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How to remove dreadlocks

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There are two basic ways to remove dreadlocks – and yes, there are ways to do it without cutting your hair, contrary to popular belief.

Myths:

- * The only way to remove dreads is to shave your head, or cut them off very close to the scalp.
- * If you don't shave your head, removing dreadlocks is painful and damaging to the scalp and hair.

Fact:

- * It is possible to have dreads, and then remove them no matter how long you may have had them. Here are the 2 basic methods.

1. Shave or cut dreads

By far the easiest method of dreadlock removal if you don't wish to save any of your hair.

Materials:

- * scissors and/or clippers

Duration:

- * less than an hour

Directions:

Whether you want to shave close or cut leaving an inch or so of hair is entirely up to you.

1. Begin by using scissors to cut the dreads off one at a time near the root where the hair is less tangled, and then shaving clean with clippers if you so desire.

(You can also leave 4-6 inches and pick out that amount of hair with a lot of conditioner and a strong metal comb if you are willing to put in a little more work in order to keep some hair. For picking instructions – see below).

2. Finish by washing your scalp and remaining hair thoroughly.

2. Picking out dreadlocks

Extremely time consuming but very successful if you are willing to put the time in.

Materials:

- * strong comb (preferably metal)
- * high quality de-greasing shampoo
- * high quality verrrry slippery conditioner

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jesus: Ay i feel u i got the same problem im locked at the bottom. But from middle and up...  0  0

alyse: they are nasty u do not want them i promise you  0  0

Barbare: Hello thanks for you suggetion I will be moving to AZ I purchased a home on the...  0  0

jija: hi,please tell me which conditioner is good for combing out dreads?  0  0

yusefisatwat: hey urself, thats not cool raggin on people u dont know, let them have their...  0  0

Annabelle: Hi Kirsty... I say go for it!! I myself am scottish with a full head of...  0  0

MzUndastood: My dreads started as a layered yarn braid bob... They locked,...  0  0

peter styler: am aloctician and am based in kenya dreadlocks salon...get intouch with...  0  0

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Note* We recommend the [Knotty Boy](#) removal kit, for [removing dreadlocks](#). it has both, they also have metal combs for a good price. It is possible that you will run out of conditioner if you have really long hair or a lot of hair, so you can supplement this with another quality conditioner to finish the job.

Duration:

* up to 15 hours total, depending on your locks. We are serious about this. Typically 4-8 hours but we have heard of it taking 2 days!

Directions:

1. Lay in a bath and soak your dreads completely for at least 10 minutes.
2. Wash dreadlocks thoroughly with shampoo, and with water as hot as you can safely stand it. This will help melt the wax or whatever greasiness has built up over the years. Do this by working small amounts of shampoo into each section of each dreadlock to get the soap into the middle as much as possible.
3. Rinse
4. Work conditioner into each dreadlock and begin to GENTLY pick each dread out carefully with a metal comb, beginning from the bottom and working your way up to the scalp. This will take a LONG time – but be patient – you will get your hair back.
5. Once you have picked out all of your dreads, condition all of your hair again with a lot of conditioner and allow it to sit in your hair for 5 minutes. This will help repair some of the damage caused by picking.
6. Go to a salon and get yerself a nice new hairstyle!

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brooke said: 2013.02.24 04:15

Ive never had dreads but i want them i just turned 13 and my mom let me.



alysse said: 2013.03.21 23:18

they are nasty u do not want them i promise you



wyntah said: 2012.10.29 16:40

umm dude do whatcha wanna do. dreads are beautiful if well kept and if not, they can look messy which is unattractive. some people can pull off anything!

Hot debate. What do you think? 5 4





philip marsh said: 2012.10.04 20:39

i had dreads since i was 9 years old. now i am 12 and i want my dreads out so i can get brads. but my sister and mom say i should keep them till i am 35 or older. what should i do plz help me plz comment and tell me.

3 0



Robin said: 2012.10.18 20:10

Both dreadlocks and braids are very cool. Since dreadlocks do take such a long time to fully mature, it's really cool that you already have 3 years under your belt! However, they can always be redone if you end up not liked braids. And in the end, it ultimately should be about what YOU want to do.

This Post is Well-loved. 6 0



Indigo said: 2012.10.04 03:19

Ok I just started combing/picking my "locs" out because I wanted a change. I loved them a lot (13 years)! But it's time for a change. It's a process. I do a little each day. You need patience most of all but I find the olive oil cholesterol cream with the conditioner works best. Oh plenty of all water! Saturate your hair. It was a journey growing them (I have very fine, curly hair) so I know it will be a journey combing them out. I'm loving the change. Good luck to all.....
To each, his own!

This Post is Well-loved. 18 1



zee said: 2013.01.09 17:29

Were you able to comb them out??? I am curious if it really can be done or do I have to cut my hair...

1 0



Journey said: 2013.02.01 08:30

Hi, I haven't taken out all of mine yet. However, I have had success with 6 locks. I used water on 3 and nothing on the others. Each one took about 30-1 hour. The time varied because I have different textures throughout. I've been locked for 7.5 years and they are to my waist. I'll try the conditioner next just to see if it's quicker. Good luck.

1 0





Kenye said: 2012.09.18 00:58

Hi I'm male and I've had my dreads since last year and I have very soft hair and still my dreads are not locked all the way til this day so I'm trying to decide whether I should cut the dreads or take them out because their not locked all the way

1 2



Sonu said: 2012.08.14 16:16

I have natural dreadlocks starting right away from my scalp, thickness around 1 inch and length is around 10 inches, they are glued and merged into each other like bunch of small roots as my hairs are curly and I never combed them. so what's the easiest way to extract from each other without shaving them.

1 0



cherie said: 2012.10.19 23:09

first of all the reason they are fused together is because you didnt take care of them. You could try cutting them down the middle which will make one big lock be aware the other parts may be cut off. Good LUCK

1 0



Adriana said: 2012.07.09 08:46

so my names Adriana and i got my dreads at 10. My mom actually tricked me. she said i was going to the salon to get twist. so i was a little 10 year old girl and thought hey twist will be cute. after getting them a few months passed and i asked my mom "when am i going to get my hair done" she told me soon. as i went to school people-even my best friend- asked "adri you know i love you but let me be honest. when you gonna get your hair done" i asked my mom and then she said i was growing locks. i was only ten i didnt really care but now when i turned 14 a few months ago i started to miss my old natural hair. my mom said im old enough to decide and make my own decisions and if i wanted to "cut" them out i could. i asked her if i could take them out without cutting them off. because my hair is down my back not by a lot but it is. she told me No because my hair would be damaged forever it would be ugly. so its summer now im going to virginia and while im there im going to take them out without cutting them. hopefully my mom wont be pissed but i dont really care its my life right, you only live once 😊

This Post is Well-loved. 28 1



May (Another 14-year-old) said: 2012.08.01 21:28

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Poorly-rated. 23 28





Cheryl said: 2012.09.07 16:09

it's your hair, and it can be done, just make sure you are doing the best way not to lose to cuch hair, Good Luck

This Post is Well-loved. 11 0



Stella said: 2012.07.03 19:58

I really like the look of dreads, but I only want a couple, like near the nape of my neck. I've seen this on a couple of people and I was wondering if it's normal. Any comments?

2 1



Sonya said: 2012.07.10 04:10

I have 7 dreads around that area 😊 they look awesome, no regrets

This Post is Well-loved. 4 0



ashley said: 2012.09.20 22:56

i sarted out with 2....my "tie arounds" now half my head is done.... <3 them... you dont have to do it all to do it!!! just take care of them or your other hair will start to get entrapped in them <3 good luck

1 0



@Sam_Sational said: 2012.06.30 19:51

- I've had my dreads since March now & only because I'm being forced into this hairstyle . Well i'll have to keep these for 3 years until I graduate . I get them like updated every two weeks & have somewhat of a lot of hair . Will this work for me when I can take my dreads out in 3 years ?

1 0



Zakkiyyah said: 2012.06.20 00:42

ive had my sisterlocks in for 11 months and it is too expensive to maintain i want to take them out

1 0





Badu said: 2012.06.13 04:58

I am considering getting dreadlocks. I've always wanted them after seeing my Rasta cousin with his knotty dreads. I'm hesitant because what if later, I feel like un-tangling them? I'm lazy :p

1 0



Veronica said: 2012.06.12 21:57

I've had my locks now for five years. I love them. I can do all the things with them that most women can do without them and more. I curl them, I braid them, I wear cute hair accessories, I pin them up, I dye them. I get compliments on my locks all the time. So why am I on this page? Because I want to join the military and unfortunately locks are not allowed. I figure I can get my locks back whenever I want but I won't always be able to get into officer candidacy school. So I want to wear some other natural hair style while I'm in the military and go back to my locks once I get out. So thanks for the info. No need doing a big cut if I don't have to.

This Post is Well-loved. 14 0



Carri said: 2012.06.09 17:43

I really want to get dread locks but am scared to get them ..is it worth it

2 1



KMC said: 2012.05.24 19:42

Hi everyone. I grew up with my natural hair , but then i turned 11 & my mom decides to get me DREADS!!!! Now im 13 & i still hate them. Im bullied & teased & i never wanted locks. Everytie i cry & beg my mom if i could take them out (Ive tookin out about a few noqw & twisted them back so i wont get in trouble) She talks about jesus , & natural hair blah blah blah blah. But i want to be able to sleep over my best friends house & paint nails & braid eachothers hair. I want to wear bangs & Have cute bows with my hair. Okay "Jesus had dreads. its my natural hair" If so, how come i came out the womb with curly soft hair thats my natural hair & i want it back. You cant blame me for wanting to be a GIRL!!!! ITS MY LIFE LET ME LIVE IT. . . . lol sorry i went journal entry on yall , but yea there comin OUT In 5 days , my birthday Wish ME LUCK 😊

This Post is Well-loved. 21 2



jj-nicki said: 2012.06.17 16:51

hi im 12 .i got dreads when i was 5 . sometimes i cry because i want to be able to dye my hair and cut it but my rents' wont let me i want to cut it all out sometimes but then i get worried "what if i want them back after i cut them " any advice? p.s im emo . but the dreadz kinda kill the emo look *sigh * dont know what to do? 😞

1 0





KMC said: 2012.07.09 08:38

well if im honest i can't really speak for you. if you decide to make the decision of cutting out your dreads then go for it. maybe you'll miss them but you can always get them back. and if its something you really want then do it. and i know some emo girls and yea it kind of does kill the emo look lol

👍 1 🗑️ 0



trololol said: 2012.07.30 01:03

obvious troll is obvious

This Post is Well-loved. 👍 4 🗑️ 0



kelia said: 2012.05.13 23:52

i am 11 and had my dreads since i was 2 yrs old. i want my hair out because i go on google and to school and see beautiful pretty girls with long hair and all the boys tell me that I'm pretty but my hair i mean dreads make me ugly i wanna do this because i want to have pretty hair I'm hoping it will work #ipray

👍 4 🗑️ 3



Mina said: 2012.05.18 13:06

What? I think everybody here would agree that dreads are beautiful, no? I know this sounds cheesy, but I think the most beautiful people are the ones who do their own thing and don't care about what others think. Today's media industry tells us that we women have to look a certain way and dress a certain way, because this is how they manage to sell us more and more things that we don't need, and keep us locked into a system of slavery – to all look the same believing that this is what beauty is. If you start looking to change yourself in order to fit in with some kind of mold of what 'pretty' is, you will get caught in an endless trap. Girl, keep it BEAUTIFUL keep it RASTA and don't be afraid to be that freaky girl: secretly, other girls will envy you because they don't have the courage, and the (more interesting) boys will be drawn in by your mystique.

This Post is Well-loved. 👍 45 🗑️ 3



jj-nicki said: 2012.06.17 16:53

you tell it sistah !!!! i ve had dreads for 7 years now !!
EMBRACE THE RASTA !!!!

This Post is Well-loved. 👍 5 🗑️ 0





yusef said: 2012.12.06 20:41

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Poorly-rated. 1 4



yusefisatwat said: 2013.03.13 05:01

hey urself, thats not cool
raggin on people u dont
know, let them have their
own opinion please, and if u
look at the constitution,
maybe they moved here from
great britain just so they
could say rasta, and now ur
screwin it all up for them.
arent rastafarians supposed
to be laid back and easy
going and nice to people?
cuz ur coming off like a bit of
a prick. lahdamercy.

0 0



brooke said: 2013.02.24 04:20

how old are you now

0 0



Karen Carrington said: 2012.05.04 13:37

So I had a dread my dreads for over four years. And I'm thinking of taking it down. My hair falls almost to the middle of my back.Can I keep all of my length if i detangle it very carefully?

4 1



Vera-Anouk said: 2012.05.01 10:32

now, this is the link that'll work world-wide..... http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ywx5_S4ps8M





Vera-Anouk said: 2012.04.17 20:16

so, you combe them out while they are still wet? normaly wet hair is much more hard to combe because the hot water opens the hair-joints...this is the way they DO dread...normaly.....has anybody tried conidoning them very much, then blowtrying them and combing then????
any experience?



Emily said: 2012.04.15 19:48

This is useful – my mom’s best friend spent 2 weeks in the hospital with waist-length curly hair. 3/4 of her hair is now in 1 dread at the back of her head. We’ve combed through half of it, and this is encouraging to do the other half. THANK YOU for your information! It is much appreciated!

This Post is Well-loved. 4 0



Erin said: 2013.02.02 12:37

I spent 1 month in the hospital n now I got the same exact situation, I don’t kno bout u n ur friend but I’m a white girl too. But my hair is soooooo thick n curly. I have a very important and Extremely formal dinner to be at Tom nite. I kno I’m gonna have to cut thru ALOT of it, but I want to try n keep as much as I can.....aaaahhhhhhhh I just wanna scream. Good luck every1, GOD knows I need all the help I can get....lol



me said: 2012.03.28 11:32

to each his own....

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Rasta said: 2012.03.07 04:49

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Poorly-rated. 8 30



Rasta said: 2012.03.07 04:37



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Poorly-rated.  7  28



jj-nicki said: 2012.06.17 16:55

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Poorly-rated.  0  6



maleaha said: 2012.03.06 01:47

So If Had My Dreads For 4 Years Now And Im Thinking About Taking Them Down .Because When I Wash My Hair It HELLA Heavy And When I Dye My Hair It Break Off .But I Juss But My Head In Some VERY VERY VERY HOT Water And I Felt My Hair Getting Very Soft So I Took A Comb And Comb A Dread Out And My Mom Stopped Me And Was Like Maleaha Your Really Gonna Hate You Did This Because When You Hair Wasnt Long And You Complained About Me Pulling Your Hair When I Combed It Because It Hurt You Begged Me To Twist Your Hair And Let It Dread Up So Think About That And I Took One Down And LOVE<3 It Because I Just Wanted My Natural Hair Back :]

This Post is Well-loved.  12  0



Trevahn Nug said: 2012.02.26 22:04

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Poorly-rated.  6  17



Courtney said: 2012.02.26 21:36

I have had dreads since 2nd grade so about 13 yrs now... As i was growing up i always had thoughts of cutting them and as i am older i have grown to love them but i still would like to have my natural hair without the dreads. i want to know what it feels like and see my self in a different way. i am very scared because i do not want to regret this decision. my dreads are past my but and if i do go through with combing them out i want the process to be a sucess. maybe i will try to take one down and see how that goes????

This Post is Well-loved.  12  0



Vera-Anouk said: 2012.04.17 20:09

hey there! if you are not afraid of cutting them (so as to have fairly short hair), you can cut them and then combe the rest (shoulder length or whatever)...and if you do not like it the natural way, you can start dreading the left-over hair and then, once angain crochet your safed dreads on the "new dreads"! this works pretty well!

I have mine for more than 10 years now, had to have them removed once for a medical treatment and are now thinking about putting them



down for good....



Fi said: 2012.02.15 13:24

I have undone / removed my dreads twice now-first time i had had them for five years -they were breaking off from the weight and I was getting bald ugly patches at the forehead. i did it myself over months whenever I had the chance as each one did take about an hour to detangle-heaps of conditioner oil and comb. I must say each dread would have probably two handfuls of dead hair come out and not much real hair attached was left-but i have heaps thick hair so it was good. It was very frizzy and weak but had length so I spent the money on a keratin Protein treatment(\$500 and it turned to silk-amazing. well worth it as Im not good with short hair due to the curl/ soon got sick of doing my hair-washing straightening and being boring so went back to dreads, but the same issues returned -itchy scalp, and balding, so out they came again-a lot easier this time though -as I detangled I replaced with a braid so end up with conditioned braids that all came out in 10 minutes. If you want to keep the length its worth it but I wish I looked ok short as it really would be heaps easier and less expensive than having to re condition the hair to just shave it off



emma said: 2012.02.05 21:43

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jj-nicki said: 2012.06.17 16:57

CUT IT

This Post is Well-loved.

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