

Which curl type do I have?

The one-page cheat sheet

CurlCentric

curlcentric.com/hair-typing-system

Free to print. No email required.

1 • WASH YOUR HAIR

Clean your hair. Air-dry it and don't add product. Adding product or heat can change the pattern you are trying to read.

2 • EVALUATE ONE STRAND

Pull a single strand away from your scalp and look at the individual strand, not your entire head of hair.

3 • MATCH IT WITH THIS GUIDE

Find the shape your hair strand makes, then check its curl diameter using this cheat sheet.



1A

No bend

Light everything

—



1B

Slight body

Root lift, moisture at ends

—



1C

Thick, hidden bends

Smoothing, frizz control

—



2A

Loose S past the ears

Gel or mousse, never cream

—



2B

Clear S from mid-length

Light hold + scrunch

—



2C

Waves from the root

Treat it as curly, not wavy

—



3A

Big loose spirals

Moisture + a light cast

sidewalk chalk



3B

Springy ringlets

Layer leave-in, cream, gel

a Sharpie



3C

Tight corkscrews

Heavy moisture, slip to detangle

a pencil



4A

Small springy coils

Moisture on repeat, then seal

a crochet needle



4B

Sharp Z-bends

Stretch it; detangle wet

—



4C

No visible curl

Max moisture, min handling

—

The cross-check that settles debates.

Measure your hair wet and stretched, then measure it dry. **How much shorter does it get?**

Barely any — Types 1 and 2A. **About a third** — 2B to 3B.

About half — 3C to 4B. **Two thirds or more** — 4C.

If the shape and the shrinkage disagree, you're likely between two types. That's perfectly normal.

Before you settle on an answer

- ☐ Checked your nape area, not just the crown
- ☐ Checked the hair around your face
- ☐ Ensure that your hair is product-free
- ☐ Looked at individual strands, not your entire head
- ☐ Evaluate single strands against the chart; don't use a photo

Two things worth knowing. Most heads of hair carry two or three hair types at once, usually looser at the nape, tighter at the crown, so your hair type is whatever pattern you have the most of, and let the tightest section decide how gently you detangle. This cheat sheet helps you determine curl pattern only; porosity, density, and strand width are separate properties.