

BEAUTY

COTTON
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TV and radio presenter and champion of the “imperfect” selfie, Fearne Cotton can put a smile on anyone’s face with her infectious laughter and perfect presenting skills, but what beauty buys does she rely on to make her smile?

Type Fearne Cotton’s name into an internet search and the first word that comes up is “hair”; little wonder, given that she has perfected the ultimate undone/done London look. It’s a style that says, “I try, but not too hard,” and one that has garnered her a legion of fans keen to emulate it. We persuaded the mum-of-two to let us rummage through her make-up bag and share her beauty secrets.

Despite posting those make-up free shots on Instagram, you are a self-confessed lover of all things beauty. What’s your latest discovery? “The fact that I can get a gel-like finish to my nails at home. The thing that has really fallen by the wayside since I had kids is taking time to get pampered or have my nails done. I just don’t have the time and, even if I did, I would spend it thinking that I should be doing something else. Any mum will say the same.”

So you are a fan of gel nail colour?

“Oh yes, painting my nails normally is pointless – they would be chipped in no time. Now I can put the kids to bed at seven, set up my little lamp in the kitchen, put on some rubbish TV and I’m ready. And it lasts – my most recent DIY colour lasted two weeks. You add it half and half to your everyday nail polish, set it under the UV light for 15 seconds, then add a special top coat and set it again under the light. Genius!”

When it comes to nails, are you short and sweet or long and elegant?

“Short, for practical reasons; I can’t do those stiletto Khloé Kardashian nails or I would be constantly scratching my children. Plus, I have so many emails to do and I’m finishing my cookery book, so I couldn’t type. But I do like bright colours – orange, lilac, turquoise. Not red; somehow that seems too grown-up and lady-ish – even though I am 34 [laughs].”

Your hair always looks great – what’s the secret?

“I am lucky I have lots of hair; I mean – a lot. I get Nicola Clarke to colour it. She is the queen of blondes and does Cate Blanchett, Kate Winslet, Kate Moss... Then Paul Percival styles and cuts it. I ask him to do a sneaky trim when we are shooting together. We’ve done some tutorials for BaByliss and he has taught me so much.”

Are you confident about doing your own hair?

“Yeah, especially since working with Paul. He has taught me little tricks, like how to wave my hair. I rely on the BaByliss Soft Waves – its jumbo tong. It gives that done/undone look.”

That is exactly how I would describe your whole look, kind of cool London, done but a little undone...

“I hope so, because that’s the look I go for.”

What products always have a place in your make-up bag?

“Elizabeth Arden Eight Hour Cream as I hate having dry lips. Charlotte Tilbury make-up, Nars, bareMinerals. I’m fickle with mascaras, not loyal – I just use whatever I have. And my current favourite is a blue eyeliner, which is weird for me. When I first saw it, I thought, ‘Oh no, far too 1980s,’ but it’s a dark blue and it really works – I have an Arden one and a Bobbi Brown one.”

Do you have a signature scent?

“Yes, Molecule 01. Although my mother-in-law [the gorgeous Jo Wood] bought me a Byredo fragrance with patchouli top notes. I love it as it’s like going back to the 1970s. I wear that loads.”

Do you ever fake tan?

“I did once, for a magazine shoot. And although it looked okay, it’s just not me. I hate it when you can see the orange tides and grubby bits. I would never have one out of choice. I love having that natural, pale is interesting vibe; it’s elegant and lovely, especially if you are fair or have red hair.”

Are there any body products you particularly love?

“I have so many oils and creams – I’m still using up my stretchmark creams from my last pregnancy. I also love Neal’s Yard and Sisley, but they are so expensive.”

Do you think stretchmark creams work, then?

“I don’t know. I think if you are gonna get them, then you will. I expanded quite massively in both pregnancies. I used lots of creams and I managed to just have one or two stretchmarks on my hips. They don’t bother me at all.”

You seem very happy and comfortable in your own skin – was it always like that?

“You have to try, but for me the biggest game changer is not getting older but having kids. I am so in awe that my body has done it. I think it’s amazing that it has grown these two humans and gone back to nearly how it was – bar a few jiggy bits and loose skin. I am happy with that and proud that my body has done it. And with that comes a whole heap of acceptance. I’m at that point now where I am happy to be healthy. I had terrible morning sickness with my second pregnancy, so just to feel healthy and normal is all I really care about. If I’m feeling toned and trim then that is the cherry on the cake, not the cake. My goal is to stay calm, healthy and happy.”

So any worries about your looks are well and truly in the past?

“Honestly, when you are younger you worry about everything; your bottom is too fat, your arms look strange. Now my stylist



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asks, 'Do you want to wear this?' and I just say, 'Yes, whatever you want; I don't care, it's fine.' If it's comfy, I'll wear it."

I know that you go to the gym to help you stay healthy and in shape – what is your workout regime like?

"Nothing crazy. A bit of cardio on the running and rowing machines, a bit of weights. I love yoga and have just joined a new place called Bhuti, where you do yoga in a gorgeous glass conservatory. It has treatment rooms and a vegan café; it's heaven for me."

What is your biggest beauty bugbear?

"My hands, from pushing the buggy in cold weather. I have the hands of an 80-year-old, they are so red and dry and chapped. I can't keep up with the hand creams because I constantly need my hands and am on the move."

Who inspires you?

"For work, my heroes are Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders – I admire everything they do and every project they are involved in. Presenter-wise, I love Davina [McCall] and Claudia Winkleman. Then, for beauty I love Cate Blanchett, who is always amazing; and for style Lupita Nyong'o – her style and beauty are so on point."

Why did you decide to write a cookbook?

"I am constantly battling sleep deprivation, yet I want to feel energised and nourished. I've called it *Cook Happy, Cook Healthy*, and it's all about food that tastes great but is good for you. Doing this book has made me do research into nutrition; it's my passion. Eating has so much to do with energy; if I didn't eat well I'd be on the floor. I have so much going on with the kids, and my husband is on tour a lot, so I need lots of energy. I cannot have an off day."

It's early to bed for you, then...

"Yes. Maybe when the kids are a bit older I'll start having a few crazy nights out. But at the moment, no."

What was the last book you read?

"*The Danish Girl*, which I loved."

And the last song you danced to?

"I've been listening to a lot of David Bowie, so *Rebel Rebel*. But we have a massive dance-athon every day in my kitchen."

And who – or what – is guaranteed to make you smile?

"My beautiful babies' cheeky faces – every day, all day." 🍷



FEARNE'S FIXES 1. Chanel Le Vernis Nail Polish in Espadrilles, £18, from Selfridges or House of Fraser (available from 27 May) 2. Sensationail Polish to Gel Transformer Starter Kit, £49.99; visit sensationail.co.uk. Contains all you need to turn everyday polish into gel, including the UV lamp 3. Bobbi Brown Eye Shadow in Shell, £17.50; visit bobbibrown.co.uk 4. bareMinerals Frame & Define Brow Styler in Universal Light, £14; visit bareminerals.co.uk 5. Charlotte Tilbury Beach Stick in Las Salinas, £30; visit charlottetilbury.com 6. Elizabeth Arden Beautiful Color Precision Glide Eye Liner in Sapphire, £17, from Boots 7. BaByliss Boutique Salon Soft Waves, £30 (was £40); visit babyliss.co.uk 8. Bobbi Brown Longwear Cream Shadow in Ballet Pink, £19 9. bareMinerals Pure Brightening Serum Foundation in Bare Porcelain, £26 10. Bobbi Brown Perfectly Defined Gel Eyeliner in Sapphire, £18.50 11. Hourglass Ambient Lighting Powder in Ethereal Light, £38, from Space NK

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