

OLIVER J TATTOO AFTERCARE ADVICE

Congratulations on your new tattoo! You've chosen the perfect artist, survived the pain, and now you're walking out of Oliver J Tattoo with a fresh piece of art. But what comes next?

Caring for your tattoo properly is crucial to ensure it heals well and stays vibrant for years to come.

Think of your tattoo like a piece of artwork - you wouldn't hang a painting in a dirty, damp place, and similarly, how you care for your tattoo directly affects its longevity and appearance. Here's how to keep your tattoo looking its best!

Immediate Aftercare:

A tattoo is essentially a wound because the needles break the skin's surface. Proper aftercare is essential to minimise the risk of infection and ensure smooth healing.

- **Avoid Touching:** Do not touch the tattoo unnecessarily to minimise the risk of germs. Always wash and dry your hands before and after touching the tattoo.
 - **Sterile Dressing:** Your artist will apply a sterile dressing to your new tattoo. Keep it on for at least an hour or until the skin stops oozing fluid. Some artists may use a second skin (a protective film) or a different method like a spray, which they will explain.
 - **Second Skin Removal:** This dermal dressing should be left on as long as possible to aid the healing process. If and when you need to remove it you should gently peel up one corner in the direction of hair growth. Stretch the second skin from each side rather than pulling it off like a plaster. Use of warm water and non-perfumed, anti-bacterial soap can help loosen the adhesive.
 - **Cleaning:** After removing the dressing (or paper towel - wet it before removing to avoid sticking), gently wash the tattoo with warm water (with or without a mild liquid soap). Pat the tattoo dry with lint-free tissues or a clean towel. Do **NOT** rub it, as this can irritate the skin.
 - **Apply Aftercare:** Use aftercare products specifically designed for tattoos (sometimes available from your artist or online). Avoid products not intended for tattoo care, as these may cause irritation or delay healing. Follow the product's instructions, applying it only after washing and drying the tattoo.
 - **Avoid Other Products:** Do not use other skin creams or antiseptics unless advised by your tattoo artist or a healthcare professional.
 - **Hydration:** Keep hydrated, this will aid with the recovery and research has hydration supports circulation and lymphatic function in turn reducing swelling.
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Things to Avoid in the First Two Weeks:

- **Tight Clothing:** Avoid wearing tight clothes that rub against the tattoo.
 - **Sleeping on the Tattoo:** Try not to sleep on the tattoo to avoid irritating it.
 - **Water:** Avoid swimming in pools, oceans, hot tubs, etc. Don't submerge your tattoo in water for at least the first two weeks.
 - **Excessive Sweat:** Stay away from intense workouts or activities that cause heavy sweating.
 - **Sun Exposure:** Do not expose your tattoo to direct sunlight or tanning beds during the healing process.
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Healing Process:

- **Week 1-2:** Expect some scabbing and peeling. This is normal as the tattoo heals. You may also notice the skin around the tattoo looking shiny or silver.
 - **Week 3-4:** By the end of the second week, scabbing should have fallen off, leaving the skin slightly shiny. The tattoo should be fully healed by the end of the fourth week.
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General Aftercare Tips:

- **Showering:** Shower instead of bathing to avoid prolonged exposure to water. When drying, always PAT the tattoo dry with a separate towel or lint-free tissues.
 - **Bedding:** Be mindful that your tattoo could stain your bedding with ink or blood. If possible, use alternative bedding that you don't mind blood or ink transfer while healing.
 - **Avoid Petroleum-Based Products:** Petroleum-based products can draw ink out of the tattoo, which will cause fading. Avoid them at all costs.
 - **No Picking or Scratching:** Do not pick at scabs or scratch the tattoo. This can cause scarring and delay healing.
 - **Work Environments:** If you're working in a dirty, dusty, or oily environment, protect your tattoo by covering it.
 - **Wear Loose Clothing:** Opt for loose, breathable cotton clothing to avoid friction on the tattoo.
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Long-Term Aftercare:

Once your tattoo has fully healed, continue to care for it to maintain its appearance:

- **Sun Protection:** Always use sunscreen (SPF 45 or higher) to protect your tattoo from UV damage. There are also sunscreens specifically designed for tattoos, which are a great choice.
 - **Moisturise:** Keep your tattoo moisturised with a gentle, fragrance-free lotion to prevent it from drying out and fading, especially on areas prone to wear like hands, elbows, or knees.
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Recognising Signs of Infection:

While tattooing is a relatively safe procedure, improper care can lead to infection. It's important to be aware of the signs and seek medical attention if needed.

- **Inflammation:** Some swelling and redness is normal in the first few days. However, if the redness becomes more intense or spreads, or if the area feels warm to the touch, this could be a sign of infection.
 - **Excessive Swelling:** Mild swelling is typical, but if it becomes excessive or painful, or if the pain radiates beyond the tattoo area, this could indicate infection. Seek medical attention if this occurs.
 - **Discharge:** A fresh tattoo will ooze clear fluid, which will stop after 48 hours. If the discharge turns yellow or green and continues after 48 hours, you may have an infection.
 - **Foul Odour:** An infected tattoo may emit a foul smell due to anaerobic bacteria. If you notice this, see a healthcare professional immediately.
 - **Fever:** A fever may be a sign of infection, particularly if it persists after the first 48 hours. If it doesn't go away or gets worse, contact a healthcare provider.
 - **Red Streaks:** If you notice red streaks extending from the tattoo, it could indicate blood poisoning. Seek medical attention right away.
 - **Swollen Lymph Nodes:** Swelling in the lymph nodes near the tattoo could indicate your body is fighting an infection.
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If You Have Concerns:

If you notice any of the signs of infection or have any concerns during the healing process, don't hesitate to contact your tattoo artist. They can offer guidance and refer you to a healthcare provider if needed.

Remember, the studio follows strict sterilization protocols to ensure your safety, but once you leave, it's up to you to care for your tattoo. Keep it clean and protected, and your tattoo will stay vibrant and beautiful for years to come!

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In Conclusion:

Taking care of your tattoo is a long-term commitment, but it's worth it. Treat your tattoo with the same care you would give to any important part of your body. By following these aftercare instructions, you ensure that your tattoo heals properly and remains a lasting work of art.

Additional Notes:

- Treat your tattoo like a healing wound.
- Avoid exposing it to bacteria, dirt, or anything that could cause irritation or infection.
- Take care of your skin overall—healthy skin supports healthy tattoos!