GENERAL

how to put on eyeliner

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When it comes to makeup, eyeliner is the secret weapon that can instantly elevate your look. Whether you want a subtle line that defines your eyes or a dramatic wing that turns heads, mastering the art of eyeliner application is essential. In this guide, we'll walk you through everything you need to know about putting on eyeliner— from choosing the right product and tools to troubleshooting common mistakes—so you can create flawless lines every time.

Why Eyeliner Is a Makeup Must Have

Eyline isn't just a cosmetic accessory; it's a powerful design element that can:

- Enhance eye shape and make your eyes appear larger or more defined.
- Balance facial features by adding depth and contrast.
- Complement other makeup like mascara, eyeshadow, or bold lips.
- Serve as a statement piece for evening looks, runway trends, or everyday style.

Because eyeliner can dramatically change the look of your eyes, learning how to put on eyeliner correctly is a skill worth investing time in.

Types of Eyeliner: Which One Is Right for You?

Choosing the correct eyeliner depends on your desired look, skill level, and how long you want the line to last. Below are the most common types:

Pencil Eyeliner

Pencil eyeliner is the most beginner-friendly option. It's easy to control, smudge resistant, and perfect for a natural line or a soft wing. Pencil liners are ideal for:

- Daily wear and quick touch ups.
- Defining the lash line without a harsh edge.
- Creating a subtle, "no makeup" look.

Gel Eyeliner

Gel liners combine the precision of pencils with the longevity of liquid liners. They come in a tube and are applied with a small brush or a built in brush. Gel liners are great for:

- Long lasting wear that resists smudging.
- Adding a bit of drama with a thicker line.
- Versatility—use them for a classic line or a bold wing.

Liquid Eyeliner

Liquid liners are the go to for sharp, precise lines and dramatic winged looks. They come in a pen like format with a fine tip. Liquid liners are best suited for:

- Achieving a crisp, professional finish.
- Creating bold, graphic shapes.
- Intense eye looks that last all day.

Cream and Pencil like Cream Liners

These are softer, more flexible products that can be applied with a brush or a fingertip. Cream liners are perfect for:

- Adding a subtle, shimmery line.
- Creating a “smudged” or smoky effect.
- Those who prefer a more natural finish.

Essential Tools and Prep Work

Even the best eyeliner can fall flat without the right tools and proper prep. Follow these steps to set the stage for flawless eyeliner.

Tools You’ll Need

- Eyeliner product (pencil, gel, liquid, or cream).
- Brushes: A fine angled brush for gel liners, a smudging brush for cream liners.
- Mirror: A magnifying mirror or a dedicated eye makeup mirror.
- Clean cotton swabs or makeup remover wipes for touch ups.
- Optional: Lash primer or eye primer to help eyeliner stay in place.

Prep Your Eyes

1. Wash your face and remove any old makeup.
2. Apply an eye primer or a small amount of concealer under the lashes to create a smooth base.
3. Use a light touch of mascara to lift and separate your lashes, which helps the eyeliner glide on more easily.

Step by Step Eyeliner Application

Below is a detailed guide to applying eyeliner using the most popular methods. Feel free to mix and match techniques to suit your eye shape and desired look.

1. Basic Line Along the Lash

This is the foundation of any eyeliner look. Start by drawing a thin line that follows the natural lash line.

1. Hold the eyeliner at a slight angle so the tip is close to the lashes.
2. Place the tip of the product right at the base of your lashes.
3. Pull the liner up toward the tail of your lashes in a smooth, continuous motion.
4. For a more precise line, pause at the middle of your eye and then finish the rest of the line in one fluid stroke.

2. Tightlining for a Fuller Look

Tightlining involves lining the upper waterline (the inner part of the upper lashes) to create a denser, fuller lash effect.

1. Choose a dark pencil or a liquid liner with a fine tip.
2. Hold the eyeliner vertically, aligning the tip with the upper lash line.
3. Gently glide the liner along the waterline, staying as close to the lashes as possible.
4. Stop before the lashes start to lift; you want the line to sit on the lashes, not on the skin.

3. Winged Eyeliner (Cat Eye)

A winged liner adds drama and elongates the eye. Here’s how to nail the classic wing:

1. Step 1: Create a baseline. Draw a thin line from the inner corner to the outer corner, following the natural lash line.

2. Step 2: Measure the angle. Place a small dot at the outer corner of the eye. From that dot, draw a line that extends outwards and slightly upward. The length of this line should be roughly equal to the distance from the outer corner to the tip of your nose.
3. Step 3: Connect the lines. Join the endpoint of the baseline to the end of the angled line, creating a triangle shape.
4. Step 4: Fill in. Use a small angled brush or the tip of the liquid liner to fill in the triangle. Finish by smoothing the line for a seamless look.
5. Optional: Add a dash. For a more pronounced wing, extend the angled line slightly further before connecting.

4. Smudged or Smoky Eyeliner

Smudging gives a relaxed, smoky vibe. Ideal for evening looks or when you want a softer definition.

1. Apply a thin line along the lash line with a pencil or liquid liner.
2. Take a smudging brush or a fluffy Q tip.
3. Gently drag the brush or Q tip along the line, creating a feathered effect.
4. Repeat until you achieve the desired intensity.
5. For a more dramatic look, blend the line into the crease with a soft eyeshadow.

5. Graphic or Bold Eyeliner

Graphic liners involve bold shapes, such as a thick line or a creative pattern. Use a liquid or gel liner for sharpness.

1. Sketch a rough outline of the shape you want (e.g., a thick line, a geometric design).
2. Use a small angled brush or the liner's tip to fill in the shape.
3. Make sure to keep the strokes steady; practice on a piece of paper first if you're new to graphic eyeliner.
4. Finish with a subtle wing or a line that follows the lash line to tie the look together.

Tips for Different Eye Shapes

Every eye shape responds differently to eyeliner. Here are specific tips for the most common eye shapes.

Round Eyes

Goal: Make the eyes appear more elongated and less round.

- Focus on a thin line that follows the lash line.
- Extend the line slightly toward the outer corner for a subtle lift.
- Avoid heavy winging, which can exaggerate the roundness.

Monolid Eyes

Goal: Create the illusion of a crease and depth.

- Apply eyeliner along the upper lash line and slightly above it to mimic a crease.
- Use a darker shade to add contrast.
- Consider a subtle wing that doesn't extend too far to maintain balance.

Hanging or Down Falling Eyes

Goal: Lift the eyes and create a more open look.

- Draw a thin line from the inner corner to the outer corner.
- Finish the line with a small, upward flick at the outer corner.
- Use a light hand; too much liner can accentuate the droop.

Deep Set Eyes

Goal: Add definition without making the eyes appear smaller.

- Apply a thin line along the lash line.
- Use a slightly thicker line on the lower lash line to balance the depth.
- Avoid heavy shading on the inner corner.

Common Mistakes and How to Fix Them

Even seasoned makeup artists can slip up. Here are frequent errors and how to correct them.

Smudged Lines

Solution: Set the liner with a translucent powder or a light dusting of setting spray. Tightlining before applying the main line can also help the liner stay in place.

Uneven Wings

Solution: Use a ruler or a small piece of masking tape to create a straight line. Practice the angle measurement technique to maintain consistency.

Too Dark for the Skin Tone

Solution: Choose a shade that matches or is slightly lighter than your natural lash color. For a subtle effect, blend the liner with a light eyeshadow.

Too Thick or Thickened Lines

Solution: Use a small angled brush to thin out the line. If the liner is too thick, apply a second, lighter line underneath and blend.

Maintenance and Removal

Keeping eyeliner fresh throughout the day requires a few simple steps.

During the Day

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