

treading BROWS

Eyes are said to be the windows to one's soul, and the old adage holds more truth than it gets credit for. Eyes express a lot about a person's state of mind; sometimes saying it all when the tongue fails. And critical to the eyes, often overlooked, but vital in every sense, are the eyebrows. Just as one's hair frames the face, adding character to the overall personality, eyebrows frame the eyes and complete their story.



The literary world has been obsessed with eyes since time immemorial, and the eyebrows also hold their own significant place. Whether an annoyed person is scowling, raising his brows to express bewilderment or knitting them together when engaged in deep thought, the brows are omnipresent in the writer's psyche to better describe a character's state of mind.

In the world of beauty, the humble brows hold a place of pride, no less important than the eyes themselves, and have always received preferential treatment, as a variety of shapes and trends were made popular by actresses and models in every successive decade.

The trends trickled down to regular women, who made those their own. The silent screen sirens of the 30s and 40s wore pencil-thin eyebrows in exaggerated lengths, while the 50s starlets wore theirs in thick, bushy yet groomed arches. Deep browns and blacks were the colour of choice for brows. The 60s saw slightly more natural shapes and colours, and the 70s were all about natural yet groomed brows. The 80s saw brows in their natural, bushy unplucked glory.

Then came the 90s with barely-there pencil thin brows followed by the natural but enhanced ones in the noughties, when everything natural was favoured, leading to slightly thick, natural, yet well-groomed brows becoming popular again.

In recent years, the rigid, one-shape-suits-all trends of yore have been ditched in favour of personalised styles,

where an individual can wear eyebrows in the shape most flattering to her face.

Karishma Rahman, professional make-up artist at Zuri, feels that "every person is blessed with their own unique set of features and individuality comes from that. Just because something looks amazing on someone else doesn't mean it will have similar effects for another. Eyebrows are a key feature that pull a makeover together, and hence following a certain kind of trend and forcing a shape that doesn't complement your face is a very wrong idea."

Every face is different, and so is every pair of brows. However, a basic cheat sheet of brow-face shape can help. A round face benefits from an arching brow which helps elongate the face, adding dimension. The oval face benefits from an angled, soft shape with a medium arch. A person with a long face can opt for a straight, flat shaped brow as anything arched will make the face appear even longer. Lastly, an arched, softly angled brow will help soften the strong jaw-lines of a square-shaped face. In Karishma's expert opinion, moderate thickness is universally flattering. Thicker in the inner sides and slightly thinning out in a nice arch always looks beautiful. These tips aside, a trial and error method is usually beneficial to finding out one's best shape.

In terms of products, the options nowadays are endless. From powders to pomades to pencils, one can choose any product, or a combination. "A brow gel is essential to keeping the brow hairs in place. I prefer using my pomade or cream products to fill in the brows; that

way I can control the strokes. Pencils can end up looking too harsh at times if not used lightly," Karishma says. "A brow powder is always the easiest if you're a beginner. The most essential is a good eyebrow brush as using this helps the eyebrows look more natural and blends the product in nicely. The aim is to make them look as natural as possible and to make sure it complements the rest of your face. Also, avoid black tones at any cost. Always use a chocolate brown/taupe shade to make them look more natural," she added.

With these ideas, tips and tricks in mind what's stopping you from getting your perfect pair o'brows?

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