

# Looking Good

*Helpful tips for personal care when you're visually impaired*

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No matter what your level of vision, looking your best helps you feel your best and face the world with confidence. And believe it or not, many of the skills and techniques involved in personal hygiene do not rely on vision and may only require you to pay closer attention to tactile cues or make a few alterations to increase basic safety. Here are some tips for key portions of your personal grooming regimen:

## DENTAL CARE

- **Let your finger be your guide.** Put your index finger next to the bristles of your toothbrush and use it as a guide for putting the right amount of toothpaste in the right place.
- **Use contrasting colors.** Pick a toothbrush that is a good color contrast to your countertop or sink. You can also pick toothbrushes with colored bristles for added contrast with white toothpaste. There are even special low vision toothbrushes available that have black bristles.
- **Let a little floss hang out.** When you finish flossing your teeth, pull a short length out of the dispenser to help easily locate the end of the thread for the next use.

## HAIR CARE

- **Ask an expert.** Simplify your hair routine by asking your hair stylist or barber to help you design a style that is easy to care for as well as flattering.
- **Make your hair products easy to tell apart.** Buy shampoo and conditioner products with distinct shapes, colors or fragrances. Put a rubber band around one to clearly differentiate it from another. Or buy all-in-one shampoo and conditioner.



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## Looking Good (continued)

### MAKEUP

- **Consult with those in the know.** When buying makeup, take along a trusted friend to give you honest opinions about what looks best on you. Or ask the person in the cosmetics department to help you find the colors that best match your skin tones and are easy to apply.
- **Less is more.** Try using less makeup overall, especially mascara or pencils. Or switch to softer shades to help with blending colors.
- **Polish up your manicure technique.** If you polish your own nails, using clear or pale polish will make any imperfections less noticeable. Also, applying a little petroleum jelly on the skin and cuticle around each nail will make it easy to wipe off any polish that has accidentally gotten off-track.
- **Let your fingers do the smoothing.** Use your fingers to apply makeup rather than a brush or sponge, to better gauge the amounts and evenness. Store liquid foundation and nail polish in your refrigerator, so the cold temperature will help you feel where you are putting it.
- **Think elastic.** Wrapping a rubber band around your favorite lipstick tube will help you identify it quickly and easily.

### SHAVING

- **The truth is in your fingertips.** Use your sense of touch to determine which areas require shaving.
- **Get it all together.** Assemble all your shaving supplies onto a counter or tray before you begin.
- **Pick your weapon.** A safety razor generally provides a closer shave. Shaving cream or lotion helps soften hair and also helps you feel the difference between shaved and unshaved areas. Use an electric shaver if you feel more comfortable with it.
- **Get a helping hand.** Use the hand that is not holding the razor or shaver as a “guide hand” to explore the area you are about to shave, and draw the skin tighter if desired.
- **Save your skin.** To protect a mole or blemish, place your fingertip over the area and shave around it.
- **Go against the grain.** For best coverage, use overlapping strokes, going against the grain of the hair.



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## Looking Good (continued)

### APPLIANCES AND AIDS

- **Reduce clutter in your cabinet.** Throw out old or unused items in your medicine cabinet. Then label containers using large black print on white labels, and arrange them in alphabetical order.
- **Improve lighting.** For close-up tasks use gooseneck lamps, illuminated magnifiers and magnifying mirrors. Minimize glare from outside sources such as windows and overhead fixtures.
- **Weigh in.** Use talking scales or scales with waist-high dials. Affix brightly colored adhesive tape to indicate your desired weight, so you can tell at a glance how you're doing.

### ORGANIZING YOUR WARDROBE

- **Keep it simple.** Find ways to remove clutter from your closet and organize your clothes in a straightforward manner. Place seasonal items in a different section or a different room.
- **Use Safety Pins.** Come up with a system for identifying items in your closet by placing safety pins on the various pieces of clothing, i.e. one pin for black pants, two pins for brown pants and none for white, etc.
- **Organize by color.** Several adaptive devices are available that can identify the color of an item. If you don't have one of these gadgets, ask a friend or family member to help you place your clothes in order from dark to light colors.
- **Use grouping techniques.** Special space-saver hangers allow you to put an entire outfit together on one hanger. You can even place matching jewelry for the outfit in a small plastic bag and attach it to the hanger as well.

We encourage you to take pride in your appearance, and see how it improves your outlook on life. And we can help. We offer hundreds of free resources, classes and services. For more information, call us or visit us online.

*Stay up to date on ways to help visually impaired people live fulfilling lives. Join our free online community at [solutionsinsight.org](http://solutionsinsight.org).*



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