



Module 6 : How to Perform a Manicure

- What supplies you will need to perform a manicure
- How to shape the nails
- The best way to deal with cuticles
- How to make each manicure perfect - every time

In this module you will learn:

- What supplies you will need to perform a manicure
- How to shape the nails
- The best way to deal with cuticles
- How to make each manicure perfect - every-time

6.1: Shaping the Natural Nail

Before we look at the manicure we will first investigate the different options available to your client for nail shape.

Remember - each client will have preferences for nail shape.

Most clients seek out a nail technician to obtain a clean and even look to their nails, but also one that will look nice and impress. As a nail technician it is important to have different nail shapes that will provide individual attention and customisation for your clients.

Nails are unique to each person, not only in shape and size, but certain features. Some individuals have long fingers with wider nail beds while others have short fingers with shorter nail beds.

Examining your client's nail to see the natural features they have is the foundation for the nail shape you should choose.

There are five basic shapes:

- Square
- Round
- Oval
- Squoval
- Pointed

6.2: Nail Shapes

Oval

Oval shapes are the most common because it adds length to the nail and provides a softer curve. An oval shape can be difficult due to nail features. It is important to begin by straightening the sidewalls of the nails until they are even.

Begin from the side and move to the top of the nail smoothing as you go, making arching motions with the nail file. The next step is to work on the angles of the sides to create a balanced oval with soft edge.

Square

Square shapes are often created for acrylic nails. The side walls are straight with two sharp points on the tips to create a balanced C-curve. This shape can also be created on regular nails.

Start with a medium grade file to shape the free edge and side walls first. You will need to turn the hand over to straighten the free edge with the file perpendicular to the nail. The sidewall of the nail is filed straight up.

Squoval

The Squoval is another popular shape.

The essence of this popular shape is based on a combination of square and oval. It is often not a part

of the nail technician textbook for formal training; however, it is one that clients will ask for. It is a square shape without the harsh edges.

The square is built first in the same manner as any square nail. Next the side walls are straightened; however, at the end the edges are rounded gradually to take away the harsh edge of the square, while leaving nice square sides.

Round

Round shaped nails are conservative and frequently used when a client has a nice, natural round shape.

Round nails have soft edges with a subtle outline. Begin with the sidewalls by straightening them out. After the sidewalls are smooth, the edges can be rounded out for a nice even look. This particular style requires less angle and filing. The top of the nail is tapered meaning the nail is slightly slimmer at the tip than at the beginning of the nail bed.

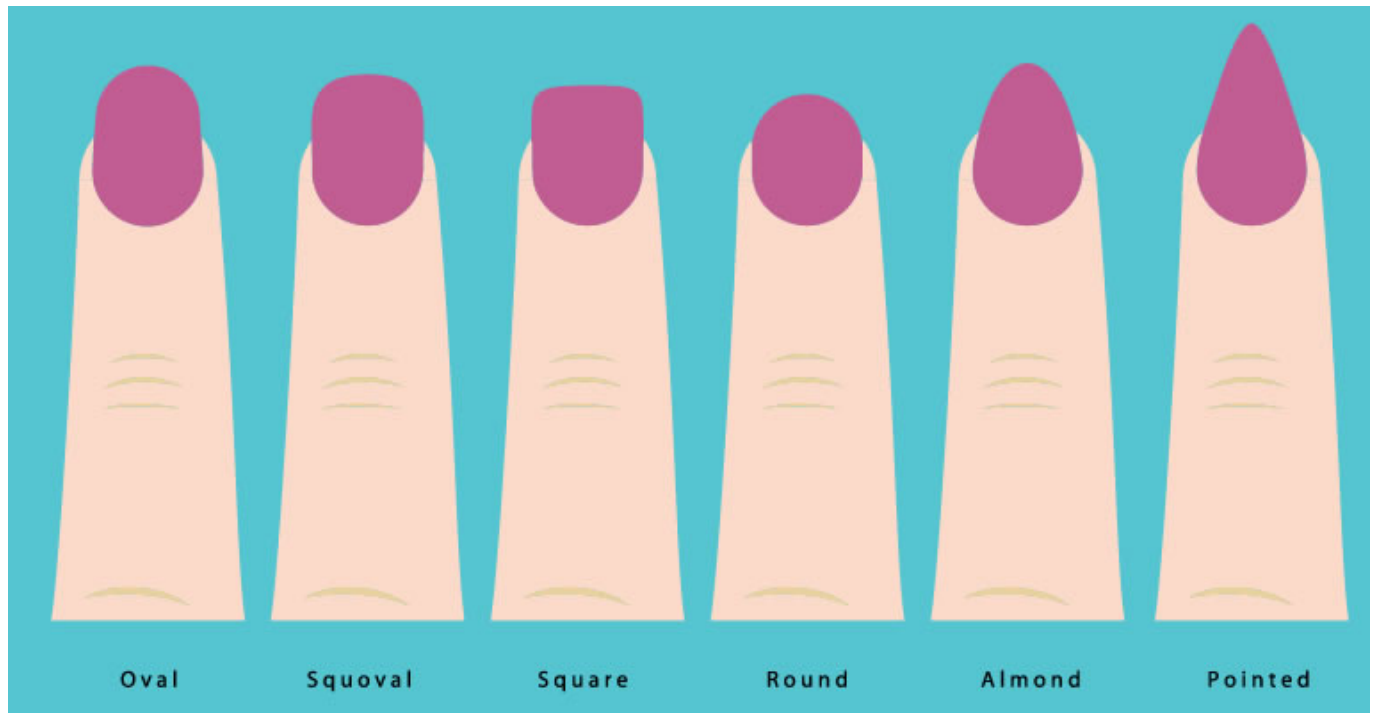
Pointed

Pointed nails are not seen very often unless it is a special occasion or a client preference. The pointed nail is a great option for Halloween costumes. It is certainly an adventurous shape with an extreme tip. The nail goes from a wide nail bed into a sharp, but rounded point on the tip. From the nail bed file the side walls taper down the nail until a slim tip comes to a point. It must be even on both sides with the point in the centre of the nail.

Instruments

It is important to choose the correct file for the nail shape a client requests or prefers. For slimming nails down a 150 grade nail file is best. For softer, rounded edges a typical nail file of normal strength will work best to ensure you do not take too much nail off during filing.

Visual examples of nail shapes



6.3: Gather All your Manicure Supplies

One of the most basic tasks a nail technician will have to perform is the simple manicure.

There are three types of manicure:

- Mini manicure - treatment time about 30 minutes and comprises: Disinfect, File/shape, Cuticles, and Paint.
- Luxury manicure - normally takes up to one hour (as per steps detailed in this module).
- French manicure - which can be a mini or luxury.

Before carrying out the manicure you need to gather your equipment and products.

These essentials include:

- A bowl of hot/warm water (always prepare your hand bowls before a client arrives, so you are ready and prepared)
- Sanitising spray for cleansing (such products can be sourced from beauty suppliers' websites)
- Nail polish remover (non-acetone)
- Cotton pads

- Manicure scrub/exfoliant (this should not be too harsh)
- Nail soak or cleanser
- Hand towel(s)
- Cuticle remover
- Cuticle pusher
- Cuticle nippers
- Hand and nail moisturisers
- Nail clippers
- Emery boards
- Nail buffers
- Base coat, nail colour, and top coat

Prepare your equipment and products



6.4: Sanitise and Remove any Previously Applied Nail Polish

Apply a sanitising spray to your client's hands. Wipe over the nail beds with non-acetone remover and a cotton pad - removing any excess nail varnish. Even if you can't see any immediately, it is recommended that you do this anyway. Doing so ensures you do not have to work past any residue that was there in the first place.

Use a **non-acetone remover** only as this is gentler but will still easily remove any nail polish from the client's nails effectively. (Do not use an acetone-based remover - as this is recommended more for removing gels/acrylics; as acetone can be harmful to the natural nail.)

While some salons prefer to use nail polish remover in a bottle with cotton pads, others like to use ready soaked pads. Either option is fine, but if you are running your own business you may find that the former is better.

Sanitise hands/Remove any nail polish



6.5: Shape the Nails

Not all nails need clipping, but particularly long ones may.

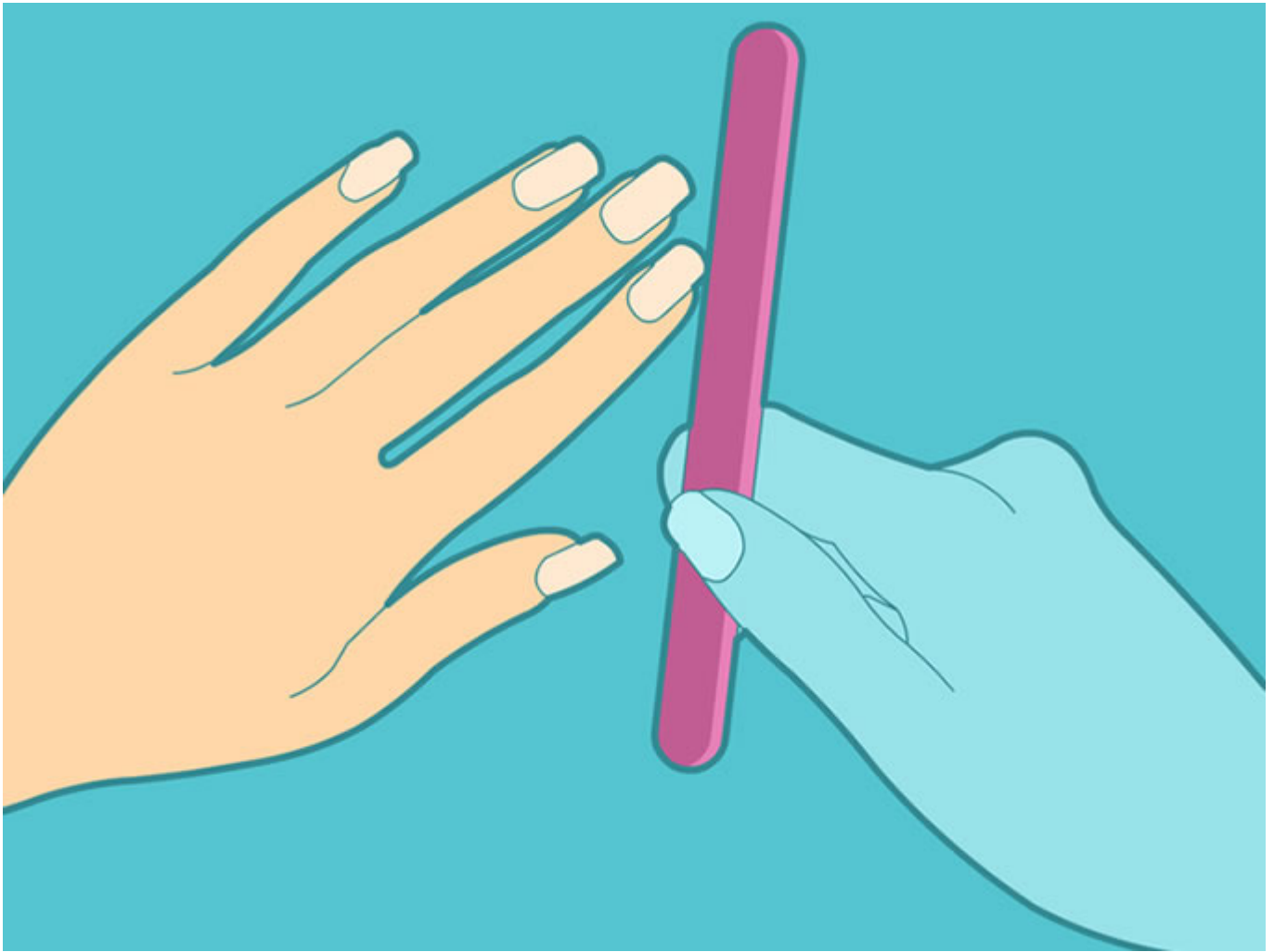
If it does not look as though an emery board alone will be sufficient to shape the nails, use the clippers. Relying on an emery board alone can cause the nails to fray.

After clipping the nails, round or square them using an emery board. Rather than using a metal or overly coarse emery board, opt for one that is only slightly coarse or a crystal one. When finished, buff the tips of the nails.

Before giving your clients a nail shape, it is a good idea to discuss what they want first. While some love the softness that comes with rounded tips, others like a square look. If they are not sure, suggest square, as it is slightly more modern.

Note - some technicians prefer to shape their client's nail later in the treatment, just before preparing for nail polish application.

Shape the client's nails



6.6: Exfoliate and Soak Hands

Exfoliate the client's hands and put hands in the soak bowls for 5-10 mins - do not use a harsh exfoliator on the client's hands.

Whilst the client's hands are still soaking gently remove the exfoliator and take the client's hands out onto a towel and dry.

You may need to fill your bowls up again with fresh, warm water in readiness for the cuticle soak (if you work in salon a colleague would do this for you).

Note: exfoliation of the hands is not included in the below instruction video, but is a beneficial option to include in the treatment. Exfoliation softens and enhances the appearance of the skin.

6.7: Apply Cuticle Remover and Soak Nails

Apply cuticle remover to the client's nails.

Put nails in soak for about 5-10 mins. Once these are soaked take the client's hands out onto a towel and gently pat over their hand just to dampen them.

Rub any excess cuticle remover in and start pushing the cuticles back. Do this gently, as pushing them back too far can remove that waterproof barrier and cause damage that can lead to increased risk of bacterial infections.

Nip any cuticle that you think needs taking away.

Use non-acetone nail varnish, remove the cuticle remover from the client's nail bed.

Cuticle removers tend to be quite powerful, so do not leave your client's cuticles to soak any longer than the manufacturer's instructions state.

Attend to the cuticles



Soak the nails



Ensure that water is not too hot, but just slightly warm, and leave your client's nails to soak for a few minutes. Remember, those with skin conditions will be unable to withstand water that is too hot. Soak for no longer than three minutes.

Leaving the nails to soak for too long can actually cause damage, especially when it comes to the cuticle removing stage. As such, you may find that you want to set up a timer on your phone or another device to make sure you do not go over.

6.8: Moisturise and Massage

Apply moisturiser



Here comes another relaxing part!

Using moisturiser, massage the client's hands and arm - 3/5 mins on each hand.

To perform a hand/arm massage:

- Start by putting the moisturiser into your own hands to warm this up, so it is not cold for the client
- Apply the moisturiser all over the client's hand and start massaging over the hand and up the forearm
- Go over each finger one by one in circular motions
- Turn the client's hand over, so the palm is facing up, and massage gently into their palm finish by massaging back over the client's hand and forearm - making sure all the moisturiser is soaked in

Once you have done this, again use non-acetone nail polish to really remove any excess from the client's nails bed - make sure this is thorough as this can cause nail polish to lift or difficult application

You may also want to buff after this, in case there are any ridges you have noticed in the client's nails. Clean the nails again after, to rid any particles. This will help the nail painting process.

6.9: Begin the Nail Painting Process

Add a base coat



Now is the time to begin painting those nails, in layers.

First, check that the client is happy with the nail shape, length etc before beginning to apply polish.

Begin with a base coat, ensuring that the brush is not flooded. The base coat needs to dry fully before you apply the colour layer. Many salons have drying machines, which you place the client's hands under, to speed the process up.

Then the main colour



Next, apply the main colour, again ensuring that the brush is not flooded. You will find it easier to apply by making sure the colour is on one side of the brush - place the brush as close as you can to the cuticles and apply lightly.

Apply two coats of colour. This ensures the manicure will last longer. As with the base coat, allow it to dry fully before adding the next coat.

Finally, add the top coat (1 coat minimum - but 2 coats are recommended).

Finish with a top coat



Now it does take time for nails to fully dry, which is why many salons use machines to expedite the process. Make sure the client knows that it can take up to one hour for their nails to be fully dry, if there are no machines in the salon.

6.10: Making Each Manicure Perfect

In order to make sure each manicure is perfect, you need to manage the client's expectations.

Naturally you want to aim for perfection each time, but you also need to ensure they know how to engage in post-manicure care for the best results.

One of the best tips you can give them is to add a top coat every couple of days. This should deliver results that last, allowing clients to justify returning to you for repeat manicures.

Always make sure you use high quality colours and base coats. Making this small investment now can lead to repeat customers that make you a lot of money in the future.

NOTE: The routine in which your manicures are carried out may depend on your training and what the salon use.

6.11: Instruction Video

How to perform a Manicure - 19m 26s

Go and Practice

Estimated time: 60 minutes

Find a friend or family member and practice a manicure on them following the step by step instructions as set out in this module of the course.

Module 6 Summary

In this module you learned how to perform a basic manicure.

Unlike French manicures, the basic manicure (mini or luxury) involves adding colour to the nails. However, it is not as simple as adding a layer of polish and getting on with it. Prep work and after-care is needed, allowing you to deliver the perfect manicure.

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