



JUST SHOW MY HAIR THE NOZZLE OF a hairdryer and it's ppp-poker straight – no movement, no girlie wisps or sexy waves. Tongs are my weekend treat.

I have mastered the art of the tousled wave and, given the best part of an hour completely alone and with full concentration on the heated barrel, I can create something half decent. But I just don't have time in my working week to commit to this elaborate process so it's strictly a weekend-only style. Having been reared on movies such as *Annie* and *Curly Sue*, my obsession with curls started at an early age but I witnessed enough dodgy 1980s perms to know to keep well away and stay straight.

Curls were abundant on the 2012 catwalks and, with tongs fast overtaking irons as the go-to styling tool, now it's the public's turn. That's why I'm shocked to hear the perming technique has recently been taken off the hairdressing curriculum and many young stylists can't do them (I can sense the OAP uprising already).

So it's a pleasure to be in the hands of Melanie Halacoglu in Hari's Kings Road salon in London. Mel is committed to single-handedly changing attitudes towards the perm. 'I want to take away the stigma attached to the perm. I use a variety of squiddy rods for a softer, more natural result. No crispy curls here!'

The Boho Drop Perm is billed to give hair a beachy wave from the mid-lengths to ends, leaving roots natural for a laid-back LA vibe. Other than that, it's not unlike a traditional perm whereby the solution breaks down the disulfide bonds that decide your hair's structure (curly, straight, wavy etc), and then the neutraliser sets the new shape to the curve of the rollers. My hair is wound around giant squiddy rods and the lightest of perming lotions is applied thoroughly. The resulting structure is so large, it takes four shower caps to cover it, and I look like a bizarre alien. This is finished off with an intensive conditioning treatment for a healthy, non-frazzled gloss.

Upside down with a diffuser working around my roots, I realise for the first time I'm nervous about the result. Everyone



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Extreme Beauty

The Boho Drop Perm

Can a new curling technique make perms popular again? Jessica Hough is brave enough to try it out

I've spoken to in the past week has told me not to do this, but I've continued regardless. That's when I think, 'What have I done?'

When I'm flipped upright again, there are no springy spiral curls but a mane of a hundred tiny waves. But the waves aren't bouncy and voluminous and rather than dropping out towards the end, they curl up even tighter. It's beachy but in the most

literal of senses. Like an extra from *Point Break*, I look like I've just surfaced from catching some gnarly surf and my salt-sprayed hair is still wet. Only it's not, it's bone dry. The effect is great, it's just not for the office so I can see myself having to smooth it out with a comb come Monday morning. It's exactly what it's supposed to be, completely boho. Only it turns out that maybe I'm not.

The Boho Drop Perm costs from £200, lasts three to six months and is available with Mel at Hari's Kings Road Salon (020 7349 8722; harissalon.com). Alternatively, speak to your stylist about how to achieve a similar effect.

Photograph by Christophe Kütner/trunkarchive.com