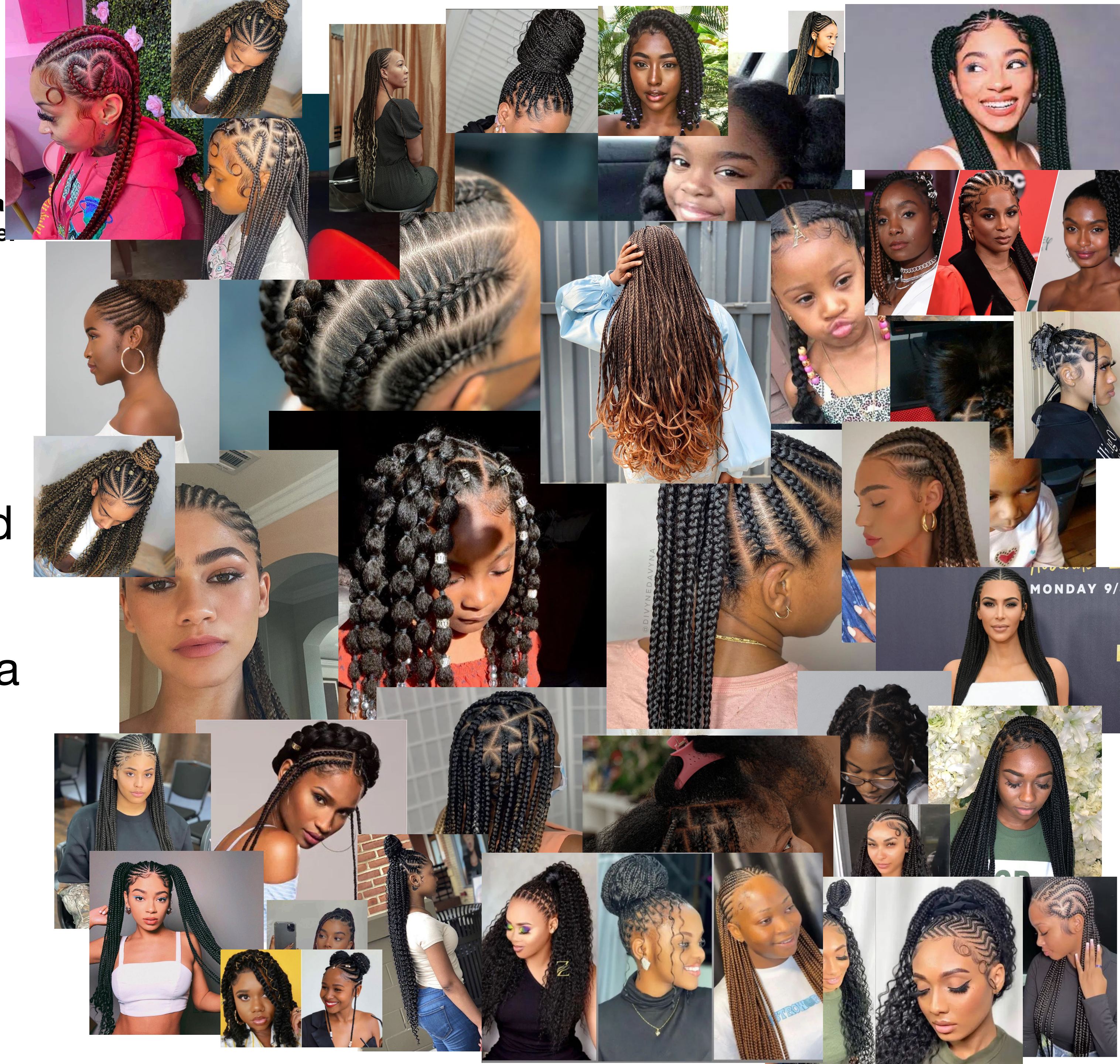


AFRO HAIR:



Afro-textured hair, is the hair texture of populations in Africa
Strand of this hair type grows in a tiny, angle like helix shape.

- All braids are protective hairstyles
- The history of the Afro can be traced back to the Motherland
- Afro-textured hair, is the hair texture of populations in Africa



Things you need to know about afro hair:

There are many types of Afro hair:

Afro-textured hair is the natural hair texture of most people of African descent although it is not only limited to them. Afro hair comes in many different textures. The classification system, like any other hair type, is a combination of a number and a letter where the number denotes the category in which the hair pattern falls and the letter denotes the intensity of that pattern. The categories range from 1 (straight) to 4 (kinky). So, afro hair ranges from straight hair types to curly hair types, with a vast majority being naturally curly and thus falling under the Type 3 and Type 4 categories.

Natural hair vs relaxed hair

Natural hair refers to afro hair that has not had its texture altered by chemicals.

Relaxed hair is hair that has been permanently straightened by chemically “relaxing” the natural curls using a relaxer which is a type of cream. Relaxed hair must be conditioned regularly as natural oils are lost during the straightening process. The National Centre of Biotechnological Information (NCBI), reckons that relaxers are used by more than two-thirds of African females to straighten hair for easier grooming and increased length.

Moisture is the key!

Dry hair breaks easily and since afro hair is susceptible to dryness due to its curl pattern it is also more susceptible to breakage. The oils that are naturally produced in the hair follicles have a harder time reaching the ends of the hair causing much dryness. Also, the majority of afro hair is of 1/1b in colour which absorbs heat and so further dries the hair, especially when combined with heating tools for various styles. And so, protecting afro hair by locking in moisture is essential. Moisturizing hair oils, leave-in conditioners, serums, treatments and the correct shampoo (One that does not contain surfactants, such as sodium lauryl sulfate) can be effective for hydrating and keeping Afro hair soft and supple. Afro hair is not to be washed everyday as this can be damaging as washing strips hair follicles of necessary oils. On the other hand, conditioning regularly is highly advised.

Styling Afro hair:

Afro Hair can be styled in many many many different ways! From twist outs, wash and go’s, Bantu knots and puffs, the possibilities are endless. Though it may be fun to leave the hair in its natural state, protective styling is said to be essential for growth. A protective hairstyle is simply a style that protects the ends of the hair, helping to decrease tangling, shedding and breakage. Protective styles can range from braids, sew- in weaves, wigs and many others. Wigs are the most effective protective style as all the hair is covered from root to tip although friction around the edges of the hair if not applied properly can cause more harm in some cases. Wigs give the entire head a break from manipulation and styling. And as wigs are becoming increasingly undetectable, this is the latest craze within the female afro hair community. Whether the hair is left to out or hidden behind a protective style, a wide tooth comb is what is recommended when detangling to reduce breakage.

Afro hair can be expensive and time consuming!

Styling afro hair, whether natural or relaxed, often takes a lot of time, effort and money! Even without a trip to the salon, you’d be amazed at how much money is spent on hair care products out of pure necessity. The UK black hair industry is worth an estimated £88 million, with black women on average spending three times more than their Caucasian counterpart on hair care. And furthermore, monthly visits to hairstylists and buying extensions and wigs add up when by the end of the year.

