select a smart shade

In-salon colour can be costly, so consider your hue carefully before taking the plunge. "If you're looking for long-lasting colour, opt for a shade that is close to your natural hue or has slightly warmer tones," says Martin. "You should also avoid reds, as these fade the quickest." And remember that, while a few carefully placed highlights can create a soft effect and will gradually grow out, an all-over tint, especially in a pale shade, will result in obvious regrowth that can be hard to hide. To extend the time between appointments, try an at-home colour to conceal roots, such as **Clairol Nice'n Easy Root Touch-Up (1), $12.59**. A shampoo or conditioner with in-built pigments can even out a patchy shade. We love **John Frieda Collection Sheer Blonde Go Blonder Lightening Shampoo (2), $17.99**, which works to lighten your look, and **Andrew Collinge Brunette Salon Conditioner (3), $14.49**, to add shine to dark hair.

INSIDER SECRET: If you're overdue for a colour, here's how to cover up until you have time to get to the salon: apply a dry shampoo to dark roots to visually blur the line, then create an uneven, zigzag part. If your roots are lighter than your lengths, try blending in a similar shade of eyeshadow, or consider a product like **Irene Gari Cover Your Gray Root Touch-Up (4), $16.95**, as a temporary measure. Avoid tight ponytails and buns, as they will only highlight the problem.

great products do count

Caring for your strands, with the right formulas for you, will result in longer-lasting lustre. While the buys don't have to be pricey, they do need to be tailored to your tresses. So, if you have dry, frizzy hair, look for moisturising options that will hydrate and add shine; or, if your style is fine and lacking fullness, light, volumising choices will give your style a lift. Try **Palmolive Naturals Intensive Moisture Conditioner (5), $5.48**, for an unruly 'do, and **Sukín Protein Shampoo for Fine/Limp Hair (6), $7.95**, to boost lacklustre locks. But the most important thing to consider is colour. If you're devoting your dollars to a professional tint or highlights, you'll need to protect your investment. "To keep your hue looking better for longer, make sure you use a colour-specific shampoo," advises Martin. "These products work to smooth the hair cuticle and lock in the colour," he says, adding that avoiding direct sunlight is the simplest and most cost-effective way to protect your look. Try **Dove Colour Care Therapy Shampoo (7), $5.99**, or **Nak Colour Fix Colour Lock Treatment (8), $11.95**, to care for a new shade.

INSIDER SECRET: Bumper-sized products nearly always work out cheaper, even if they seem more expensive at the time. Keep an eye out for salon-sized shampoos and conditioners and remember that, not only will they save you money, but they'll also help save the planet, as you'll be using fewer bottles in the long run.

prevention is cheaper than cu

It's possible to fix damaged hair, b better to prevent the problem bef happens. "To make your cut last l you need to protect your hair fron split ends, so start with a good-q shampoo and conditioner," explai Martin, who recommends the Par Pro-V Deep Fortifying range as a choice at a great price. "You also make sure you don't overuse hea or over-style your hair, as this cau dehydration and split ends." To gu against styling damage, consider protection product that can be ap before blow-drying or straightenin as **TRESemmé Heat Tamer Prot Spray (10), $9.95**. "You can also money by doing regular hair treatr at home," suggests Martin. Resto your lengths once a week with a nourishing option will extend the li your cut and colour, and leave you soft, silky strands. Try **L'Oréal Elv Colour Protect Protecting Masq $11.45**, or **Pantene Pro-V Deep Fortifying Treatment (11), $6.99**.

INSIDER SECRET: To save mor why not make your own hair treat from products you already have a home. Warm a little olive oil and w through coarse, dry hair, leave for minutes, then wash twice for nour lengths. Or, boost fine hair by mixi tablespoon of apple cider vinegar litre of fresh water and using it as after washing to add shine and bo