



# FOOT LOOSE

Get your toes  
into tip-top shape  
for sunshine-filled  
days and sultry  
summer nights

BY ANDREA KARR

Summer is coming, so it's time your feet come out of hibernation and go on full display. Think that means your salon bill has to skyrocket? While a professional pedicure is a luxurious treat, you can also achieve wonderful results at home, thanks to this step-by-step guide to the perfect pedicure courtesy of editorial nail artist Nargis Khan. Check out her handiwork on Instagram, [@nailsfromnars](#).

Photo courtesy of CND

**Super Soaker**

First things first: Take a shower or soak your feet in warm water for up to 10 minutes. This will soften the skin to make pushing cuticles back and filing dry patches much easier. “Just don’t soak your feet for too long, because you don’t want them to be so flooded with water that you can’t tell the difference between dead and live skin,” Khan says.

**Clip-N-File**

Clip your nails straight across. Don’t cut them too short; otherwise, you might encourage

a nail to grow into the skin — known as an ingrown nail — rather than out and over. Also refrain from letting your nails grow beyond the end of your toe, which can cause irritation when wearing shoes. No matter the length of your toenails, try to avoid narrow, tight footwear, which can put unwanted pressure on your feet. Next, file your nails to smooth and shape them as necessary.

**Push Comes to Shove**

Use an orange wood stick or cuticle pusher to push back overgrown cuticles and clean

underneath the edge of each nail, “especially around the corners of the big toe,” Khan says. “Clean outwards so you’re getting out all the gunk and dead skin instead of shoving it in, which could lead to an ingrown nail.” If you’ve cleaned out under your nails and you still have a bad ingrown toenail, put a tiny bit of cotton under the corner of the nail to relieve the pressure and help the nail grow out.

**Buff Stuff**

Give your nails a good buff to create a rough surface to which the polish can adhere. Also buff

**Tool Kit**

Everything you need to get your tootsies ready for public viewing



Amopé Pedi Perfect Electronic Foot File With Diamond Crystals, \$45, [walmart.ca](http://walmart.ca)



Revlon Gold Series Titanium Coated Ingrown Away Toenail Set, \$21.50, [revlon.ca](http://revlon.ca)



Tenoverten The Rose Oil, \$34, [thenaturalcurator.com](http://thenaturalcurator.com)



Sephora Collection Instant Nail Polish Remover Wipes, \$10 for 20 wipes, [sephora.ca](http://sephora.ca)



L'Occitane Shea Butter Foot Cream, \$32, [loccitane.ca](http://loccitane.ca)



Lovefresh Key Lime Coconut Sugar Scrub, \$30, [lovesfresh.com](http://lovesfresh.com)



Revlon Multicare Base + Top Coat, \$7.50, [revlon.ca](http://revlon.ca)

the cuticles and skin around the nails so that you have to trim as little skin as possible with cuticle nippers. "The rule is to nip anything that's white and wavy or sticking up," Khan says. "Make sure you don't touch live tissue."

### Filing System

Once you're done grooming your nails and cuticles, file the bottoms of your feet — the heels in particular. Use a rougher grain first to remove excess dry skin, then file with a finer grain to smooth everything out. "Don't over-file," Khan says, "because you could worsen cracks or cause bleeding."

### Scrub-A-Dub-Dub

Rub away dead skin and rough surfaces with a sugar scrub, which will also help lotion to absorb more easily into the skin. Don't forget to rub between your

toes, around your nails and over your heels. Extra points if the scrub smells almost good enough to eat!

### Balm Dot Com

The one area that most people forget to moisturize is their feet — but you can avoid cracked, dry heels if you consistently apply a rich balm or body butter. If you need a quick fix before donning open-toe shoes, rub cuticle oil into your heels and nails and they'll look better in a snap.

### Squeaky Clean

Before you even consider applying base coat, rub each nail with a cotton pad or ball soaked in nail polish remover. This step will remove lotion and oils from your nails, both of which would make your nails slick and compromise the longevity of your pedicure.

### Paint Job

After placing separators between your toes, apply a base coat to protect the nails from yellowing, and then brush on two coats of colour and one layer of top coat to seal in your hard work.

For a better-looking result, make sure that you hover your brush rather than dragging it over each nail. Also important: Use an appropriate amount of polish for the size of the nail — a baby toe, for example, doesn't need much! If your polish is goopy or stringy, it's time to toss it.

### Waiting Game

Let your pedi dry for a good hour, especially if you're going to put shoes on. If you must go out when the polish isn't 100 per cent dry, apply cuticle oil to each nail and wrap your toes in cling wrap to prevent smudging and denting.

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## Colour Ways

Whether you prefer a classic coral, vibrant green or subtle nude, the hottest summer polishes offer something for everyone



Coral red.

Try OPI Infinite Shine in Living on the Bula-ward!, \$17, [chatters.ca](http://chatters.ca)



Cobalt blue.

Try Sally Hansen Color Therapy in Ja-Cozy, \$12, [sallyhansen.com](http://sallyhansen.com)



Kelly green.

Try Essie Nail Polish in On the Roadie, \$10, [essie.ca](http://essie.ca)



Tan nude.

Try L'Oréal Paris Colour Riche Nail Polish in Classic Check, \$7.50, [amazon.ca](http://amazon.ca)



Emerald green.

Try CND Rhythm & Heat Collection Vinylux Weekly Polish in Palm Deco, \$12.50, [cnd.com/find-salon](http://cnd.com/find-salon)