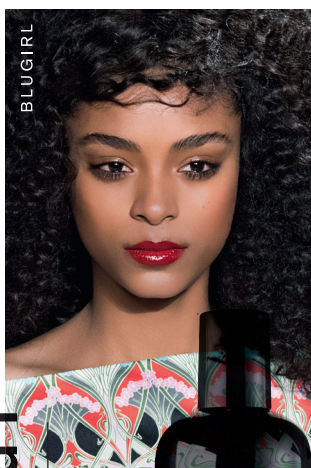


Your Afro arsenal



01 Bardou Pure Silk Conditioner, £14

Tight curls are the most porous of all curl types as the cuticles are highly raised, allowing them to absorb and lose moisture easily. The keratin in this conditioner helps put protein back into your hair, filling in the porous cracks that cause breakage and a halo of fuzz – all without dragging down springy curls.

02 Shea Moisture Raw Shea & Cupuacu Styling Gel Cream, £10.99

The hair shaft of Afro hair is flat with a twisted structure. This means it absorbs chemicals more rapidly than other hair textures, making it even more vulnerable to damage. This styler is made with all-natural and certified organic ingredients, including antioxidant polyphenols from cupuacu fruit. These help to snuff out some of the free-radical damage that may have incurred from relaxers and straighteners in the past.

03 Bouclème Curl Cream, £19

'Where "twists" in the hair shaft occur, strands becomes weaker,' says Francois. 'This is one reason why Afro hair breaks so easily.' So you need a styling product

that doubles up as a leave-in conditioner.

This curl cream, with its nutrient-rich blend of shea butter and kukui oil, can be applied to wet hair for crunch-free hold or to dry strands to boost moisture.

04 Andre Walker Q Oil Quench-Essential Oil, £14.99

Tight curls don't reflect light in the same way straight hair does, so a shine-boosting oil is key. Created by the stylist responsible for Halle Berry's short pixie cut, a blend of vitamin E-rich argan and mongongo oils gives this one its gleam factor. A drop is all you need to seal frayed ends and fight frizz.

05 Vernon François Pure-Fro Conditioner, £26.50

The tighter the curl, the longer it takes for natural oils to circle their way from the scalp to the ends, causing the lower half to appear frazzled. Unlike traditional conditioners, this delivers hydration via a new-gen spray applicator so you get even distribution from root to tip. It's also packed with cutting-edge nourishers, including a black oat extract clinically proven to seal the scales on the outside of the hair shaft and keep moisture in.

06 Phytospecific Cleansing Care Cream, £19.90

After traditional shampooing, tangles can be a major gripe, so the latest approach for Afro hair is a cleansing cream. It's like an all-in-one shampoo and conditioner that's applied to dry hair (unlike co-washing – washing your hair with conditioner). Here, castor and sea buckthorn berry oils cut through excess oil and grime, then transform into an emulsion to rinse them away. The only thing left behind: softened ends and shiny strands.

07 Charlotte Mensah Manketti Oil Shampoo, £22

Yes, even if you regularly co-wash, you still need to shampoo every two weeks to raise the hair cuticle, making it easier to remove dirt and product build-up. This one contains the hottest new super oil, manketti, which is high in polyunsaturated fatty acids. These are known to remain on the hair longer than saturated fatty acids (think coconut oil) and act as a better barrier to prevent moisture escaping.

08 Briogeo Be Gentle, Be Kind Avocado + Quinoa Co-Wash, £27.06

The hands-down best way to cleanse very thick curly hair is with a sulfate-free co-wash. 'Sodium lauryl sulphate (SLS), the most common ingredient in old-school shampoos, is both a salt and a detergent,' says Francois. 'It's too harsh for most curls as it strips away their natural oils.' This gentle co-wash doesn't contain sulphates and its blend of avocado oil, aloe vera and shea butter means no more candyfloss texture. ■