

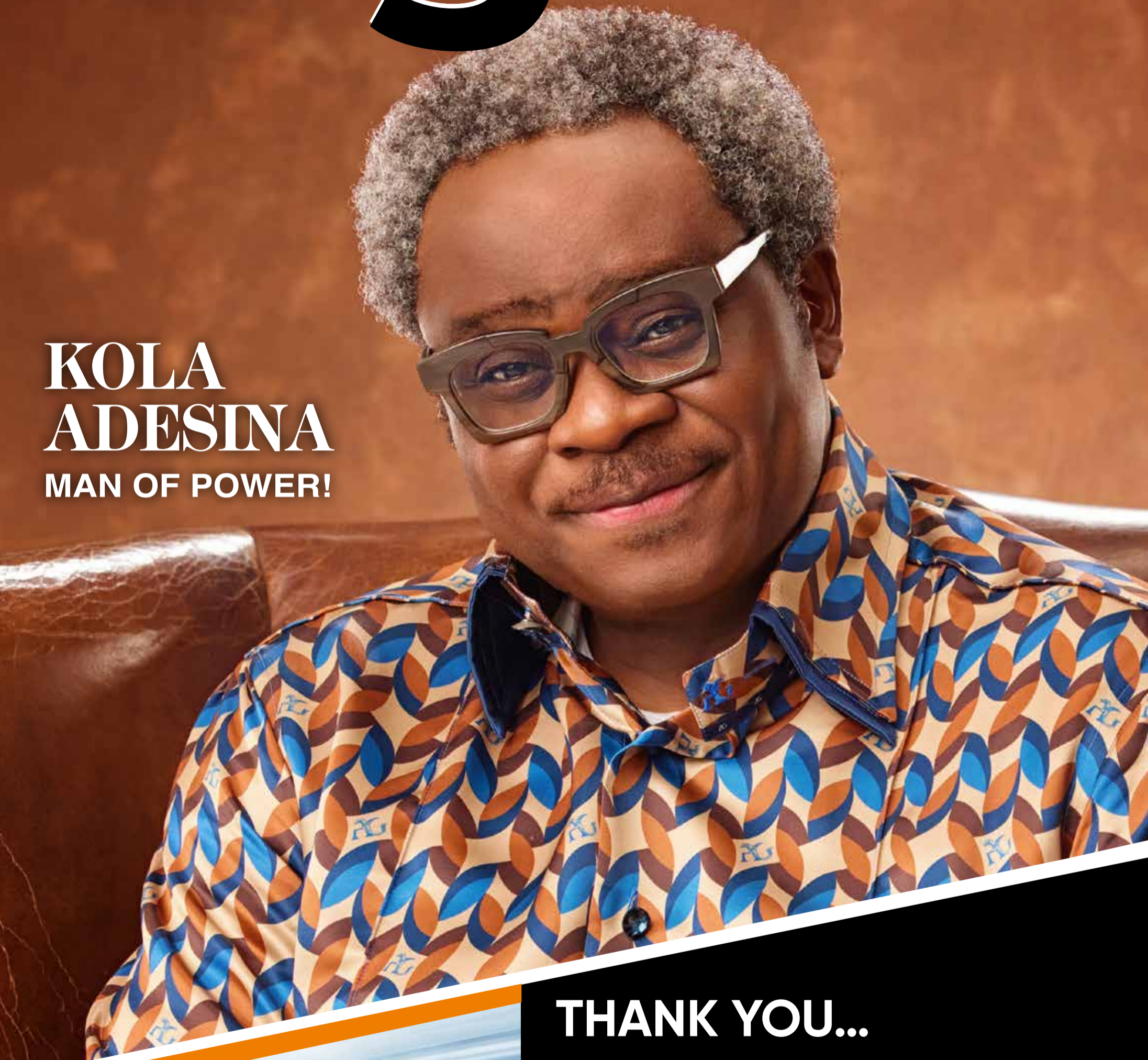
...NOT IN THISDAY STYLE? THEN YOU'RE NOT IN STYLE

THIS DAY

# Style

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 2024

**KOLA  
ADESINA  
MAN OF POWER!**



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## COVER NOTE

Kola Adesina, Executive Director at Sahara Group, is a man of man accomplishments, yet he wears his success with the kind of humility that defines true leadership. It's impossible to overlook the vast terrain his career has traversed—academia, finance, energy, trade, and diplomacy. He has made significant strides in these fields, inspiring young Africans aspiring to create their legacy. Under his leadership, Sahara Power Group has been at the forefront of bringing energy to life across Africa, connecting over 30 million homes and businesses to electricity through subsidiaries like Ikeja Electric and Egbin Power Plc.



## EDITOR'S LETTER



EXECUTIVE EDITOR

### Is the Glass Half-Full or Half-Empty?

So, I found the article "Is a 50/50 relationship possible?" incredibly thought-provoking. The funny thing is that I have had this conversation with my friends countless times. The idea of going 50/50—whether with a romantic partner or a friend—seems like a noble goal, but in reality, is it even possible to give equal love, care, attention, and commitment in any relationship?

Personally, I don't think so. I believe the notion of a 50/50 split puts so much pressure on a relationship, leaving us constantly measuring what we can or can't give. My relationships, whether with friends or romantic partners, have always been based on commitment rather than a strict balance sheet of give and take. Instead of attempting to create a ratio of giving in order to receive, my friendships are grounded in the understanding that love will come back around in its own time. And yes, it always does. By love, I'm referring to emotional support, shared meals, quality time—all the facets of a deep friendship.

Of course, there are those who would disagree. I recently saw a post on Instagram telling readers to only fill people's glasses who never leave their cups empty. I couldn't help but roll my eyes. Whoever wrote it must be on a futile search for someone with unlimited time and energy to give. Sometimes, your glass will be lighter than your friends' or your partner's, and that's perfectly normal. The important part is knowing that if you stay at the table, your cup will be filled up again. It's about commitment to each other, not constant give and take.

So, what is it for you? Are you an equal-measuring, give-and-take person, or do you go with the flow, hoping the love you give will eventually return?

I'd love to hear your thoughts on this. It's such a fascinating topic because it challenges the conventional wisdom of what makes a relationship "fair."

If you enjoyed this, check out "7 Tips for Living a Luxury Lifestyle on a Budget." It's such a timely read because, let's face it, living a good life regardless is the only thing that can help our mental health stable these days. People often equate the luxuries of life with money and ridiculously expensive things, but that's not always the case. Good ole Merriam-Webster defines luxury as "a condition of abundance or great ease and comfort; something adding to pleasure or comfort but not absolutely necessary; an indulgence in something that provides pleasure, satisfaction, or ease."

I particularly like that last definition because it suggests that luxury is subjective. It can mean different things to different people based on what they value. I think that's the first step to living a luxurious lifestyle on a budget—determining what luxury means to you. For some, it may be having a night away from their kids. For others, it might be as simple as going to the spa. Whatever your idea of luxury is, let this be your sign to start living your best life now. August is almost over, and if that doesn't remind you of how fast time flies, I don't know what will.

Speaking of August, how's your year wind-down looking? Do you have any plans you're trying to accomplish before the end of the year? I wish you success in all your endeavours. Let's make the most of the time we have left in 2024.

Wishing you a beautiful and productive week ahead!  
Love,

*Konye*

## Lifestyle & Fashion

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THIS DAY **Style**

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## IS A 50/50 RELATIONSHIP POSSIBLE?



### The Allure of 50/50

The appeal of a 50/50 relationship is undeniable. In theory, it sounds like the perfect solution to many issues that can arise in a partnership. If everything is split down the middle, there should be no arguments about who is doing more, who is paying more, or who is giving more emotionally. The playing field is level, and both partners can feel secure knowing that they are in a truly equal partnership.

In many ways, the desire for a 50/50 relationship reflects the broader societal push for equality, particularly gender equality. As more women enter the workforce and contribute financially to their households, the idea of sharing responsibilities equally has gained traction. No longer is it expected that one partner (usually the woman) will handle the bulk of the domestic work while the other (usually the man) focuses on providing financially. Instead, both partners are encouraged to share the load in all aspects of life.

### The Reality of 50/50

While the idea of a 50/50 relationship is appealing, the reality is often much more complex. For starters, defining what "50/50" actually means can be tricky. Does it mean splitting every bill down the middle? Dividing household chores exactly evenly? Making sure that each person gets an equal say in every decision, big or small? In practice, achieving a perfect 50/50 balance in every area of a relationship can be incredibly difficult—if not impossible.

One reason for this is that life is unpredictable, and a relationship's needs can change from day to day. There will be times when one partner may need to give more than the other, whether it's because of work stress, health issues, or family obligations. Expecting a relationship to always be perfectly balanced ignores the fact that people are not robots; they have different capacities and limitations at different times.

### The Emotional Ledger

Another issue with the 50/50 concept is that it can create an emotional ledger, where each partner keeps a score of who is contributing what to the relationship. This can lead to resentment if one feels like they are constantly giving more than they receive. Relationships are not transactions, and trying to reduce them to a series of exchanges can strip away the emotional depth and connection that makes them meaningful.



*In theory, it sounds like the perfect solution to many issues that can arise in a partnership. If everything is split down the middle, there should be no arguments about who is doing more, who is paying more, or who is giving more emotionally.*

In her book *The Art of Loving*, psychologist and social philosopher Erich Fromm writes, "Love is an activity, not a passive affect; it is a 'standing in,' not a 'falling for.'" This quote highlights the idea that love and relationships are about ongoing, active participation rather than a static division of labour. In a healthy relationship, each partner should be willing to give freely without always expecting something in return.

### Finding a New Balance

So, if a perfect 50/50 split is unrealistic, what's the alternative? The key may lie in striving for fairness rather than equality. A fair relationship is one where both partners feel valued, respected, and supported, even if the contributions are not always exactly equal.

Fairness means recognising that each partner has different strengths, weaknesses, and needs. It involves communicating openly about what each person can realistically contribute and being willing to adjust as circumstances change. For example, one partner might be better at managing finances, while the other excels at organising the household. Rather than insisting on splitting these tasks evenly, it might make more sense to divide them based on each person's strengths.

In addition, fairness involves being attuned to each other's needs and willing to step up when necessary. This might mean taking on more responsibility during times of stress or being patient when one partner cannot give as much as usual. Over time, the balance may shift back and forth, but as long as both partners feel that their contributions are recognised and appreciated, the relationship can remain healthy and fulfilling.

### The Importance of Communication

Ultimately, whether or not a 50/50 relationship is possible comes down to communication. It's crucial for partners to discuss their expectations, needs, and limitations openly and honestly. Without clear communication, one partner might feel like they are shouldering too much of the burden, leading to resentment and dissatisfaction.

One of the best ways to maintain a healthy balance in a relationship is to check in with each other regularly. This could involve setting aside time each week to talk about how things are going and whether any adjustments need to be made. With connection and willingness to adapt, couples can create a fair and supportive partnership, even if it's not perfectly equal.

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VERONICA EBIE IS ONE OF NIGERIA'S MOST SOUGHT-AFTER FASHION STYLIST



## STYLISTS: THE UNSUNG HEROES OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY

**W**hen we think of fashion, our minds often go straight to the dazzling designers who create jaw-dropping garments, the models who effortlessly glide down the runway, or the celebrities who seem to have an innate knack for setting trends. But behind every iconic look is an unsung hero working tirelessly in the shadows: the stylist. These fashion wizards are the masterminds behind the polished ensembles that dominate magazine covers, red carpets, and social media feeds.

They possess a unique talent for seeing beyond the fabric, recognising how a seemingly simple item can be transformed into a statement piece with the right mix of accessories, layering, and a touch of personal style. A great stylist knows how to work with different body types, skin tones, and individual preferences to craft looks that stand out and feel authentic to the person wearing them. It's about more than just looking good; it's about feeling confident and expressing who you are through your wardrobe.

### Why You Might Need a Stylist in Your Life

You don't have to be a celebrity to reap the benefits of working with a stylist. Here are some compelling reasons why hiring a stylist could be one of the best decisions you make:

- **Time-Saving:** In today's fast-paced world, finding time to curate the perfect outfit can be challenging. A stylist saves you precious time by pre-selecting outfits that fit your lifestyle and preferences.
- **Wardrobe Maximisation:** A stylist helps you make the most of what you already own, showing you how to create fresh, exciting outfits from your existing wardrobe rather than constantly buying new items.
- **Special Occasions:** Whether it's a wedding, a job interview, or a major event, a stylist ensures you look your absolute best when it matters most.
- **Career Boost:** In many industries, your appearance plays a significant role in your professional success. A stylist can help you curate a polished, professional image that aligns with your career goals.
- **Personal Growth:** As you evolve, so should your style. A stylist can guide you through life's transitions, whether you're returning to work, embracing a new chapter, or simply looking to refresh your look.



## 7 TIPS FOR LIVING A LUXURY LIFESTYLE ON A BUDGET



Who says you need a million-dollar bank account to live like a millionaire? The truth is, with a bit of creativity and smart planning, you can enjoy the finer things in life without breaking the bank. Whether you want to enjoy luxury travel, dine at the best restaurants, or dress like a style icon, it's all within reach. Here's how to live a lavish lifestyle on a budget—no trust fund required!

By Funke Babs-Kufeji

### 1. Master the Art of Savvy Shopping

Luxury is all about perception, and when it comes to style, how you carry yourself is just as important as the price tag on your clothes. The key to looking like you've stepped out of a designer boutique is knowing where to shop. Start by exploring high-end consignment stores and online resale platforms. You can score authentic designer pieces at a fraction of the original price. Also, don't underestimate the power of off-season shopping. Snag those high-end items during end-of-season sales when prices are slashed. Your wardrobe will thank you!

### 2. Travel Like a Jetsetter for Less

Dreaming of an exotic vacation in Bali or a weekend getaway in Paris? You don't need to splurge on five-star hotels or first-class tickets to make it happen. Instead, become a pro at finding travel deals. Sign up for fare alerts online and be flexible with your travel dates. Look into alternative accommodations like boutique hotels or vacation rentals through Airbnb, which often provide a more personalized and luxurious experience than your standard hotel chain.

### 3. Dine in Style Without the Price Tag

Dining at the best restaurants doesn't have to be a once-in-a-blue-moon affair. Many upscale restaurants offer prix fixe menus or early bird specials, giving you a gourmet experience for a fraction of the cost. For those special occasions, consider dining out during Restaurant Week, when many top restaurants offer reduced prices for set menus.

### 4. Create a Luxe Home Environment

Your home should be your sanctuary; with a few thoughtful touches, you can make it feel luxurious without spending a fortune. Invest in quality over quantity when it comes

to home decor. A few statement pieces, like a plush area rug, high-thread-count sheets, or a well-placed piece of art, can transform your space. And don't forget the power of a little DIY—refinishing a vintage piece of furniture or adding a fresh coat of paint can instantly elevate your home's ambience.

### 5. Pamper Yourself Like Royalty

Everyone deserves a little pampering, but spa days and beauty treatments can add up quickly. Instead, recreate the spa experience at home. Invest in quality skincare products and set aside weekly time for a self-care routine. Want to indulge in regular manicures? Learn to do them yourself or find a budget-friendly nail salon that doesn't compromise on quality.

### 6. Curate Your Social Life with Elegance

Living lavishly also means surrounding yourself with the right experiences and people. Host elegant dinners or cocktail parties at home, where you can control the budget without sacrificing style. The key is in the details—creating a beautiful tablescape, serving a signature cocktail, or curating a playlist that sets the mood. Potluck-style gatherings are another great way to keep costs low while enjoying gourmet meals and good company. Plus, they offer a unique opportunity to showcase your hosting skills.

### 7. Invest in Experiences Over Things

The experiences that bring joy and create lasting memories are at the heart of a truly lavish lifestyle. Instead of spending on the latest gadgets or trendy fashion items that lose their appeal, focus on experiences that enrich your life. Whether it's taking a cooking class, attending a concert, or exploring a new city, these moments will make you feel truly wealthy. Often, the best experiences don't come with a hefty price tag but rather with the value they add to your life.



# HOW TO LAYER YOUR SCENTS SO YOU SMELL AMAZING

When it comes to leaving a lasting impression, nothing does the job quite like a well-chosen fragrance. But have you ever wondered how some people seem to have a scent that's uniquely their own, a blend that's both subtle and striking, making you lean in just to catch a whiff? The secret isn't just in the perfume they wear—it's in how they layer their scents. Mastering the art of scent layering is a game-changer, allowing you to create a personalised fragrance that lingers beautifully. Here's how to do it like a pro.



PRECIOUS JOHN

## Start with a Clean Slate

Before diving into the world of scents, it's essential to start with a clean, moisturised body. The truth is that fragrance lasts longer on hydrated skin, so after your shower, make sure to apply an unscented or lightly scented moisturiser. This not only preps your skin for the perfume but also ensures that the scent adheres better and lasts longer. Some experts recommend using a body oil for an extra dose of moisture, which can act as a subtle base layer for your fragrance.



AYODEJI AWONUQA

## Choose Your Base Note

The first step in layering is choosing a base note that sets the foundation for your scent. This is typically a heavier, richer scent that can be worn alone or as the first layer of your fragrance cocktail. Think of deep, warm notes like vanilla, musk, sandalwood, or amber. These scents are grounding and tend to last the longest, giving your overall fragrance a solid base.

When selecting your base note, consider what type of mood you want to convey. Do you want something cosy and inviting? Opt for a creamy vanilla or warm amber. Looking for something a bit more sensual? Musk or sandalwood could be your go-to. Apply this scent directly to your pulse points—wrists, behind the ears, and at the base of your throat—where your body heat will help to diffuse the fragrance throughout the day.

## Add a Middle Note

Now that you have your base, it's time to add a middle note. The middle note, or heart note, is the core of your fragrance. It's what gives the scent its personality and character. Florals like rose, jasmine, or lavender are popular choices, as they add a touch of elegance and softness. However, don't shy away from spices like cinnamon or clove if you're in the mood for something more exotic.

## Finish with a Top Note

The top note is the final layer, the first thing people will notice when you walk into a room. These are usually lighter, more volatile scents that fade faster, so they need to be refreshed throughout the day. Citrus notes like bergamot, lemon, or grapefruit are excellent choices for a fresh, invigorating finish. Spray your top note lightly over the other layers, focusing on areas like your hair or clothing where the scent can be easily picked up. Be careful not to overdo it—this layer is meant to be the finishing touch, not the main event.

## Don't Forget the Unexpected Layers

If you want to elevate your scent game, consider layering unexpected elements. For instance, a scented hair mist or body oil can add an extra dimension to your scent profile. Even your body wash or deodorant can contribute to the overall fragrance. Just be sure to choose products that complement your chosen scents rather than compete with them.

## Trust Your Nose

The most important rule of scent layering is to trust your own nose. Don't feel constrained by traditional fragrance rules—mix and match until you find a combination that feels uniquely you. Fragrance is deeply personal, and what smells amazing to you is ultimately what matters most.

## Final Spritz

Once you've layered your scents, give yourself a final spritz—a light mist over your hair or clothes. This not only ensures your scent will last but also allows the different notes to meld together seamlessly, creating a beautiful, cohesive fragrance that is distinctly yours.



# ESSENTIAL GROOMING HABITS EVERY MAN SHOULD FOLLOW

By Funke Babs-Kufeki



It's high time we debunked the myth that grooming is a "feminine" thing. Caring for yourself isn't just the right thing to do—it's downright attractive. Your skin and hair are major players in how you present yourself to the world, and whether you like it or not, they do matter. Even if you've avoided the grooming game until now, some rituals are simply non-negotiable. So, for those of you who've been on the fence about embracing a grooming routine, here's a look at five daily habits every man should master.

## 1. Skincare Routine

No, we're not suggesting you follow a seven-step Korean skincare regimen. But maintaining clear, healthy skin doesn't require a ton of effort—just consistency. A simple daily routine can keep your skin in check and looking its best.

### -Cleanse

First things first: cleanse. Think of all the dirt, pollution, sweat, and dead skin cells that accumulate on your face throughout the day. A good cleanser is your first line of defence, clearing away grime and giving your skin a fresh start. Choose a product that suits your skin type and use it at least twice daily—morning and night. Trust us, your skin will thank you.

### -Moisturise

Next up is moisturising. Let's clear this up—moisturising doesn't make you a "pretty boy." What it does is keep your skin hydrated and balanced, which is crucial for maintaining its natural barrier. A good moisturiser nourishes your skin, helping it stay resilient against environ-

mental stressors. So, don't skip this step—it's essential for keeping your skin in peak condition.

### -Sunscreen

Last but definitely not least: sunscreen. If there's one thing you take away from this, let it be this—never skip sunscreen. The sun's UV rays are the number one culprit behind wrinkles, fine lines, and other signs of ageing. Worse, they can cause permanent skin damage or even increase your risk of skin cancer. Prevention is better than cure, so make applying a broad-spectrum sunscreen a daily habit.

## 2. Hair Care

Gone are the days when only women were judged by their hair. In today's world, men are also expected to take pride in their locks. A well-maintained mane not only looks good but also speaks volumes about your personal grooming standards.

**-Shampoo** - Shampooing is all about keeping your hair clean and free from dirt, oils, and unwanted particles. But here's



the thing—daily shampooing can strip your hair of its natural oils, leaving it dry and brittle. Instead, find a balance that works for you, whether that's every other day or a few times a week. Choose a shampoo that complements your hair type, and don't be afraid to experiment until you find the perfect match.

**-Conditioning**-Conditioning is where the magic happens. It's not just for women—your hair deserves some TLC, too. A good conditioner hydrates, nourishes, and protects your hair, leaving it soft, shiny, and more manageable. So, go ahead and indulge—your hair will look and feel better for it.



## 3. Beard Maintenance

Beards have made a major comeback, and they're not just for models anymore. Today's beards are all about combining ruggedness with professionalism. But with great beards come great responsibility. Regular grooming is key to keeping your beard in top shape.

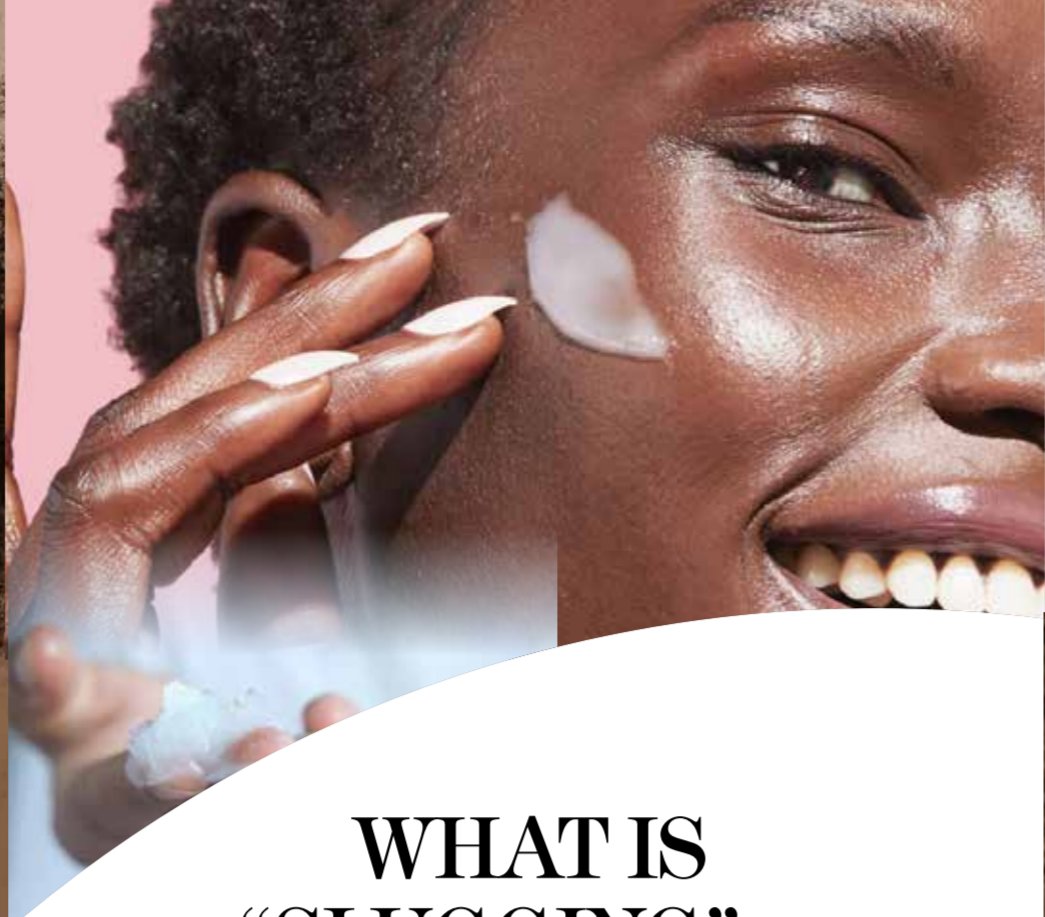
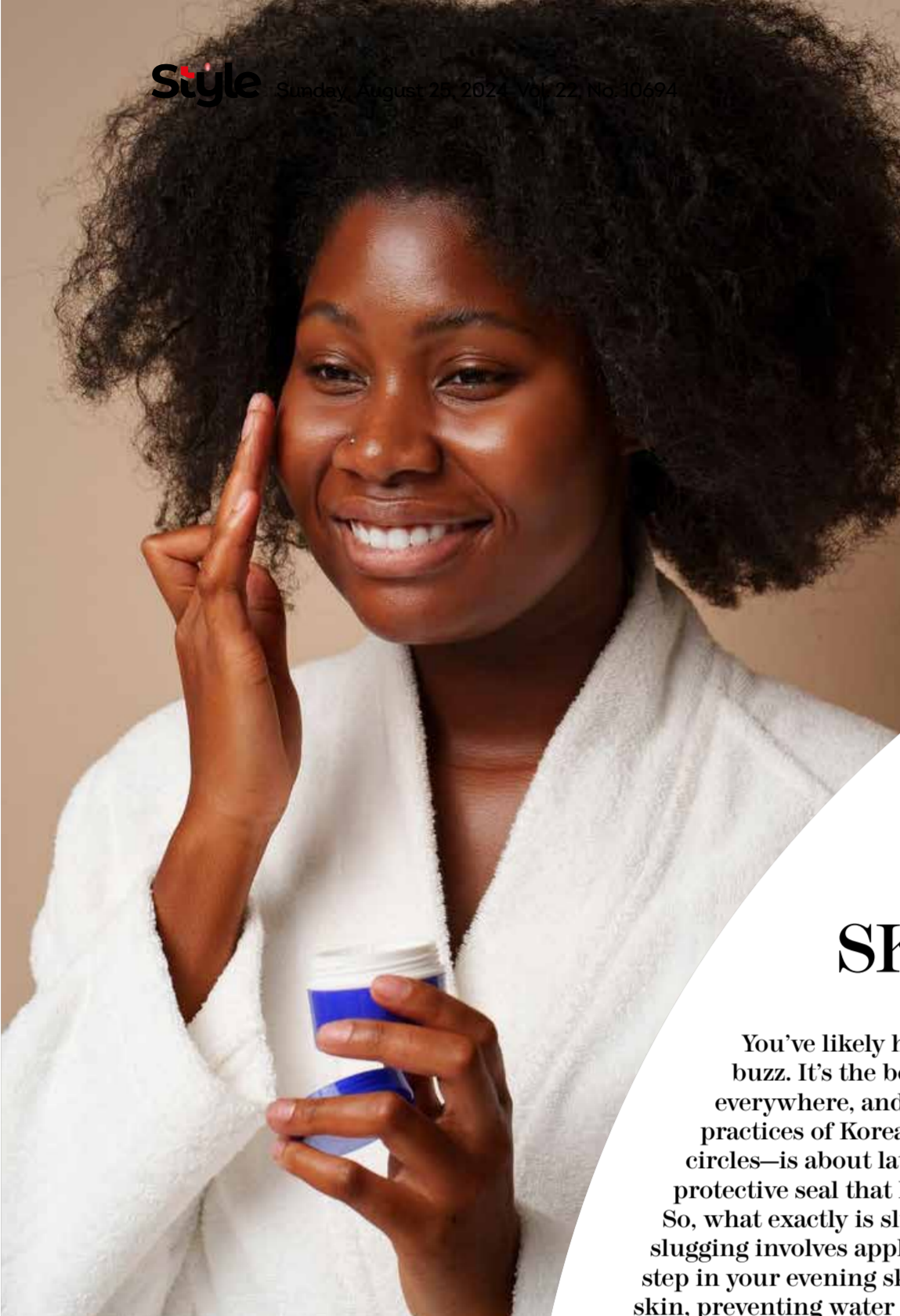
**-Groom and Exfoliate**- To avoid ingrown hairs and acne, exfoliate regularly and treat yourself to long, relaxing baths. Washing your face morning and night is essential, especially if you're sporting a beard. If your beard is on the thicker side, consider investing in a foamy beard wash. It'll clean your facial hair effectively without stripping away the natural oils that keep it looking healthy.



## 4. Oral Hygiene

Oral hygiene isn't just about fresh breath—it's about your overall well-being. No one likes bad breath, and maintaining a clean, fresh mouth is essential for any man. **-Brush and Floss** - Brushing and flossing are your best friends when it comes to preventing cavities and ensuring gum health. Make sure to visit your dentist regularly for check-ups—they'll remove plaque and tartar safely, reducing your risk of gum disease.





## WHAT IS “SLUGGING” AND HOW TO ADD IT TO YOUR FACIAL SKINCARE ROUTINE

You’ve likely heard of slugging if you’ve been following the latest skincare buzz. It’s the beauty trend quietly revolutionising nighttime routines everywhere, and it’s not just another fleeting fad. Rooted in the time-tested practices of Korean beauty, slugging—or “dabong” as it’s known in K-beauty circles—is about lathering your skin in rich, hydrating creams, creating a protective seal that locks in moisture all night long.

So, what exactly is slugging, and why is everyone talking about it? Essentially, slugging involves applying a petrolatum-based product, like Vaseline, as the final step in your evening skincare routine. This occlusive agent forms a barrier on your skin, preventing water loss and keeping all those hydrating serums and moisturisers you’ve applied from evaporating. The result? A deeply moisturised, dewy complexion that greets you in the morning.

### Why Slugging Works

The magic of slugging lies in its simplicity. Vaseline, for instance, is an occlusive—a substance that forms a protective barrier over your skin, reducing trans-epidermal water loss (TEWL). This barrier helps your skin hold onto the moisture it already has, making it an incredibly effective way to boost hydration without worrying about clogged pores or irritation.

What’s even better? Vaseline is almost completely inert, meaning it’s unlikely to cause any adverse reactions, making it a safe bet for most skin types. However, it’s crucial to note that while Vaseline helps your skin retain moisture, it doesn’t actually add moisture. That’s where your other skincare products come into play. Pairing slugging with a hyaluronic acid serum, for instance, can amplify the hydrating effects, giving your skin the extra boost it needs to stay plump and healthy.

### How to Perfect Your Slugging Routine in 3 Easy Steps

#### Step 1: Cleanse and Prep Your Skin

The foundation of any good skincare routine is a clean slate. Before you start slugging, ensure your skin is thoroughly cleansed. A double cleanse—using an oil-based cleanser followed by a water-based one—removes dirt, dead skin cells, and any residual makeup. Clean pores are key to preventing irritation or clogging when you apply your occlusive layer.

#### Step 2: Follow Your Regular Skincare Routine and Apply Moisturiser

With your skin prepped, move on to your usual nighttime skincare routine. Whether you’re using serums, toners, or treatments, this is the time to apply them. Once that’s done, finish with a good moisturiser tailored to your skin type. Moisturisers are essential for adding hydration back to your skin, especially if exposed to harsh environmental elements during the day.

#### Step 3: Seal in the Moisture with an Occlusive

Now for the star of the show: the occlusive. This is where slugging truly comes into play. Add a small amount of Vaseline or another petrolatum-based product over your moisturiser. This final step is crucial because it locks in all the moisture and active ingredients you’ve just applied, creating a barrier that prevents water loss throughout the night. The occlusive layer ensures that your skin stays hydrated, plump, and radiant by morning.



TIMINI EGBUSON



ASAP ROCKY



## BREAKING THE RULES: HOW TO ROCK SUITS WITH SNEAKERS

Imagine telling someone in the 1980s that a few decades later, people would be swapping their polished Oxfords, loafers, and brogues for sneakers when wearing suits. They might have looked at you like you were out of your mind! After all, back then, sneakers were strictly for the gym, playgrounds, or maybe a casual stroll, while suits were reserved for serious business, formal events, and important meetings. The two worlds just didn’t collide. Fast forward to today, and here we are, boldly breaking all the old-school fashion rules with the suit-and-sneaker combo becoming a stylish staple.

The beauty of this trend lies in its versatility: it blurs the lines between casual and formal, making fashion less about rules and more about personal expression.

If you’re new to this concept, pairing sneakers with suits might seem like a daring move. But don’t worry, it’s easier than it looks. The key is to start small, incorporating this trend into formal events where you want to add a youthful, relaxed twist to your suit.

### Start with an Audit: What’s in Your Closet?

Styling Tips and Tricks

**White on White:** For a clean, chic look, try pairing white sneakers with a slightly off-white or beige suit. The subtle clash of lighter hues creates a sophisticated yet relaxed vibe.

**Grey Matter:** A grey suit is a perfect middle ground—more subtle than black but still exuding power. Pair it with a crisp, all-white sneaker for an understated look and undeniably cool.

**Fun Prints:** If you’re feeling adventurous, pair your sneakers with a full suit in a fun print. Keep the sneakers in a solid colour to let the suit do most of the talking. This combo perfectly balances breezy business casual and bold personal style.

**Posh Socks:** Why not add some statement socks to the mix on those cooler days? Experiment with different textures and patterns to add a touch of personality to your outfit. It’s a small detail that can make a big impact.

**Confidence is Key:** No matter what you choose to wear, the most important accessory is confidence. Own your look with poise, and you’ll elevate any outfit. Remember, fashion is about having fun and expressing yourself—so don’t be afraid to experiment and find the style that makes you feel your best.



By Funke Babbs-Kuféji



NOBLE IGWE



# THANK YOU...

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for subscribing to the Access Holdings Rights Issue. Your belief in our mission fuels our ambition for the future. As we close this phase, we are more excited than ever for what lies ahead.

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COVER

COVER

## KOLA ADESINA MAN OF POWER!

**Kola Adesina**, Executive Director at Sahara Group, is a man of many accomplishments, yet he wears his success with the kind of humility that defines true leadership. It's impossible to overlook the vast terrain his career has traversed—academia, finance, energy, trade, and diplomacy. He has made significant strides in these fields, inspiring young Africans aspiring to create their legacy. Under his leadership, Sahara Power Group has been at the forefront of bringing energy to life across Africa, connecting over 30 million homes and businesses to electricity through subsidiaries like Ikeja Electric and Egbin Power Plc. Kola Adesina's influence extends far beyond the energy sector. His work on the Presidential Committee on the Accelerated Expansion of Electricity Infrastructure in Nigeria was instrumental in reshaping the nation's power sector. His leadership led to the unbundling of the PHCN successor companies, a milestone that has had a lasting impact on Nigeria's economy. He is also a forward-thinking leader who envisions a future where Africa is not just a participant but a leader in global economic conversations. His recent appointment to the Presidential Economic Coordination Council (PECC) by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is proof of his vital role in shaping Nigeria's economic future. Tasked with developing and implementing a comprehensive economic strategy, Kola's influence is set to extend even further, ensuring that the nation capitalises on its vast resources and talent. This interview offers a rare glimpse into the mind of a man who, at 60, is more committed than ever to progress and the realisation of the Pan-African.

**Congratulations on turning 60, sir! How does this milestone feel, and what are you most excited about as you enter this new chapter?**

I always start every new year on the platform of gratitude to God for the gift of life, the gift of family and the gift of capacity to be healthy and in a position to keep making a difference and contributing to making the world a better place, working alongside all the people God has given me the grace to meet, learn from and impact. So, for this milestone, it's not different. I owe everything I am and can ever be to the grace and favour of God, and this state of gratitude and total dependence on God is the highest expression of my lifestyle. At 60, I feel like 40; in fact, I am ageless in my mind as I am still armed with the same bandwidth for continuous learning and adaptability required for optimal and exceptional impact. This can only be God's gift, for which I am grateful. Above all, having my wife and children, who have been my rock, celebrate this milestone with me gives me so much joy, and I thank God for His grace. Then, of course, celebrating this milestone with my extended family, my Sahara Family, global leaders, friends and associates from all over the world makes me feel so special. Again, this can only be the Hand of God upon my life. This new chapter will be one of legacy building, with intention and unyielding resolve to build platforms to promote the values that have shaped my life over these six decades.

**Looking back, what are some of the biggest lessons life has taught you over the past six decades?**

Well life has taught me so many lessons that I will have to write a book on that. However, some key lessons for me are. Love your neighbour just as God loves you. If we truly understand the concept of loving one another, we will do right by each other and drive the development we desire. Build long-lasting relations because these relationships are the bridges needed in the journey of life. Always hold onto God; his favour, mercy, and love are the rock and foundation of this life. Upskill yourself and be ready to take on opportunities when they arise. You just never know when one comes knocking. Never take no for an answer. Let your ambition drive you to do the unimaginable.

**Is there anything on your bucket list you're determined to check off now that you've hit the big 60?**

For me, electrifying Nigeria and Africa has been a lifelong goal. I will not rest on my oars until Nigeria can boast of 24/7 electricity. With the amount of work that has been done diligently by the men and women in the sector, we are increasingly moving the needle towards achieving this feat. Would there be challenges? Most definitely. However, I am

confident that with collaboration and the right investments, policies, strategies, sustainable adaptation of renewable energy, and consumer orientation, Nigeria and indeed, Africa will check the box of uninterrupted power supply ultimately.

**Let's talk a bit about your career. It's really an impressive one, spanning academia, finance, energy, trade, and diplomacy. What's the secret to staying relevant across so many sectors?**

You forgot Insurance. This gave me the platform to traverse the different sectors I have found myself in. The secret really is adding value. What solutions and value are you bringing to the table? Every sector has different challenges, but a mind that looks beyond them and identifies solutions and opportunities will flourish. One must always be nimble and willing to grow capacity that will facilitate making a difference along the value chain of creating, transforming, redefining, and repurposing value. At the end of the day, everyone salutes, embraces, and defers to value. You must strive to be seen as a "value merchant" with the capacity that traverses different areas of endeavour. And the beautiful thing about this value principle is that it must not originate from you. You can learn, collaborate and be willing to unlearn things that will disrupt your journey towards creating value responsibly and sustainably.

**As a board member of several companies, how do you balance your responsibilities across? I imagine it must be a lot.**

Well, it is quite a lot; however, I have a fantastic team with which I work. From the management staff of the different entities to the desk and field officers, there is a collaboration that births success. I manage my time appropriately, ensuring that I am always giving my best. I am a solution provider, and whenever called upon, I deliver. Without the team behind me, I am sure I will struggle, but I am glad I have them. So, I simply immerse myself in the strength of my team, learning from them and providing guidance and oversight as we create value together. I believe so much in "we"; it unleashes the beauty of diversity and always drives sustainable success

**Sahara Power Group connects over 30 million homes and businesses to electricity. What's the secret to managing such a massive operation?**

As I mentioned earlier, a collaborative team with the right synergy will do wonders. As an organisation, we believe strongly in the phrase, "My job is not done until the job is done." Sahara is not an organisation; it's a phenomenon, a mindset that defies the impossible. Sahara is always seeking frontiers to make a difference, and we have continued to lead the way in the power sector, where we operate the largest generation and distribution power companies in sub-Saharan Africa. With





COVER

continuing investments, infrastructure upgrades, deployment of new technology and human capital transformation, we have a shared vision of bringing energy to life responsibly wherever it is needed.

**What does the future of energy in Nigeria and Africa look like through your lens?**

I see a Nigeria and Africa that harnesses its natural resources to create the development we desire to see. Take for example, Nigeria is blessed with Natural Gas, and it is only logical that we harness this gas for our power plants to provide electricity that will be the foundation of our industrial revolution. With the right policies and determination by all stakeholders, from Government to private individuals, this dream can become our reality in the not-so-distant future. Africa needs to solve its problem using local solutions while creating an alignment with the



*The day Nigeria becomes a producing nation rather than just a consuming nation, we will have truly broken free of years of poverty and marginalization. This means our children and their generation will live way better lives, become proud of the country called Nigeria and ensure it takes its place on the table of first world countries.*

global stakeholders.

**You're a strong advocate for Nigeria becoming a nation that manufactures opportunities. What does this vision look like in reality?**

The day Nigeria becomes a producing nation rather than just a consuming nation, we will have truly broken free of years of poverty and marginalization. This means our children and their generation will live way better lives, become proud of the country called Nigeria and ensure it takes its place on the table of first world countries. We have been blessed with natural resources, youthful population that is determined to proffer solutions so this can become a reality if we truly focus on this as one country and one people.

**I think this is a good time to bring up your appointment to the Presidential Economic Coordination Council by President Tinubu. How's that going? And how has this experience shaped your perspective on Nigeria's economic future?**

I first must commend His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for his leadership and guidance. The PECC is strategic because it created a platform where private sector players like me will relate with other stakeholders of the economy, especially the government, to review the economic structure of our country and provide solutions to be implemented. I don't

believe any of us wants Nigeria to disintegrate into a war-torn country, hence the need to get it right and put Nigeria on its part to economic growth and development. With the calibre of the individuals in the council, there truly is a renewed hope for the project called Nigeria.

**So, what keeps your belief in Nigeria's potential unwavering, even in challenging times?**

There is no place like home truly. Regardless of where you live, there's this enterprising Nigerian spirit that makes us unique. We have an expansive and incredibly gifted mindset that sets us apart. It is not unusual to hear about Nigerians excelling in different disciplines across the globe. I believe in Nigeria and the fact that Nigeria has what it takes to truly become a global power. It is a continuing journey that requires patience, bold policies and selfless participation of all Nigerians beyond the lines of tribe, tongue and creed. This keeps me energised in my every endeavour to play my path in the success story of Nigeria. Nigeria has a rendezvous with history; it is a glorious rendezvous that generations unborn will celebrate.

**What message do you have for Nigerians who might feel disillusioned with the current state of the nation?**

The countries we compare ourselves to today once had it bad, and some were even worse than Nigeria, but there was just a change that set them on the right path. Singapore wasn't such a fantastic place to be decades ago. However, today, they sit on the table with world powers. It takes the efforts of each and every one of us to play our role in ensuring Nigeria becomes great. The little decisions you make even in managing your waste, paying utility bills, obeying traffic laws etc are fundamental in our growth and development. I implore every Nigerian to play their path in creating the best nation on earth; this is truly possible.

**You are big on mentorship and empowerment. Why is this so important to you?**

Well, knowledge transfer has always been a passion right from my teaching days at the University of Lagos. I strongly believe that knowledge is given to us not just for ourselves but also for others. I will be selfish if I don't share what I know because while giving, I also receive. I also learn from the mentees around me, creating a mix of ideas that gives out-of-the-box solutions. When the younger generation learns from the older generation, they can build on that and create a future way better than the past; this is very important to me.

**What has been the most rewarding moment in your journey of mentorship and empowerment?**

For me, it is seeing my mentees succeed in the different areas they chose to play in. This, in itself, is the reward and blessing. A good teacher will always want his/her students to be better than them. When I see them excel, this gladdens me, and that is my reward.

**As someone who has achieved so much, how do you want to be remembered?**

I want to be remembered as the man who diligently played his part in bring 24/7 electricity to Nigeria and Africa. Most importantly, one who contributed passionately and selflessly to bringing energy to life responsibly.

**If you could achieve one more major milestone in your career, what would it be?**

Electrifying Nigeria



**9 TINY THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MAKE YOUR MEALS MORE NUTRITIOUS**

Let's be honest—life is busy. Between work, family, and squeezing in some me-time, it's easy to fall into the trap of quick, convenient meals that might not exactly be brimming with nutrients. But what if I told you that with just a few tiny tweaks, you could transform your meals into a powerhouse of nutrition without adding a ton of extra effort? Sounds good, right? Well, grab your fork because we're about to share ten tiny things you can do to make your meals more nutritious—without sacrificing the flavour or fun.

**1. Boost with Seeds**

Here's a little secret: seeds are like nutritional superheroes in disguise. Whether it's chia, flax, or pumpkin, these tiny powerhouses can add a major nutrient punch to your meals. Sprinkle them into your morning smoothie, mix them into your oatmeal, or even toss them into salads. Not only do they add a satisfying crunch, but they also bring in fibre, healthy fats, and a surprising amount of protein. Plus, seeds are an easy way to get some omega-3s if fish isn't your thing.



**2. Spice It Up**

Spices aren't just for making your food taste amazing—they also come with health benefits. Turmeric, for example, is known for its anti-inflammatory properties. Cinnamon can help regulate blood sugar, and ginger can soothe an upset stomach. The best part? You can add them to almost anything. Stir turmeric into scrambled eggs, sprinkle cinnamon on your yoghurt, or grate some ginger into your stir-fry. It's a small change, but your body will thank you.



**3. Embrace the Power of Citrus**

A squeeze of lemon or lime can do wonders for your food—and your health. Citrus fruits are packed with vitamin C, which boosts your immune system and helps your body absorb iron more efficiently. Add a splash of lemon juice to your salads, fish, or even water. Not only will it brighten up the flavours, but it also gives your body that little extra nutritional kick it needs.



**4. Go Green with Herbs**

Herbs are the unsung heroes of the kitchen. Fresh basil, cilantro, parsley, and mint can transform a dish from bland to brilliant while adding a burst of nutrients. These leafy greens are packed with vitamins A, C, and K, not to mention a host of antioxidants. Chop them up and toss them into soups, sprinkle them over roasted vegetables, or mix them into your pasta dishes. It's a tiny tweak with a huge payoff.



**5. Swap Out Refined Grains**

Alright, this one might sound a bit obvious, but bear with me. Swapping out refined grains for whole grains is one of the easiest ways to amp up the nutrition in your meals. Whether it's brown rice instead of white or whole-grain pasta instead of the refined kind, these swaps bring more fibre, vitamins, and minerals to the table.



**6. Top It with a Handful of Nuts**

Nuts are another small yet mighty addition to your meals. Almonds, walnuts, and pecans add a satisfying crunch and a dose of healthy fats, protein, and antioxidants. Sprinkle them over your morning cereal, blend them into smoothies, or just keep a handful on the side for a quick snack. The key here is moderation—a little goes a long way!



**7. Sneak in Some Veggies**

We all know we should eat more vegetables, but let's face it, sometimes they just don't fit into the dish we're making. The solution? Sneak them in. Grate carrots into your pasta sauce, blend spinach into your smoothies or add cauliflower to your stir-fry. These tiny adjustments are barely noticeable in taste but make a big difference in the nutritional content of your meal.



**8. Switch to Greek Yogurt**

If you're a yoghurt fan, consider switching to Greek yogurt. It's thicker, creamier, and packs more protein than its regular counterpart. Plus, it's lower in sugar and higher in probiotics, which are great for your gut health. Use it as a smoothie base, mix it into sauces for a creamy texture, or enjoy it with a drizzle of honey and some fruit.



**9. Mind the Portion Sizes**

Here's a tiny tip that's often overlooked: portion control. It's not just about what you eat, but how much you eat. By being mindful of your portion sizes, you can ensure that you're not overloading on calories while still getting all the nutrients your body needs. Use smaller plates, measure out servings, and pay attention to your hunger cues. It's a small change, but it can make a world of difference in your overall health.





## TURN HEADS WITH THESE MUST-TRY BRAID STYLES

By Funke Babs Kufeji

Braids have always been a go-to hairstyle for their versatility, protection, and undeniable style. Whether you're dressing up for a special occasion or simply looking for a fresh everyday look, the right braid can elevate your entire appearance.



BOX BRAIDS



FULANI BRAIDS

### Cornrows

Cornrows are the epitome of classic braiding style—clean, symmetrical rows woven close to the scalp. This look has universal appeal, and for good reason. Cornrows are stylish and practical, promoting healthy hair growth while keeping your locks neat and protected. It's no wonder this iconic style never goes out of fashion.

### Box Braids

Box braids have earned their place as a go-to style for their durability and versatility. These individual braids, which can be crafted in varying lengths and thicknesses,

allow for endless creativity. Whether adorned with beads, cuffs, or other accessories, box braids can be personalised to reflect your unique style.

### Fulani Braids

If you're looking to channel a traditional yet modern vibe, Fulani braids are your answer. Originating from the Fulani people of West Africa, these braids are not just intricate and stylish but deeply rooted in tribal culture. Adorned with beads and rings, Fulani braids bring a touch of timeless elegance and remain as fashionable today as they were centuries ago, connect-

ing you to a rich heritage.

### Knotless Braids

Knotless braids are the latest evolution in the world of braiding, offering a fresh take on traditional methods. Starting with a knot-free base, these braids provide a more natural and lightweight finish, making them incredibly comfortable to wear. It's no wonder this modern twist on classic braids is becoming a favourite among trendsetters, ensuring you feel at ease while staying stylish.

### Goddess Braids

If you're after a style that exudes

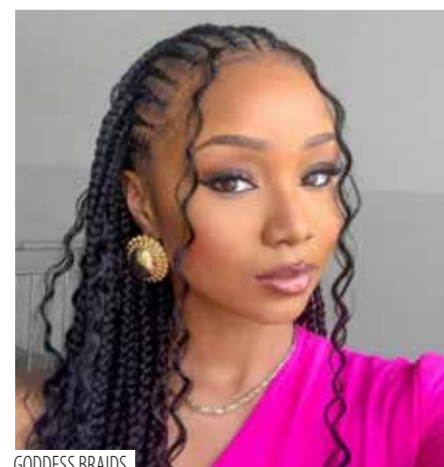
elegance and regality, goddess braids are your best bet. These curly-styled braids are perfect for anyone who wants a low-maintenance yet stunning look.

### Jumbo Braids

When it comes to making a bold statement, jumbo braids are hard to beat. These large, thick braids are perfect for anyone who wants to stand out from the crowd. They're big, bold, and beautiful, giving you a dramatic and stylish look. Whether you opt for a full head of jumbo braids or just a few to accent your natural hair, this style will surely get you noticed.



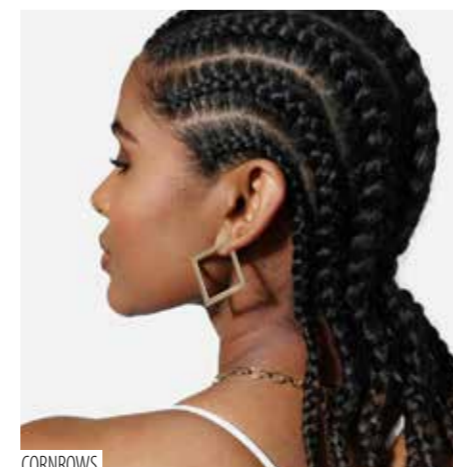
KNOTLESS BRAIDS



GODDESS BRAIDS



JUMBO BRAIDS



CORNROWS

## HOW TO MAKE EVERY OUTFIT FASHIONABLE, REGARDLESS OF THE OCCASION

Fashion is more than just what you wear; it's how you wear it, and that's why you don't need a stylist or an overflowing closet to turn heads at every event. Whether you're headed to a casual brunch or a black-tie gala, the key to looking fashionable lies in the details. The following tips will help.

### 1. Know Your Signature Style—And Stick to It

We all have that one look that makes us feel unstoppable. It could be a perfectly tailored blazer, a flowy bohemian dress, or even a simple pair of well-fitted jeans. The trick to looking fashionable in any situation is understanding what works for you and then refining it. Your signature style is like your fashion compass—it guides you when you're unsure of what to wear.

### 2. Play with Proportions and Textures

Fashion isn't just about what you wear, but how you put it all together. Mixing different proportions and textures can add depth to even the most basic outfits. Pair an oversized shirt with a sleek pencil skirt, or layer a delicate silk blouse under a structured jacket. The contrast between the materials creates visual interest and keeps your outfit from looking flat or predictable.

### 3. Accessories Are Your Best Friend

You've probably heard this before, but let me reiterate: accessories can make or break your outfit. The right accessories can elevate even the simplest look. A statement necklace, a chic belt, or a pair of standout shoes can transform a basic outfit into something special. But remember, it's all about balance—if your outfit is already loud, go for subtler accessories.

### 4. Invest in Versatile Pieces

Here's a little secret: you don't need a million pieces in your wardrobe to look fashionable. What you do need are a few versatile items that you can mix and match in countless ways. A well-tailored blazer, a little black dress, or a crisp white shirt are all pieces that can be dressed up or down depending on the occasion.

### 5. Embrace the Power of Colour

While neutral tones are safe, don't shy away from adding a pop of colour to your outfits. A bright scarf, a pair of red heels, or even a bold lipstick can add that extra flair to your look. If you're feeling adventurous, try colour-blocking—pairing contrasting colours together can create a dynamic and fashionable ensemble.

### 6. Understand the Dress Code—Then Bend the Rules

First things first: always know the dress code. But once you've got that down, feel free to put your spin on it. For example, if the event calls for business casual, why not pair a tailored blazer with a pair of stylish sneakers? Or if you're attending a cocktail party, try a jumpsuit instead of the traditional dress. The idea here is to respect the occasion but still let your personality shine through.

### 7. Confidence is Key

No matter what you're wearing, you'll look fashionable if you confidently walk into a room. Confidence comes from knowing you look good but also from feeling comfortable in what you're wearing. This is why it's crucial to wear clothes that fit well and that you feel good in. There's nothing worse than fidgeting with an outfit all night because it's too tight or too loose.

### 8. Add a Personal Touch

Finally, the best way to make any outfit fashionable is to add a bit of you to it. Whether it's a piece of jewellery with sentimental value, a vintage find, or something from a local designer, incorporating personal elements into your outfit makes it unique. Fashion is an expression of who you are, so don't be afraid to let your personality show through.



NICOLE CHIKWE

ONYEKA MICHAEL UGWU

### 1. Go Green

Jump on the sustainable bandwagon and give Mother Earth a little love while you're at it. Think reclaimed wood coffee tables, bamboo spice racks, or a cosy rattan chair. Deck out your digs with fabrics that feel good, literally and morally—like jute, cotton, or linen.



## BUDGET-FRIENDLY HOME MAKEOVER IDEAS

By Bukola Amoye

Feeling like your living space is more “blah” than “ta-da”? Let's change that! Transforming your home into a pretty and comfortable space doesn't need to drain your wallet. Here are some chic, wallet-friendly ways to spruce up your space that are so fun you'll be itching to get started!

### 2. DIY Your Heart Out

Why buy when you can DIY? Unleash your inner artist with some do-it-yourself magic. Transform that tired old bookshelf with a splash of vibrant paint, turn jars into chic plant holders, or even craft your own wall art from scraps. Dive into Pinterest or YouTube for a whirlwind of inspiration—your next project is just a play button away. Plus, nothing beats the bragging rights of “I made that!”



### 3. Plant Parenthood

Bring the tranquility of nature inside with some leafy companions. Indoor plants are more than just pretty greenery; they're air-purifying, mood-boosting, zen-inducing wonders. Start with some fuss-free friends like succulents or snake plants. Play around with different pots—maybe some in funky colours or quirky designs. Create a lush little corner garden and watch your room—and spirits—lift!



### 4. Light It Up

Lighting can make or break a room's vibe. Swap out that dull overhead light for some snazzy pendant lamps or statement floor lights. Mix and match lighting types to control the mood—romantic dinner or dance party, anyone? Adding dimmers can let you switch from daytime productivity to evening relaxation in a flick.

### 5. Wallpapers that Wow

Wallpapers are like the outfit of your room, so dress them to impress! Whether you're into bold botanicals or sleek geometrics, a well-chosen wallpaper can turn a wall from blah to breathtaking. Experiment with an accent wall or, if you're feeling daring, paper up a whole room for a dramatic transformation.



### 6. Hunt for Vintage Treasures

There's something thrilling about hunting for vintage and antique gems. Each piece has a story; finding one that speaks to you is like uncovering treasure. Explore thrift stores or online havens. You might find a quirky lamp, an ornate mirror, or even a mid-century modern sideboard that can add a layer of sophistication and history to your home.



### 7. Gallery Walls Galore

Show off what makes you you with a gallery wall that screams personality. Mix photos, art prints, and even little souvenirs from your travels or life milestones. Play with frames of different colours and sizes to add dimension. It's a living art installation that grows with your experiences and makes your walls talk (metaphorically, of course).



## EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SUNGLASSES

Sunglasses are one of those accessories that, once you start wearing them, you can't imagine life without them. They're not just a fashion statement—though let's be honest, they do add an undeniable cool factor to any outfit—they're also essential for protecting your eyes. Whether heading out for a day at the beach or just taking a stroll through the city, a good pair of sunglasses can make all the difference. But with so many options out there, how do you choose the right pair? And beyond looking good, what should you really know about sunglasses? Let's take a closer look at the world of shades and break it all down.



### Why Sunglasses Are More Than Just a Fashion Statement

Sure, sunglasses can elevate your style game, but their primary function is to protect your eyes from the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. These rays can cause a host of problems, from short-term discomfort like eye strain and sunburn (yes, your eyes can get sunburned!) to long-term damage, including cataracts and macular degeneration. So, when picking out sunglasses, it's crucial to look for ones that offer 100% UV protection. Don't be fooled by darker lenses either—just because a lens is dark doesn't mean it's blocking those harmful rays.

### Polarised vs. Non-Polarised Lenses: What's the Difference?

One term you'll often hear when shopping for sunglasses is "polarised." But what does that mean, and do you really need it? Polarised lenses are designed to reduce glare from reflective surfaces like water or car hoods. They're especially useful if you spend a lot of time driving or participating in water sports. The reduction in glare not only makes it easier to see but can also reduce eye strain. Non-polarised lenses, on the other hand, are just your standard lenses without the extra glare reduction. If you're not frequently in situations where glare is an issue, non-polarised sunglasses might be perfectly fine for your needs.

### Frame Styles and Face Shapes: Finding Your Perfect Match

The world of sunglasses is as varied as it is vast, with frame styles to suit every face shape and personal style. Here's a quick guide to help you find the right match:

**Round Face:** If you have a round face, look for sunglasses with angular lines, like square or rectangular frames. These can help add definition to your face.

**Square Face:** For those with a square face, round or oval frames can soften your features. Avoid sharp, angular frames that can exaggerate the angles of your face.

**Oval Face:** Lucky you! Most frame

shapes will work for you if you have an oval face. Experiment with different styles to see what you like best.

**Heart-Shaped Face:** Heart-shaped faces are wider at the forehead and narrower at the chin. Look for frames that are wider at the bottom to balance out your face shape, like aviators or cat-eye sunglasses. Remember, while these guidelines can help, the best pair of sunglasses is the one you feel most confident in. Don't be afraid to try on different styles and step out of your comfort zone.

### Lens Colors: It's Not Just About Aesthetics

The colour of your lenses does more than just change the way you see the world—it can affect your comfort and vision in different environments. Here's a quick rundown:

**Grey Lenses:** These provide the most natural colour perception and are great for everyday use.

**Brown/Amber Lenses:** These enhance contrast and depth perception, making them ideal for sports like golf or tennis.

**Green Lenses:** Green lenses offer good contrast and help reduce glare, making them a versatile option for a variety of activities.

**Yellow/Gold Lenses:** These are great for low-light conditions, as they enhance contrast and depth perception. However, they're not the best for bright, sunny days.

### The Importance of Fit and Comfort

It's easy to get caught up in how sunglasses look, but don't forget about how they feel. A poorly fitting pair can slip down your nose, pinch behind your ears, or even give you a headache. When trying on sunglasses, ensure they sit comfortably on your face without any pressure points. The weight should be evenly distributed between your ears and nose, and the frames should fit snugly without feeling too tight.

### Taking Care of Your Sunglasses

Once you've found your perfect pair, you'll want to take good care of them. Always store your sunglasses in a case when not in use to protect them from scratches. Clean the lenses regularly with a microfiber cloth and lens cleaner—never use your shirt or a paper towel, as these can scratch the lenses. And remember, while it's tempting to wear your sunglasses on top of your head, doing so can stretch out the frames over time.

# growing RELAXED HAIR

Relaxed hair often gets a bad rap, with many believing it's doomed to be fragile and unhealthy. But the truth is, growing relaxed hair can be a rewarding journey with the right approach. It's not just about the length but also about the health, the shine, and the confidence that comes with embracing the texture you've chosen. Let's talk about what it really takes to grow relaxed hair—beyond the standard "use conditioner" advice.



### Understanding Your Hair's Needs

First things first: every head of hair is unique. This isn't some cookie-cutter journey where you can follow someone else's routine to a T and expect identical results. Growing relaxed hair starts with understanding your hair's specific needs. Is your hair prone to dryness? Does it break easily? How does it respond to different products? Getting in tune with your hair means paying attention to what it's telling you—those little signs like breakage, split ends, or even the dreaded limp look after a fresh relaxer.

### The Love-Hate Relationship with Relaxers

Let's be honest—relaxers are both a blessing and a curse. They give you that sleek, straight look but can also weaken your hair if not handled carefully. This doesn't mean you should avoid them altogether if relaxed hair is your style of choice. It just means you need to be strategic about how often you're relaxing your hair. For instance, stretching the time between touch-ups allows your new growth to come in stronger before it's exposed to chemicals again. And when you do relax, consider protein treatments to fortify your strands beforehand.

### Moisture, Moisture, Moisture

If there's one thing that relaxed hair craves, it's moisture. Unlike natural hair, which can be thick and resilient, relaxed hair is more delicate and prone to dryness. But here's where most people go wrong—they mistake heavy oils for moisture. Moisture comes from water-based products, while oils are more about sealing moisture. So, stock up on water-based leave-in conditioners and moisturizing creams, and be diligent about sealing it all in with your favourite oil or butter.

### Protein and Moisture Balance

Here's the thing—too much moisture without protein can leave your hair feeling mushy and weak, while too much protein can make it brittle. The trick is to strike a balance. Incorporate protein treatments into your routine, but not to the point where your hair feels stiff. Listen to your hair's signals; it might need a protein boost if it feels too soft. Conversely, if it's feeling rigid, a deep moisture treatment is probably in order.

### The Power of Protective Styling

Growing relaxed hair doesn't mean you have to walk around with your hair out every day. In fact, one of the most effective ways to retain length is through protective styling. This could be anything from braids, twists, or even a simple bun. The key is to choose styles that don't pull too tightly at your edges or stress your scalp. Protective styles should protect—not punish. And while we're on the subject, let's not forget the importance of taking down these styles gently to avoid unnecessary breakage.

### Trims Aren't the Enemy

Ah, the dreaded trim. For those on a hair growth journey, the idea of cutting any length can feel counterproductive. But here's the reality: trims are your friend. Regularly trimming your ends helps to prevent split ends from travelling up the hair shaft, which can lead to more significant breakage down the line. Instead of thinking of trims as losing length, think of them as preserving the health of your hair.

### Scalp Care: The Overlooked Secret

Often, the focus is solely on the hair itself, but let's not forget where that hair is growing from—your scalp. A healthy scalp is the foundation for healthy hair growth. This means regular cleansing to remove buildup, gentle massaging to stimulate blood flow, and maybe even treating yourself to a scalp scrub or two.

### Patience and Consistency

If there's one thing you need more than any product or treatment, it's patience. Hair growth doesn't happen overnight; growing relaxed hair is no exception. Consistency in your routine is key. It's about sticking with your regimen, being gentle with your hair, and understanding that setbacks like a bad hair day or breakage happen.

### Celebrating Your Hair Journey

Finally, remember to celebrate your progress—no matter how small. Growing relaxed hair is a journey, not a race. Take the time to enjoy the process, experiment with new styles, and embrace your hair's versatility.

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