

Rerooting Mohair

The rooting technique's almost the same - but the fun of mohair is in the dyeing and prepping! All you need is a box of RIT, mild dish soap, salt, a pot of boiling water, and a little creativity!

1. For the most versatility and control over your finished color, I recommend you buy bundled mohair. Wefted mohair can be used, but you'll need to cut it off the weft before rooting it. About 1.5-2 ounces (1.5 yards of weft) is enough to cover a Blythe (SBLs take a little more than EBLs). For the poofy look, buy curly mohair. Wavy mohair will be more smooth.

First you will need to carefully cut the rubber-band and gently wash the banded end by rinsing it in warm soapy water. (Do not agitate it much with your hands or the fibers will lock.)

Split the bundle into four or five smaller sections. Wet the hair. You will have to add a little soap to break the surface tension and get through the oils in the hair.



2. Set up your dye bath - for my project, I decided I wanted a varied, dip-dyed look, so I made several small dye baths of varying intensities. (Ignore the directions on the box - you need a pretty concentrated dye if you want a bold color.) Don't forget a pinch of salt and soap! Pull out a tiny section of hair and do a test-strip first to acquaint yourself with how long it will take to achieve the desired color.

I used a bamboo stick to hold the tips of my hair out of the dye, since i wanted them very light. I left my hair in the boiling dye for 2 or 3 minutes.



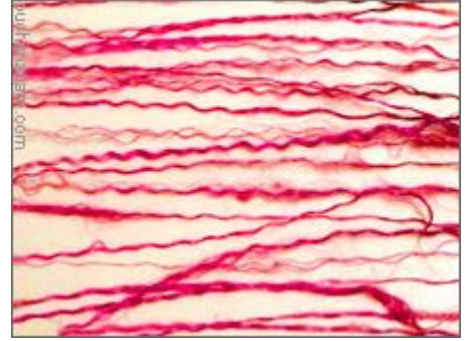
3. RINSE each section thoroughly in cold water until the water runs clear. Do not agitate them if possible — just let the water run straight through. Different dye baths and soak times will give you different intensities. Notice how dark the “roots” are on some of these pieces.

Dye ALL your mohair before planting a single root to avoid mismatching or blotchy results.

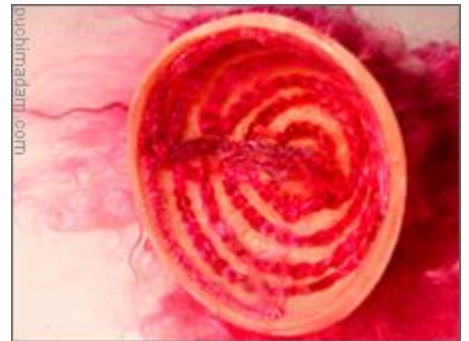


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4. While the hair is still wet (the hair needs to stay wet while you are working with it - do not store wet mohair for prolonged periods of time, it will rot) pull apart individual plugs. If any locking has occurred, just pull at the knotted area. Overly knotted hair may need to be ripped out and thrown away. I like to work at the sink so I can use running water to smooth out my plugs. (Water is the magic ingredient when working with mohair.). Mohair should only be rubbed from root-to-tip. Rubbing it in the opposite direction will damage the surface. You can see to the right of the picture that some of the plugs have frizzy ends. Big knots can be easily torn off. Your plugs should have a nice crimped curl from root to tip.



5. You're ready to plug! Use larger crochet needles with mohair I used a #10/11 for the part and hairline, and a #9 for the field. Follow the locked loop technique, but instead of folding each strand in half, fold it about 2-3" from the cut end to maximize length.



The fluffiness of curly mohair means that you do not need to thatch the part line. If you plan to root your scalp without skipping many holes, you may not even want to root a part line. Just begin at the crown and spiral down.

6. Save your tiniest plugs for the hairline, and don't forget to mix your colors around! Notice that I skipped quite a few holes in the field, but filled every hole (you can get away with every-other hole) in the hairline with a tinier plug.



If you're un-planted strands dry out, re-wet them. You'll get big knots and stray hairs if you root them dry!

7. Don't be afraid to mix different colors and values of hair - the results will have much more depth than a solid color! Good luck!

