

March
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FASHION

BILLY PORTER

"WHO AM I
HURTING BY
EXPRESSING
MYSELF IN THIS
FABULOUS WAY?
NOBODY."



THE
BRANDS
that DID
BODY
DIVERSITY
RIGHT
for SPRING
AT-HOME HAIR
and BODY CARE



BEST PRESS-
ON NAILS



Quickies

You've Got Nail

Available in a wide range of shapes, sizes, designs and materials, the options are endless when it comes to press-on nails.



Kiss Nail Drip in "Blank Drip," \$21



Facile Reusable Press-On Nails in "Sunset Waves," \$24



Quo Faux Nails in "Rose Gold French," \$15



Sally Hansen Salon Effects Perfect Manicure in "French Twist," \$11



Viella Beauté French Accent in "Noir," \$68



Glamnetic Press-On Nails in "Confetti," \$21

TIP TOP

“I still like the simple things; I have on my press-on nails right now,” says Beyoncé during a segment on *Good Morning America* back in 2013. In the short clip, the host is floored. “Press-on nails?” she asks. “Store-bought press-on nails,” laughs Beyoncé.

Over a decade later, one can only assume that Beyoncé is thrilled with the massive growth of the beauty category. Market research firm NielsenIQ reported that sales of artificial nails had exceeded nail polish revenue in the fourth quarter of 2022. Mentions of “press-on nails” on Reddit have seen a 62 per cent boost year over year, and global Google searches for press-ons increased by 32 per cent between July 2022 and July 2023. But press-on nails

Press-on nails saw a major boost during the pandemic, when nail salons were largely inaccessible. But today, sales continue to rise—and show no signs of slowing down—thanks to exciting innovations.

By **SOUZAN MICHAEL GALWAY**

experienced their biggest boost during, and thanks to, the COVID-19 pandemic—seeing a growth exceeding 80 per cent between December 2019 (just a few months before the pandemic hit) and May 2023. While this was an expected effect of the lack of access to nail salons, the category’s continued growth has been more surprising. But it’s undeniable. A report from Market Research Future speculates that press-on nails revenue could exceed \$3 billion globally by 2030.

“A lot has changed in the press-on nails space,” says Vera Wilson Ogbeide, founder of Toronto-based Viella Beauté, which launched last year. “They used to be relied on solely for convenience, but that has shifted in recent years. People have

started to realize that just because press-ons are convenient doesn’t mean they shouldn’t be made of high-quality materials. A luxury gel press-on nail brand just makes sense.” However, convenience was still top of mind for Wilson Ogbeide, as a press-on nails user herself. “I’m a nurse, and having your nails done—especially having long nails—is frowned upon due to the nature of the job,” she explains. “Press-on nails provide me with the versatility of having an amazing manicure when I need one, but they also require no commitment to the style.” But when she began exploring the category, Wilson Ogbeide noticed that the “options were very flimsy and the nail glue’s hold wasn’t great,” she says. “I always felt that people could tell I was wearing press-ons.”

This is a common complaint among users of press-ons and one that prevents many consumers from delving deep into the category, including Vancouver-based Bailey Stanworth, who launched press-on nails brand Quickies in 2022. “The brand was born out of selfish reasons,” she says over a video call. “I’ve always been a nail-biter; I’ve suffered from anxiety my entire life, and as a result I pick at my nails and cuticles. When the pandemic started, I knew my confidence was going to take a hit if I couldn’t get my nails done.” So Stanworth experimented with press-ons but, like Wilson Ogbeide, found that they would break or fall off easily or weren’t available in the fun, playful designs she was after. “I did, however, like the fact that you could reuse them,” she says. When she founded Quickies, the reusability factor took centre stage. And it’s not just the nails; reusability is prioritized in every aspect of

the Quickies experience. The nail sets are sold and shipped in a cute pouch made of recycled plastic. “It’s not the usual cardboard box and plastic tray that you throw out,” says Stanworth. “You’re not faced with a mess of nails once you open the package.”

Wilson Ogbeide says that press-on nails’ sizing is another major consumer complaint, one she addressed at the beginning of Viella Beauté’s journey. “It’s obvious that nail beds differ from person to person,” she says. “We offer nails in XS to XL, and we provide sizing guides, which allow customers to determine which size best fits them.” Many press-ons on the market today are not only made to fit a wider range of nails but also flexible and durable and light years away from the rigid offerings of yesteryear. This is due to innovations in materials; brands have moved away from stiff dental acrylic to more flexible and long-lasting acrylic resin, gel or ABS plastic.

The final obstacle, says Stanworth, is their intimidation factor. When she launched Quickies, she was determined to make press-on nails accessible to everyone. “I don’t want people to think they have to be the trendy influencer type to wear them.” The brand is available to any and all. In fact, Stanworth says Quickies is, to her knowledge, one of the first press-on nail brands to use male models in its campaigns. “I wanted every single person to be seen; that’s also why we don’t edit things like cuticles or age spots in our shoots,” she says proudly.

Then she erupts into a massive grin. “Even my 97-year-old grandma, who has arthritis, has been in our campaigns.” ■

PHOTOGRAPHY: MAIN BY IULIA AGNEW