

Manicuring in the Model A Era

By Jackie Brooks

Well groomed women and girls of the era were expected to have soft, clean, hands and nails.

A basic manicure kit from 1928 would have consisted of, an orangewood stick (used to push back cuticle, clean under the nail, apply cuticle oil, and apply powdered nail whitener under the nail tips), an emery board or metal nail file, Nippers to remove hangnails, and a buffer with a removable chamois. They ranged from a few simple, inexpensive tools (see below left) to very elaborate Dresser sets (see below right) made with Ivory or Tortoise shell.



The youngest girls (and boys) were only expected to have clean fingernails. A girl of grammar school age would have used hand lotion and been allowed to buff her nails to give them a shine for special occasions.

Older girls were shown how to shape their nails with an emery board and to push back their cuticles to avoid hangnails. As a special treat, some were taken to a beauty salon for a 'real' manicure.

If the girl was old enough and it was a special occasion she might be treated to her first (colorless) nail polish with powdered whitener or pencil applied under the nail. This would give the appearance of what we currently refer to as a French manicure. (see right.)



Advertisements of the time, such as Braun's in 1928, refer to nail polish colors as Light or natural (meaning colorless) described as "Goes with all costumes, best with bright colors. Day (medium) Example: Rose, "Charming with pastels, smart with dark green, black and brown", Coral, with white, pink, beige and grey, and Evening (dark) Ruby and Cherry. I was unable to find any reference to "Frosted" shades.

Other companies also refer to day and evening colors but they include pinks, burgundy as well as many others. They were supposed to complement both the complexion of the wearer and the costume. The nail usually had the "moons" left unpainted or clear with color on the nail. It also became fashionable to sometimes leave the nail tip clear as well, either would be correct.

"The Polish of Refinement"

Save Polish Money Complaints

THOUSANDS of shoppes are saving polish and money and winning the enthusiastic good-will of their customers this way:

Instead of putting on two or three coats of ordinary polish they simply brush on, just once, the desired shade of Braun's. With 3 shades to choose from they quickly suit the individual taste of each customer, saving polish, money, time and labor. By using Braun's, which will not peel or change color, polish complaints are forever done away with.

Quarter Pint now only **\$2** (formerly \$4.00)

BRAUN'S ALMABRA NAIL POLISH

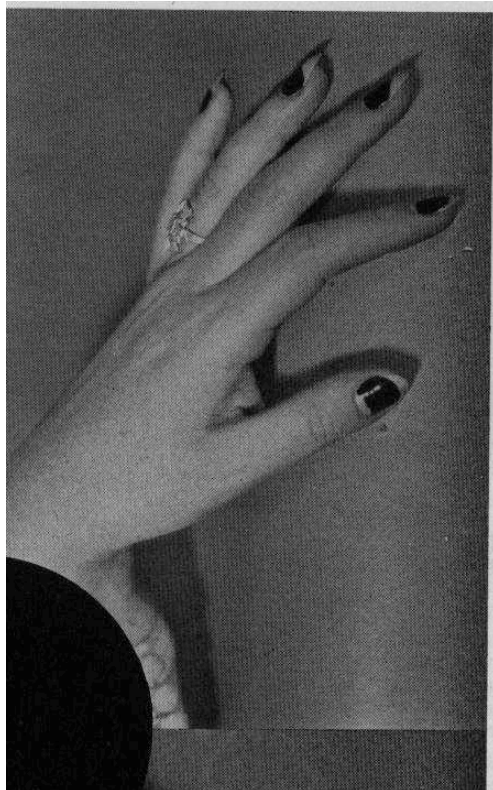
Three shades: LIGHT (Colorless), DAY (Medium), EVENING (Dark).

Get Manicure Kits FREE

Every manicurist needs a Braun's Professional Kit, FREE with your order for one, two or three quarter pint bottles of Braun's Polish at the specially reduced price of \$2 (formerly \$4.00). Each kit contains four reliable bottles complete with brush attached to ground-glass stopper. Fits right on your manicure table. You get one FREE kit with each bottle, only 3 FREE kits to a shoppe. The kit alone is worth more than \$2 to any manicurist.

Braun's Almabra Preparations, Inc. 624 Madison Ave. New York

WILL NOT PEEL OR CHANGE COLOR



In the April 1931 issue of *American Hairdresser* it says: "The lighter shades which are appropriate for daytime are apt to appear palid and lifeless under the glow of electricity, and fashionable women at nightfall should look for a more exotic and brilliant shade".

"Some of the striking combinations for formal evening wear, illustrated at left, are glossy jet black on the nail itself contrasted with tips of pale silver or coral or tea rose with pale gold depending on the color of the gown worn.

"And so it lies within your power to transform the most workaday, lifeless hand by a mere wave of your polish brush, into those of grace and colorful beauty".

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