



Ayanda Soares

Alternative lengths

House of Hair UK provides 10 specialist hair extension methods for all hair types

Beaded Wefts, Micro Rings, LA and Express Braid-less Weave are one of the 10 alternative hair extension methods being offered by weave salon the House of Hair UK. These and other hair extension methods are widely known in the celeb world, especially in Los Angeles, Atlanta and New York, and are available from this London-based salon for all different hair textures, making it one of the only locations that offers so many extension methods. We catch up with House of Hair UK founder Ayanda Soares to find out more.

Have you always been interested in hair?

Yes, I love doing hair and used to love having my own hair done from a very young age. I would even braid boys' hair in school. When I was in my early teens, I would hot comb my own hair and use bendy rollers to create curls.

Has it always been your intention to start a weave extension business?

No, I knew I had a passion for hair but always felt that it was not a sustainable or lucrative business. Hairdressing was something that I was doing as a side hustle for family and friends, even though I worked full-time in the care sector for over 10 years. I loved my job but I knew I wanted to earn more money and invest in a business of my own.

I noticed that, due to lack of inclusion, alternative weave services could only be afforded by high-paying Europeans and that there was very little option for working class, middle income customers like myself and no options for those with curly or textured hair, so over the years I became this provider.

When did you start up House of Hair?

In 2013 I decided that I would change the focus from a hobby into a professional business, so rebranded and relaunched House of Hair UK in 2014. That was when I also left social work and started doing hair extensions full-time.

Was it easy to raise funding for the business?

Raising funding has been an ongoing struggle – I have never needed funding for equipment or branded materials, it has always been to launch a product line. A lot of banks don't really know how to raise the return on investment within my industry, so they require a lot of convincing. I had to retain three times the loan repayment amount in my account for a minimum of six months before the bank would approve lending for expansion. In an industry that is ever evolving, six months can feel like a lifetime – a lot can change.

How many weave systems do you offer?

We offer 10 different weave systems:

1. Micro Rings; **2.** Ultra Tips or Nanos; **3.** Fusion Bonds; **4.** Braidless Weave aka LA Weave; **5.** Quick Weft; **6.** Flat Weft; **7.** Brazilian Knots; **8.** Pre-Beaded Wefts; **9.** Invisible Flat Wefts; **10.** Naked Weave.

You keep up with the latest extension trends, what are celebs asking for/wearing?

A lot of high-profile celebs tend to opt for frontal wigs or full lace wigs as a protective style. Recently I have seen a lot of US celebrities trying invisible flat weft hair extensions, as it allows you to have versatile styling options, like high ponies, middle and side partings, without it looking like you have a weave in.

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My core market is women aged 19-35 years old who like modest but sexy-looking hair. They want additional volume and length without everyone knowing they're wearing extensions.

Who is your target audience?

Me... for so long I was led to believe I needed to create an avatar of my ideal customer: her age, hobbies, spending habits, etc. But, around four to five years ago, I realised that my perfect customer/target is me. I was a middle-income social worker who wanted an alternative hair solution from weave or braids, that didn't cost half my monthly income and would

not damage my hair. I also like a modest look; I love ladies looking at me wondering 'is that all her hair'.

Micro rings, Braidless weaves and Brazilian knots have been my go-to hairstyles for over seven years. I like quality service and products without excessive prices. I also have a large European client base and more flamboyant customers who like extra thick, extra long hair.

