

# Acrylic or Gel-X?

## *Comparing safety and nail health*

By: Kristin Haskell

Throughout this past year, gel-x nails have been seen all over the internet as a newer and better option compared to acrylics, dips, and so much more. So, what's so special about them. Gel-x have risen to the top by offering a more natural looking nail along with their lightweight and flexible build. Besides these appealing features, what do they truly have to offer compared to its main competitor, acrylic, and overall, why switching to gel-x might be a better option for you.

### **Application process**

Starting off with gel-x. First the natural nails are prepped as they usually would be or any other nail application. Then a gel adhesive is applied to the natural nail as well as inside of the gel-x nail, finishing off by applying the gel-x nail onto the natural nail and curing it with a UV/LED lamp. As for an acrylic nail, the tip is added on with glue to the nail, followed by using a brush to apply the liquid monomer and powder polymer to create the acrylic substance that hardens on your nail when exposed to air.

When it comes to the application process of these two different types of nails, the gel-x comes on top when it comes to safety. It doesn't involve dangerous chemicals that could harm the skin compared to acrylic. The strong chemicals in monomer can cause irritation to the skin and even harm to the respiratory system by breathing in these chemicals.



### **Longevity**

When it comes to your nails lasting longer, this is where acrylic tends to shine. Since an acrylic set is not as thin as gel-x nails along with buildup on the nail of the liquid monomer and polymer, these nails can last up to 3-4 weeks. Counting fills, you can have the same set on without replacing them for up to six weeks. However, since the gel-x nails are thinner, they tend to last up to 2-3 weeks. The disadvantage compared to acrylic nails is that gel-x nails are not refillable, meaning your full set of nails are taken off and replaced each time. So, if you are looking for a nail that is better for short-term wear and special occasions then gel-x is the nail for you. If you are someone that tends to be a little hard on your nails and needs them to be sturdier and more durable, then an acrylic nail might be the better option for you.

## Nail health

When it comes to overall nail health, the gel-x nails comes out on top. Since a gel-x nail covers the entire nail compared to an acrylic nail that only sits at the top, by covering the entire nail this releases pressure on the weakest part of the nail. This helps your nails to be healthier and stronger over a longer period. Along with the acrylic nail sitting only on the tip of the nail, it also can be damaging to the nail bed through the process of filing and buffing the natural nail to apply the acrylic material to the nail. Overall, if you are trying to look out for your nails and help them become stronger and healthy, picking gel-x nails for your next set would be the better option.

## Removal process

Finally, when it comes to the removal process, this might depend on who you go to as your nail tech. When it comes to acrylics, it is recommended to soak them in acetone for a period. However, some nail salons don't take time for this and prefer to use a nail to get under yours and get them off that way. This can be a painful removal process but takes less time even though it is more harmful to your nails. However, most gel-x nails technicians also tend to soak them in acetone depending on how much time they need to come off, usually a lot less than gel-x nails don't contain as much product. So, for the removal process of these two nail types, gel-x nails as a rule are better since they are easier to get off, however it all depends on the way that your nail technicians do them.

## What nail overall is better?

Considering the points above, gel-nails tend to be the safer route when it comes to getting your nails done. They are safer for your nails, no harsh chemicals involved and are easy to put on and get off. The only disadvantage that comes along with doing gel-x nails is that they don't last as long as acrylic nails. So, if you are someone who wants to help out your natural nails while still being able to get them done, then gel-x is the way to go or if you are someone who cares more about your nails lasting longer and possibly not paying as much, then acrylics are the nails for you.

