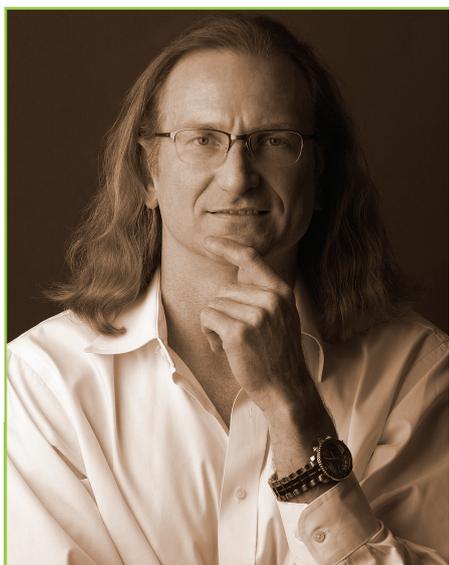


THE SCI-FILES



DOUG SCHOON

Doug Schoon is an internationally recognised scientist, author and educator with over 30 years' experience in the cosmetic, beauty and personal care industry. He is a leading industry authority known for his technical and regulatory work and is co-chair of the *Nail Manufacturers Council (NMC)*.

Doug was CND™'s chief scientist and head of the R&D laboratory, QA, and field testing/evaluation departments for almost 20 years and has authored several books, video and audio training programmes, as well as magazine articles about salon products, safety, and practices for salon professionals.

In 1986, Schoon founded *Chemical Awareness Training Service (CATS)* – the beauty industry's first safety training company. This was followed by his book, *Nail Structure & Product Chemistry*, 1st and 2nd edition, which has become essential reading for nail professionals, with a new edition out soon. He runs *Face-to-Face with Doug Schoon*, an internet learning series that focuses on nails, nail products and services.

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Watch Doug's internet series on nails, nail products and services at www.faceofacewithdougshoon.com

Globally renowned scientist and nail expert, **DOUG SCHOON**, explores the ideas and concerns surrounding nails, techniques and products

A HANDLE ON 'HALAL' NAIL POLISHES

I'm often asked if practicing Muslims are allowed to wear nail polish. Not being Muslim, I'm not qualified to interpret Islamic law, so I've consulted several Muslim experts to allow me to determine the facts. Confusion exists because many companies are marketing 'Halal' nail polish to Muslim women, which incorrectly implies that all Islamic requirements have been met, however that is not the case for nail polish.

'Halal certified' simply means 'permitted' under Islamic law and is a certification provided for foods or cosmetics that can demonstrate that they do not contain any substances forbidden by Islamic law, for example ethanol (drinking alcohol) or pork. Halal certification is actually intended for foods, but does pertain to other items that may be swallowed such as mouthwash, toothpaste or lipsticks. Even though Halal doesn't apply to nail polish, some marketeers are using the term to mislead many Muslim women.

Nail polish must adhere to a different Islamic law that so far has proven impossible for any nail polish to achieve. This law requires Muslims to wet their nail plates before praying, and this cannot be done while wearing nail polish. A 'spiritual wash' called Wudu is required to be performed before every prayer. This extremely important ritual is used to attain a state of mental preparation for prayer and help maintain good physical cleanliness.

Muslim doctrine teaches that practitioners must perform a spiritual wash before

they pray. If they don't, their prayers are considered invalid and do not count. In other words, praying without properly performing Wudu is like not praying at all, which is pretty serious stuff for practicing Muslims. They pray five times per day and must perform the spiritual wash several times per day, which is why most practicing Muslims don't wear nail polish. Claims that small traces of water or 'vapours' penetrate through nail polish to the nail plate do not count as a spiritual wash.

After examining the ingredients and testing done on nail polish claiming to allow liquid water to pass through the polish, my opinion is that these are false claims. Applying nail polish to a coffee filter to show water passing freely through the filter is not a valid test and in my view, is trickery.

As a scientist with over 25 years' experience developing nail coatings, I am convinced that no nail polish will allow water to pass through the coating to fully wet the nail plate, so none are compliant with Islamic law. Practicing Muslims who care about water reaching their nail plates will still need to remove their nail polish before prayers.

I'm often asked if there will ever be an Islamic compliant nail polish. Probably, as it's not impossible, just very challenging. So far, no company has been willing to invest in a research programme to create one, but with approximately 500 million practicing Muslim women of nail polish-wearing age, I suspect that sooner or later someone will create a solution to this great, unfulfilled need. **S**

"Practicing Muslims who care about water reaching their nail plates will still need to remove their nail polish before prayers."