Reverting or Heat-Damaged?

A strand test that helps you tell whether your curls are coming back, and what to do if they aren't.

DO THE TEST ON	CHECK THESE AREAS FIRST	IF IT'S HEAT DAMAGE
Soaking wet hair	**Ends, hairline, crown**	**Only cutting removes it**

What you need

- [ ] A normal wash, no styling product after
- [ ] Good light, ideally daylight
- [ ] A hand mirror for the back
- [ ] A rat tail comb

Run the test

1. Wash and rinse as usual.
2. Skip all styling product. Gel and cream can fake a curl pattern.
3. Leave it soaking wet. Don't towel it.
4. Part a strand at your ends, hairline, and crown.
5. Look at each one wet, before touching it.
6. Stretch one strand between two fingers, then let go.

Where damage shows first

Wherever the iron passed most: your ends, hairline, and crown. Test all three, not just the top layer.

What the result usually means

1. Reverting: the pattern reappears while wet.
2. Reverting: it matches the hair around it.
3. Reverting: the strand springs back when released.
4. Damaged: it stays limp and straight while soaking wet.
5. Damaged: it hangs differently from the hair beside it.
6. Damaged: the strand stretches and stays stretched.
7. A mixed result is normal. Damage is usually localized.

Don't

- × Don't judge it dry. Every texture reads straighter dry.
- × Don't decide from one test. Check again after your next wash.
- × Don't buy protein hoping for reversion. It can't rebuild denatured keratin.
- × Don't press the section again to blend it. That deepens it.

What to do next

- Drop the iron to 330°F, or 300°F if color-treated or relaxed.
- One pass per section. Stretch better with the blow dryer instead.
- Trim the damaged length all at once, or a little at a time.
- Space presses further apart while it grows out.