalp and wrap your hair around your thumb, wrapping towards your part. Smooth the end of your hair backwards behind the roll. Pin the curl in place using as many pins as you need, usually 3 in front at least.

13.13

Finishing the Victory roll hair style is easy too! Spray down stray hairs, then add a flower, clip, or even a pair of cherries just above one ear. The back of your hair can be put in a bun, curled under, or set in waves down your back. The variations are endless! You can even leave one side down! (Especially nice if you've made one good roll and can't get the other side to work!) Put the flower on the side with the Victory roll!

14.14

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- Women would make their own rats! They collected the hair from their combs every day and either rolled it in their hands to make a kind of dreadlock or their put it in a hair net and sewed it closed! Women have been doing this for years!
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- Victory Rolls are a growing trend in [weddings](#) too, for both brides and bridesmaids.



Change the hair. Hairstyles of this time became more casual. Fingerwaves had all but vanished. Short hairstyles with modest curls were the highest fashion. Some women began to grow their hair longer now. Rolls were still popular but were giving way to more sleek and short hairstyles popular in France. Bangs began to show up more frequently.

Select different makeup. Makeup after the war saw a few interesting changes. For the most part it had stayed the same, though now, lipstick wasn't worn much outside the natural lip line and followed a more natural arc of the Cupid's bow. This can be seen in pin-up girl posters of the time.

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- If you learn to apply fake lashes, this goes a long way.

Tips

- Use your common sense, as many of these make up styles look best on a certain type of face, which the individual must consider before incorporating any such style into her own unique "look."
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Think Bette Davis or Ginger Rogers for that Hollywood Glamour look. Healthy, powdered skin. Bow shaped bright red lipsticks, clearly defined. Highly arched penciled eyebrows with a little pale blue eyeshadow. Beauty spots. Eyelashes and a clear dark fine line on the top of the eyelid, give elegant definition. Rouge was worn to blend with the lipstick close to the nose in a triangular shape: frequently created by three dots blended together. Elaborate hairstyles, made by rolling hair either in a sausage shape, or with small pin curls and decorated with large flowers or bows. Lots of hair spray!

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1940s Hair and Makeup

[We Can Do It!](#)

Remember one of the most famous WWII posters of *Rosie the Riveter*? A woman in a red scarf with white polka-dots wrapped around her head and knotted at the top, in blue union uniform showing us her bicep with the tag line at the top that reads "We Can Do It!"? Well this Poster epitomizes the the woman's story during the century of WWII. This poster was put out by a government group named the *War Production Co-ordinating Committee*. The purpose of course was to enlist women's support back home in the war effort.

Like the decades previous this one had the war to set the tone and helped to define a woman's hair and makeup choices. Simplicity was the catchword of the day. For woman were being called on to do a lot during this decade. Makeup was more natural (i.e. creamy skin, smoothly powdered with a natural looking pinkish hue, lips in a patriotic red. The focus for 1940s eyes is the lashes as mascara had found its place during this decade.

Hair was longer and smooth, rendered in a more romantic, softer look than the previous decade. Simplicity may have been important but not at the expense of looking good. According to freebeautytips.org :

"1940's women were asked to do a lot, and working for the war effort took a toll. But glamour was in, fresh from Hollywood, and women who were earning their first paychecks were also shopping, dressing elegantly and using cosmetics like movie stars. Part of the rationale was that the nation's women couldn't afford to look frumpy in a time of war; the other reason for spending so much time and effort on one's appearance was to stay somewhat positive and optimistic. "Putting a brave face on" was more than an interior process: wearing makeup and nice clothes was a statement of self-worth and confidence. "

As in previous decades woman looked to the ladies of the silver screen for "the look"



Hedy Lamarr



Lauren Bacall



Betty Davis



How to Apply 1940s Makeup

The dames in the 1940s were ideally "naturally beautiful," not like the tanned, athletic and fresh-scrubbed 1970s women, but in a soft, feminine and rosy way. Vivien Leigh, Jennifer Jones, Ava Gardner and Ingrid Bergman were among the most famous and beautiful faces of the decade. In the history of Old Hollywood, the makeup of this era is one of the easiest to re-create. Keep that in mind the next time you are invited to a costume [party](#).

Difficulty: Moderately Easy

Instructions

Things You'll Need:

- Foundation in your skin tone
- Translucent rosy powder
- Dark-brown eyebrow pencil or powder
- Eye makeup primer
- Sheer eyeshadow
- Eyelash curler
- Black or black-brown mascara
- False strip eyelashes
- Black liquid eyeliner
- Light rosy blush
- Makeup sponge
- Highly pigmented lip liner in a shade of red and matching lipstick
- Lip brush

1. 1

Apply foundation in your [skin](#) tone.

2. 2

Dust your face lightly with a translucent rose-tinged powder to give your complexion a natural-looking, pinkish hue.

3. 3

Shape and define well-groomed brows with a brow pencil or powder in a shade that matches your hair color if you have dark hair, but darker by a notch or two if you have light hair. Eyebrows should appear perfect, with pronounced arches, regardless of thickness.

4. 4

Apply a soft, subtle shade of eye makeup primer on your lids to complement your skin tone. Very sheer eyeshadow is fine; the focus for 1940s eyes is on the lashes.

5. 5

Curl your eyelashes and lightly stroke black or black-brown mascara on your top lashes.

6. 6

Glue false strip lashes that are longer than your natural ones on your upper lash line, just enough to make your real ones appear more noticeable and defined.

7. 7

Use a black liquid eyeliner over the region where your false lashes meet your lash line. Make sure your line is very thin, fine and even.

8. 8

Buff a light, rosy blush softly into the apples of your cheeks. Blend hard edges away with a makeup sponge to keep your look natural.

9. 9

Exaggerate your top lip by drawing slightly past your natural lip line with a waxy highly pigmented lip liner. Select a shade of red that suits your coloring and your current mood. True red, tomato red and orange red were very popular in the 1940s, but deeper and cooler reds, such as raspberry and crimson, were common as well.

10.10

Draw over your bottom lip line following its natural contour. Still using the lip liner, fill in your new lip shape.

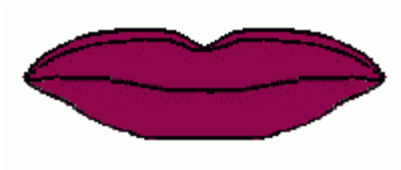
11.11

Layer on a lipstick in a matching shade with a lip brush for even coverage.



.. some color examples:

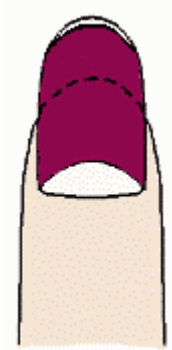




Orange Red



Crimson



Brick Red

Mustard Yellow

Violet

Navy Blue