TATTOO AFTERCARE GUIDE

Healing your tattoo, step by step

The artist’s job is now complete; the ultimate success and appearance of your new tattoo depend entirely on how you care for it over the next few weeks. From this point forward, the care and hygiene of your tattoo are your sole responsibility. Please read and follow these instructions carefully to ensure optimal healing and to prevent infection.

STEP BY STEP

Your healing timeline

PHASE 1

The First 24 Hours

Your new tattoo is an open wound. It will feel tender, tight, and similar to a moderate sunburn. It is completely normal for the area to weep clear fluid (plasma), excess ink, and a small amount of blood during the first day.

DO

- [x] Wash your hands thoroughly with warm water and antibacterial soap before touching your new tattoo for any reason.
- [x] Remove the dressing carefully after 2 to 4 hours (or as advised by your artist). If the bandage sticks, gently wet it with clean, warm water in the shower to slide it off.
- [x] Gently wash the tattoo with your clean hands, warm water, and a mild, fragrance-free liquid soap.
- [x] Rinse thoroughly until all plasma, dried blood, and excess ointment are completely gone and the skin feels clean and smooth.
- [x] Pat dry using a clean, disposable kitchen paper towel. Do not rub.

- [x] Leave it bare to breathe for the first 24 hours. Do not apply any lotions or creams until day two.

DO NOT

- ✕ Do NOT re-bandage the tattoo once the initial dressing has been removed (unless specifically instructed to use a specialist second-skin medical film).
- ✕ Do NOT use a washcloth, loofah, or sponge, as these harbor bacteria and are too abrasive for healing skin.
- ✕ Do NOT dry with a fabric towel, as bath towels can carry lint and hidden bacteria.
- ✕ Do NOT touch the tattoo with unwashed hands, and do not allow anyone else to touch it. This includes pets.

IF INSTRUCTED

Leaving with a Second Skin medical film?

If I've applied a breathable second-skin film, leave it on for 1 day (24 hours) instead of removing it after a few hours. A small buildup of dark plasma/ink fluid underneath is completely normal. If the seal leaks, or the skin becomes red or irritated around the edges early, remove it sooner.

Removal: peel it off slowly in a warm shower under running water, pulling the film back flat against itself (like a Command strip) rather than pulling straight up. Then wash and pat dry as above.

PHASE 2 · DAYS 2 TO 14

The Healing Process

Over the next two weeks, your tattoo will begin to dry out, flake, peel, and potentially form thin scabs. This is a completely normal part of the skin's regeneration process.

DAILY MAINTENANCE

1. Wash and dry the tattoo twice a day (morning and night) using the protocol outlined in Phase 1.
2. Apply a very thin layer of the recommended aftercare cream 2 times a day (e.g., morning and evening), or whenever the tattoo feels tight and dry.

> **Remember: LESS IS MORE.**
>
> Your skin needs oxygen to heal. The tattoo should never look shiny, greasy, or soggy. If it does, you have applied too much cream—blot the excess away immediately with a clean paper towel.

VERY IMPORTANT

Do NOT pick, scratch, or peel the flaking skin or scabs. Doing so will pull pigment from the deeper layers of the skin, leaving blank spots, faded lines, or permanent scarring. If it itches, gently slap it or apply a tiny amount of lotion.

Do NOT submerge the tattoo in water. Avoid baths, swimming pools, hot tubs, lakes, and the ocean for at least 3 weeks. Stick to short, clean showers.

Do NOT expose the tattoo to direct sunlight or sunbeds for at least 4 weeks. UV rays will permanently fade and damage a healing tattoo. Once fully healed, always protect it with SPF 50.

Do NOT wear tight, restrictive clothing or heavy straps over the area. Friction can irritate the tattoo and prematurely rub off healing skin.

Do NOT engage in heavy exercise or activities that cause excessive sweating for the first few days, as sweat can trap bacteria under the skin.

SHOPPING LIST

Recommended UK Products

CLEANSING SOAP

Carex Unscented, Sanex Zero%, or Simple Liquid Handwash. (Avoid heavily perfumed or coloured body washes).

AFTERCARE CREAM

Aveeno Daily Moisturising Lotion (fragrance-free), Palmer’s Cocoa Butter (fragrance-free formula), or a dedicated tattoo aftercare cream like Bepanthen Tattoo. Do not use the original Bepanthen nappy ointment or petroleum-based products such as Vaseline.

PLEASE READ

Disclaimer

Please Note: Infections are rare but are almost exclusively caused by exposure to bacteria after leaving the studio environment (e.g., contact with dirty hands, pets, unwashed clothing, or improper product application).

> ⚠ If you experience severe swelling, prolonged redness, red streaks radiating from the area, a foul odour, or thick yellowish discharge, you may have developed an infection. Please contact your GP or NHS 111 immediately, and inform the studio.

Client Acknowledgement

By taking this aftercare guide, you acknowledge that you have been fully instructed on how to care for your new tattoo. You understand that the long-term appearance, healing quality, and biological health of the tattoo are now entirely your responsibility.

Clive Camilleri, aka Blinc.ink, accepts no liability for infections, pigment loss, fading, or scarring resulting from a failure to strictly adhere to these guidelines. Touch-ups required due to negligent aftercare will be subject to the standard fees.

Unsure how your tattoo is healing? Send a quick photo on WhatsApp (+44 7343 092183) anytime—I am always happy to check in.