

MASTERS OF BALAYAGE

# SOHO LUXURY COLOR

## Professional Education Manual

*A Complete Guide to Color Theory, Formulation & Grey Coverage For Every Level of Stylist*

**"Color is transformation. SOHO is the system that makes it predictable."**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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|                                                           |              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>SECTION 1 · WELCOME TO SOHO</b>                        | <b>pg 3</b>  |
| · The Story Behind MOB & SOHO                             | 3            |
| · Why SOHO Is Different                                   | 4            |
| · The SOHO Brand Philosophy                               | 5            |
| · What This Manual Will Teach You                         | 5            |
| <b>SAFETY · SAFETY &amp; PROFESSIONAL PROTOCOLS</b>       | <b>pg 6</b>  |
| · Patch Test Protocol · Strand Test · Contraindications   | 6            |
| · Mid-Service Reaction Protocol                           | 8            |
| · Pre-Pigmentation — Filling Before You Color             | 9            |
| · Hair Porosity — The Hidden Variable                     | 10           |
| <b>SECTION 2 · COLOR FUNDAMENTALS</b>                     | <b>pg 12</b> |
| · How Hair Color Works                                    | 12           |
| · The SOHO Color Wheel                                    | 14           |
| · Warm vs. Cool Tones                                     | 15           |
| · The Underlying Pigment Chart                            | 16           |
| · The International Color Numbering System                | 17           |
| <b>SECTION 3 · THE SOHO LEVEL SYSTEM</b>                  | <b>pg 19</b> |
| · What Levels Mean                                        | 19           |
| · How to Identify Your Client's Natural Level             | 20           |
| · The SOHO Developer Protocol                             | 21           |
| · Level-by-Level Formulation Guide                        | 22           |
| <b>SECTION 4 · UNDERSTANDING EVERY SOHO TONE</b>          | <b>pg 25</b> |
| · Natural (.0) · Intense Natural (.00) · Ash (.1)         | 26           |
| · Violet/Pearl (.2) · Gold (.3) · Copper (.4)             | 29           |
| · Mahogany (.5) · Red (.6) · Matte (.7) · Blue/Pearl (.8) | 33           |
| <b>SECTION 5 · THE SHADE-SHIFTING DEVELOPER PROTOCOL</b>  | <b>pg 39</b> |
| · One Tube · Two Functions                                | 39           |
| · Permanent Color — Step by Step                          | 40           |
| · Demi-Permanent Gloss — Step by Step                     | 41           |
| · When to Use Which Mode · Inventory Advantage            | 42           |
| · Full Master Developer Chart                             | 43           |
| <b>SECTION 6 · GREY COVERAGE MASTERY</b>                  | <b>pg 44</b> |
| · The Science of Grey Hair · Diagnosing Grey %            | 44           |
| · The Grey Coverage Mixing Algorithm                      | 46           |
| · Opaque · Matte · Iridescent Grey Coverage               | 47           |
| · Grey Blending vs. Full Coverage                         | 51           |
| <b>SECTION 7 · CLIENT CONSULTATION GUIDE</b>              | <b>pg 53</b> |
| · How to Diagnose Hair · The 7 Key Questions              | 53           |
| · Word-for-Word Consultation Scripts                      | 55           |
| · Setting Realistic Expectations                          | 57           |
| <b>SECTION 8 · QUICK REFERENCE CHARTS</b>                 | <b>pg 58</b> |
| · Master Developer Chart · Grey Coverage Algorithm        | 58           |
| · Underlying Pigment Cheat Sheet · Tone Quick Reference   | 59           |
| <b>APPENDIX · ADVANCED REFERENCE</b>                      | <b>pg 61</b> |
| · Color Correction — Troubleshooting Guide                | 61           |
| · Homecare & Maintenance Guide                            | 63           |
| · Most Used SOHO Shades · Get Started with SOHO           | 65           |

# Welcome to SOHO

*Everything you need to know before you mix your first bowl.*

## 1.1 The Story Behind MOB & SOHO

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*Ryan & Jeni Weeden — Founders, Masters of Balayage*

Masters of Balayage (MOB) was built by colorists, for colorists. Founders Ryan and Jeni Weeden became two of the most trusted names in balayage and dimensional color education in the world — and they did it by teaching real techniques that actually work at the chair.

Their story with SOHO began in 2014 in New York City. While planning their wedding, they found themselves surrounded by the energy of one of the world's most iconic creative neighborhoods — SoHo. The bold architecture, the street art, the constant reinvention of style — all of it became the DNA of what SOHO Color would eventually become.

The SOHO brand symbol — a serpent intertwined with peonies — tells that story visually. The peonies honor the flowers from their wedding day. The serpent is an ancient symbol of transformation and renewal — shedding the old to make way for something better. It is the perfect symbol for a color line built around change.

### **The SOHO Symbol**

Serpent = Transformation & Renewal · Peonies = The Founders' Wedding Day Together they represent what great color does — it sheds the old and reveals something beautiful.

## 1.2 Why SOHO Is Different

There are a lot of professional color lines on the market. So why SOHO? The answer comes down to five things that no other line delivers together in a single system.

| # | What Makes SOHO Different                     | What It Means for You                                                                                                                       |
|---|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>PPD-Free &amp; Resorcinol-Free Formula</b> | Safer for your clients. Less risk of allergic reactions on the scalp.                                                                       |
| 2 | <b>Ammonia-Based — The Right Way</b>          | Fast, clean lift. The ammonia evaporates during processing, leaving no damaging residue behind. Grey is fully covered. Color stays vibrant. |
| 3 | <b>Built-In Blue/Violet Base</b>              | Every shade pre-neutralizes brassiness automatically. Less math. More consistent results every time.                                        |
| 4 | <b>One Tube. Two Functions.</b>               | Mix it one way = permanent color. Mix it another way = demi-permanent gloss. You only need one inventory.                                   |
| 5 | <b>Fade-Resistant &amp; Conditioning</b>      | Meadowfoam Seed Oil, Amino Acids, and Brown Algae are built into every tube. Color stays richer longer. Hair feels better after color.      |

## 1.3 The SOHO Brand Philosophy



SOHO was not built to be just another color line. It was built to solve real problems that stylists face every single day at the chair.

### **Clients deserve better results.**

Hair that looks dimensional, not flat. Color that fades beautifully instead of going brassy.

### **Stylists deserve a simpler system.**

One color line that does everything. No more buying two or three separate lines to cover grey, tone, and gloss.

### **Education has to be real.**

Not just theory. Real formulas. Real results. A system you can trust every time you stand behind the chair.

### **Chemistry and conditioning are not opposites.**

You should never have to choose between beautiful color and healthy hair. SOHO delivers both.

## **1.4 What This Manual Will Teach You**

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This manual is designed for every stylist — whether you have never used SOHO before or you have been doing color for twenty years. By the time you finish, you will know exactly how to:

- ✓ Read a hair color formula and know exactly what it will do.
- ✓ Identify your client's natural level and underlying pigment at a glance.
- ✓ Choose the right SOHO tone for every client goal.
- ✓ Mix SOHO as a permanent color OR a demi-permanent gloss — from the same tube.
- ✓ Cover grey hair completely — whether they want opaque, matte, or iridescent results.
- ✓ Blend grey for clients who want a low-maintenance, lived-in look.
- ✓ Use the color wheel to neutralize brassiness before it ever becomes a problem.
- ✓ Consult with clients using simple, confident language they actually understand.

### **A Note Before You Begin**

Every formula in this manual is based on the official SOHO mixing protocol. Always perform a patch test 48 hours before any color service. Always perform a strand test on new clients or when the hair history is unknown. Great color starts with great preparation.

***"The best colorists are not the ones who know the most. They are the ones who understand why."***

— Masters of Balayage

## Safety First — Before Every Service

*SOHO is one of the most advanced and gentle professional color systems available. Even so, every chemical service carries responsibility. These protocols protect your client, protect you, and ensure the best possible results every time.*

### ■ MANDATORY — Read Before Every New Client Service

Never apply any chemical color service without first reviewing the client's health history and performing the appropriate tests. A patch test is non-negotiable for all new clients and for any client who has not had a service in over 6 months.

## The Patch Test — 48 Hours Before Every New Client

A patch test — also called a skin sensitivity test or allergy test — must be performed 48 hours before any new color service. Even though SOHO is PPD-free and resorcinol-free, sensitivities can still occur with other dye intermediates. This test takes two minutes and protects both your client and your business.

| STEP | ACTION                                                                                                   | WHAT TO LOOK FOR                                     |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Mix a small amount of color (the shade you plan to use) with developer at your intended ratio.           | Ensure formula is thoroughly mixed.                  |
| 2    | Apply a small amount — about the size of a coin — to the inside of the client's elbow or behind the ear. | Area should be clean and free of broken skin.        |
| 3    | Leave uncovered and undisturbed for 48 hours. Instruct the client not to wash the area.                  | No redness, itching, swelling, or blistering.        |
| 4    | Review the test site with the client before the service. Document the result in the client record.       | Any reaction = do not proceed. Refer to a physician. |

## The Strand Test — Before Lifting or Corrective Services

A strand test should be performed any time the hair history is unknown, the hair has had previous chemical services, or you are attempting significant lift. It tells you exactly how the hair will respond before you commit to the full head.

| STEP | ACTION                                                                                       | RESULT TELLS YOU                                        |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Select a small, inconspicuous section — about 10 strands — from the nape area.               | Choose an area that represents the most resistant zone. |
| 2    | Apply your intended formula and developer to the test strand. Process for the intended time. | Observe lift rate at 10-minute intervals.               |

|   |                                                                                                         |                                                               |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Rinse, dry, and evaluate the strand carefully.                                                          | Level achieved, tone accuracy, elasticity, and breakage risk. |
| 4 | Adjust formula, developer strength, or timing based on results before proceeding with the full service. | Never skip adjustments indicated by the strand test.          |

## Contraindications — When NOT to Proceed

Always conduct a full consultation before any chemical service. Do not proceed if any of the following conditions are present.

| CONDITION                                                               | ACTION TO TAKE                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Positive patch test reaction — any redness, itching, or swelling</b> | Do not proceed. Refer the client to a physician before any future service.                                                          |
| <b>Open wounds, sores, or active scalp irritation</b>                   | Postpone service until the scalp has fully healed.                                                                                  |
| <b>Recent scalp treatments or chemical relaxers within 2 weeks</b>      | Wait a minimum of 2 weeks. Strand test before proceeding.                                                                           |
| <b>Severely compromised or breaking hair</b>                            | Do not lift. Perform a conditioning treatment series first. Demi gloss only if any color is applied.                                |
| <b>Pregnancy</b>                                                        | Advise the client to consult their physician. Many choose to wait until after the first trimester. Document their informed consent. |
| <b>Known sensitivity to hair dye ingredients</b>                        | Review the full SOHO ingredient list with the client. Obtain written informed consent before proceeding.                            |

### Document Everything

Keep a written record for every client: patch test date and result, strand test result, formula used, developer volume, processing time, and final result. This protects you legally, ensures formula consistency at every visit, and builds the kind of professional credibility that earns long-term client loyalty.

## If a Reaction Occurs During a Service

Because SOHO is formulated without PPD and without resorcinol — the two ingredients responsible for the vast majority of allergic reactions to hair color — serious mid-service reactions are highly unlikely. However, every professional colorist should know the correct protocol if any sensitivity presents during a service.

| SYMPTOM                              | SEVERITY | IMMEDIATE ACTION                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mild scalp tingling or warmth</b> | Minor    | Monitor. This is normal during processing. If it intensifies, proceed to next step. |

|                                                   |             |                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Persistent itching, burning, or redness</b>    | Moderate    | Rinse immediately with cool water until completely removed. Do not apply acidic products. Shampoo gently with a mild sulfate-free shampoo. |
| <b>Swelling, hives, or significant irritation</b> | Significant | Rinse immediately with cool water. Do not neutralize with acids. Seek medical attention. Document the incident and the formula used.       |
| <b>Difficulty breathing or extreme swelling</b>   | Emergency   | Call emergency services immediately. Rinse hair and scalp continuously with cool water while awaiting help.                                |

#### ■ Cool Water Only

Always rinse a reaction with cool water — never hot. Hot water dilates blood vessels and accelerates absorption of any remaining product into the skin. Do not apply vinegar, baking soda, or any acidic neutralizer to a reactive scalp.

# Pre-Pigmentation — Filling Before You Color

*Pre-pigmentation is one of the most important techniques in professional color — and one of the most skipped. Any time you are applying a warm fashion color over hair that has been lightened, bleached, or severely faded, a filler step ensures the artificial color deposits evenly and lasts as long as possible.*

## Why Hair Needs to Be Filled

When hair is lightened, the natural melanin is removed and the cortex becomes porous. This porous cortex cannot hold warm pigment molecules the same way natural hair can — the red and copper molecules are large and slide right out of the open cuticle within weeks. Pre-pigmentation deposits a warm base into the cortex first, giving the fashion color something to bond to. The result is more vibrant, more even, and significantly longer-lasting color.

| STARTING LEVEL | FILLER SHADE TO USE     | DEVELOPER    | PROCESS TIME | THEN APPLY                                               |
|----------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Level 7–8      | <b>SOHO 7.4 or 7.43</b> | 5 Vol · 1:2  | 10 min       | Target red or copper formula without rinsing filler      |
| Level 8–9      | <b>SOHO 8.4 or 8.43</b> | 5 Vol · 1:2  | 10 min       | Target warm or copper-red formula without rinsing filler |
| Level 9–10     | <b>SOHO 9.4 or 9.3</b>  | 5 Vol · 1:2  | 10 min       | Target red or warm golden formula without rinsing filler |
| Any Level      | <b>SOHO 6.4 or 7.4</b>  | 10 Vol · 1:2 | 15 min       | Any red, copper, or mahogany permanent formula           |

## The No-Rinse Method — Most Common Approach

Apply the filler shade as a demi gloss at 5 Vol, work through the lightened sections, and process for 10 minutes without heat. Do NOT rinse. Apply the target permanent color directly over the filler while it is still in the hair. The two formulas work together to build a dense, warm pigment base that holds significantly longer than color applied without a filler.

### When Pre-Pigmentation Is Essential

Always fill before: applying red (.6) over Level 7+ lightened hair · applying copper (.4) over bleached ends · darkening back hair that has been lifted more than 3 levels · any warm fashion color on previously highlighted hair. Skipping this step on porous hair is the number one cause of red and copper color fading within two weeks.

# Hair Porosity — The Hidden Variable

*Porosity is the single most overlooked variable in hair color formulation. Two clients can have the exact same natural level and tone goal, but produce completely different results if one has high porosity hair. Understanding and correcting for porosity is what separates good colorists from great ones.*

## What Is Porosity?

Porosity refers to the hair's ability to absorb and retain moisture and color. It is determined by the condition of the cuticle. A tightly closed cuticle resists absorption — a raised or damaged cuticle absorbs everything rapidly and releases it just as fast. This directly affects how SOHO color deposits, how dark or vivid the result appears, and how long it lasts.

### The Quick Porosity Test

Slide two fingers from the tip of the hair strand up toward the root. If the strand feels smooth — low porosity. If it feels slightly rough — medium porosity. If it feels very rough, snags, or breaks — high porosity. You can also drop a clean strand in a glass of water: it sinks quickly = high porosity. It floats = low porosity.

| POROSITY TYPE          | CUTICLE STATE                    | HOW COLOR BEHAVES                                                            | SOHO FORMULATION ADJUSTMENT                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Low Porosity</b>    | Tightly closed — resistant       | Slow to absorb. Color may sit on surface. Resistant to lift.                 | Use 20-30 Vol. Add 5-10 min processing time. Apply to dry hair. Use gentle heat to assist penetration.                                                                                    |
| <b>Medium Porosity</b> | Slightly raised — ideal          | Absorbs evenly. Predictable results. Good color retention.                   | Standard SOHO formulation — no adjustment needed. Follow all chart guidelines as written.                                                                                                 |
| <b>High Porosity</b>   | Raised or damaged — absorbs fast | Over-absorbs color. Result appears darker and fades rapidly. Uneven on ends. | Use 10 Vol maximum. Choose a shade one level lighter than target. Reduce processing time by 5-10 min. Apply to slightly damp hair. Always finish with acidic conditioner to seal cuticle. |

## Correcting Uneven Porosity — The Most Common Challenge

Most clients have uneven porosity — their roots are low to medium porosity while their ends are high porosity from years of heat, sun, and previous color. This creates the most common color complaint: roots too dark, ends too light or faded.

| PROBLEM                                | CAUSE                                      | SOHO FIX                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ends absorb too dark</b>            | High porosity ends over-absorb pigment     | Apply roots first. Dilute end formula with 5 Vol developer or use a lighter shade on the ends.               |
| <b>Color fades within 2 weeks</b>      | Porous cuticle cannot hold color molecules | Formulate one level deeper. Finish with acidic gloss at 5 Vol to seal cuticle. Recommend color-safe shampoo. |
| <b>Uneven result — patchy tone</b>     | Inconsistent porosity across head          | Pre-treat high porosity zones with a protein filler before color. Apply SOHO in sections by porosity level.  |
| <b>Color too dark on ends vs roots</b> | Roots low porosity, ends high porosity     | Apply roots with standard formula. Apply a demi 1:2 formula at 5-10 Vol to the ends only.                    |

### The Golden Porosity Rule

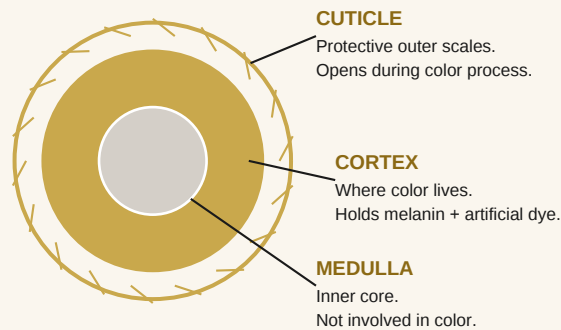
When in doubt, go lighter on your formula and lower on your developer. You can always deepen a result with a gloss. You cannot easily undo color that is too dark or too saturated on compromised hair.

# Color Fundamentals

*Before you mix a single bowl, you need to understand how hair color actually works. This section gives you the foundation for everything else in this manual.*

## 2.1 How Hair Color Works

Hair is not a solid rod. It has three distinct layers, and each one plays a different role in how color behaves. Understanding these layers is the difference between color that works and color that fails.



*Cross-section of a single hair shaft showing the three structural layers.*

| LAYER          | WHAT IT IS                                                               | ROLE IN COLOR                                                                                                                     |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Cuticle</b> | Overlapping scales on the outside of the hair — like shingles on a roof. | Must be opened by an alkaline agent (ammonia) for color to enter. Seals shut when rinsed with acidic water, locking color inside. |
| <b>Cortex</b>  | The thick inner core. Makes up most of the hair's mass and strength.     | Where natural melanin lives. Where artificial dye molecules are deposited and locked in. This is where all color happens.         |
| <b>Medulla</b> | A hollow channel at the very center. Often absent in fine hair.          | No role in the color process. Can be ignored in formulation.                                                                      |

## The Two Types of Natural Pigment

Inside the cortex, two types of melanin determine every natural hair color on earth. SOHO is engineered to work with both of them.

| MELANIN TYPE       | COLOR IT CREATES                      | HOW IT BEHAVES DURING LIFT                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Eumelanin</b>   | Black and Brown (Levels 1–4)          | Breaks down quickly with peroxide. Dominant at Levels 1–4. Dark hair lightens through the brown range fast.                                                              |
| <b>Pheomelanin</b> | Red, Orange, and Yellow (Levels 4–10) | Very resistant to peroxide. Begins appearing at Level 4 as red-orange. Fully dominant from Level 5 up — causing the brassiness that SOHO's Blue/Violet base neutralizes. |

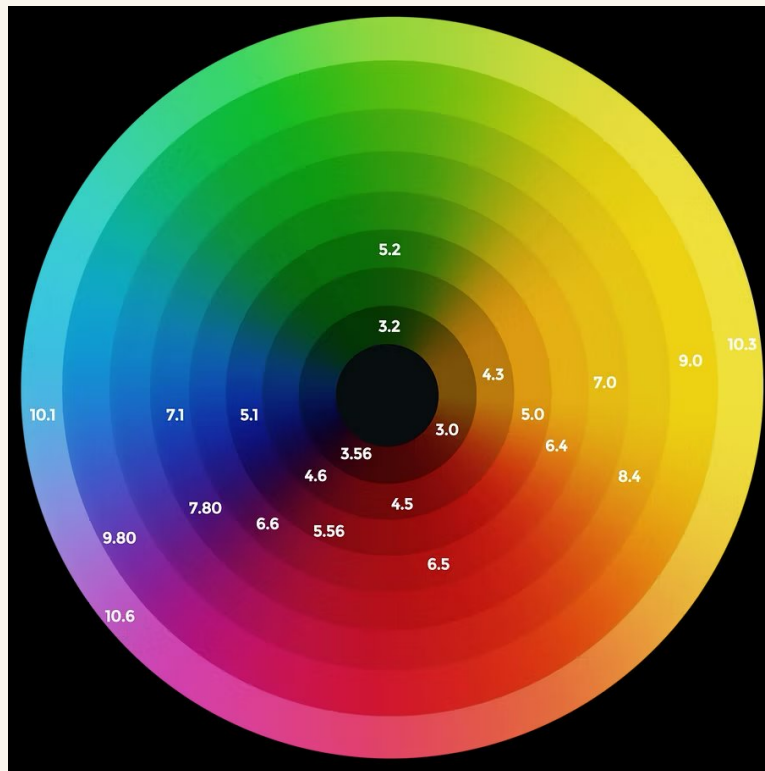
### Why This Matters for SOHO

Every SOHO shade has a built-in Blue/Violet base specifically designed to cancel out the stubborn pheomelanin (orange and yellow) that gets exposed during the lift process. This is what makes SOHO results cleaner, cooler, and more consistent than standard color lines — automatically.

## 2.2 The SOHO Color Wheel

The color wheel is not just a theory chart. It is your formulation tool. Every decision you make at the bowl — what tone to pick, how to neutralize brassiness, how to create depth — comes back to the color wheel.

The single most important rule: colors directly opposite each other on the wheel cancel each other out. This is called subtractive color theory, and it is the foundation of every SOHO formula.



*Official SOHO Branded Color Wheel*

### How to Read the Color Wheel for Formulation

#### ■ Orange is opposite Blue.

When hair pulls orange (Level 5-6), add an Ash (.1) tone to neutralize it.

#### ■ Yellow is opposite Violet.

When hair pulls yellow (Level 8-9), add a Pearl/Violet (.2) tone to neutralize it.

#### ■ Red is opposite Green.

When hair pulls red (Level 3-4), add a Matte (.7) tone to neutralize it.

#### ■ Warm tones **ENHANCE** underlying pigment.

Copper (.4), Gold (.3), and Red (.6) work **WITH** the warmth — not against it.

#### ■ Cool tones **CANCEL** underlying pigment.

Ash (.1), Violet (.2), and Matte (.7) work **AGAINST** warmth to create neutral or cool results.

## 2.3 Warm vs. Cool Tones

Every hair color result falls somewhere on the warm-to-cool spectrum. Understanding which SOHO tones are warm and which are cool gives you complete control over the final result.

| TONE            | CODE     | TEMP         | BEST USED WHEN...                                            |
|-----------------|----------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Natural         | .0 / N   | Neutral      | You need grey coverage or a balanced base.                   |
| Intense Natural | .00 / NN | Neutral      | 50%+ grey. Maximum pigment density needed.                   |
| Ash             | .1 / A   | Cool         | Client has orange brassiness or wants a smoky, cool result.  |
| Violet / Pearl  | .2 / V   | Cool         | Client has yellow brassiness or wants a silvery, icy blonde. |
| Gold            | .3 / G   | Warm         | Client wants a warm, sun-kissed, luminous result.            |
| Copper          | .4 / C   | Warm         | Client wants a vibrant, fiery copper or orange-red.          |
| Mahogany        | .5 / M   | Warm/Neutral | Client wants rich depth with a red-violet complexity.        |
| Red             | .6 / R   | Warm         | Client wants a bold, vivid red or deep auburn.               |
| Matte           | .7       | Cool         | Client has red-orange warmth or wants a flat, cool brunette. |
| Blue / Pearl    | .8       | Cool         | Intense anti-brassiness on dark bases or deep ash creation.  |

## 2.4 The Underlying Pigment Chart

This is one of the most important charts in all of hair color. Every time you lift a client's natural hair, these pigments get exposed — whether you want them to or not. Your job is to know exactly which pigment will appear at your target level, and neutralize it with the right SOHO tone.

SOHO's built-in Blue/Violet base handles a lot of this automatically — but knowing this chart will make you a better colorist on every single service.

| LVL | NATURAL LEVEL     | UNDERLYING PIGMENT | NEUTRALIZE WITH (SOHO TONE) |
|-----|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1   | Black             | Deep Red-Crimson   | GREEN (.7 Matte)            |
| 2   | Darkest Brown     | Deep Red           | GREEN (.7 Matte)            |
| 3   | Dark Brown        | Dark Red           | GREEN (.7 Matte)            |
| 4   | Medium Brown      | Red-Orange         | BLUE-GREEN (.1 + .7)        |
| 5   | Light Brown       | Orange             | BLUE / ASH (.1)             |
| 6   | Dark Blonde       | Orange-Yellow      | BLUE-VIOLET (.1 + .2)       |
| 7   | Medium Blonde     | Yellow-Orange      | VIOLET-BLUE (.2 + .1)       |
| 8   | Light Blonde      | Yellow             | VIOLET / PEARL (.2)         |
| 9   | Very Light Blonde | Light Yellow       | VIOLET / PEARL (.2)         |
| 10  | Lightest Blonde   | Pale Yellow        | SHEER VIOLET (.2)           |

### The Golden Rule of Underlying Pigment

You can never skip this step. Before every formula, ask yourself: What level am I lifting to? What underlying pigment will be exposed at that level? What SOHO tone do I need to neutralize it — or enhance it? Answer those three questions and your color will be predictable every time.

## 2.5 The International Color Numbering System

Every professional hair color shade — including every SOHO shade — has a code. Once you understand the code, you can decode any formula on any color line in the world.

### How to Read a SOHO Shade Code

Every SOHO shade is written as two numbers separated by a decimal point. The number before the decimal is the LEVEL (depth). The number after the decimal is the TONE (color reflect).

**SOHO SHADE CODE EXAMPLE: 7.43**

**7**

LEVEL 7 Medium Blonde (Depth of color — how light or dark)

**.43**

.4 = PRIMARY TONE: Copper (70% of reflect) .3 = SECONDARY TONE: Gold (30% of reflect)

### The Primary Tone Numbers — At a Glance

| NUMBER    | STONE NAME       | TEMP         | SOHO APPLICATION                                       |
|-----------|------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| .0 or N   | Natural          | Neutral      | Grey coverage anchor. Foundation base.                 |
| .00 or NN | Intense Natural  | Neutral      | High grey %, resistant or coarse hair.                 |
| .1 or A   | Ash              | Cool         | Neutralizes orange. Creates smoky, cool results.       |
| .2 or V   | Violet / Pearl   | Cool         | Neutralizes yellow. Creates icy, silver-toned blondes. |
| .3 or G   | Gold             | Warm         | Enhances warmth. Sun-kissed, luminous finish.          |
| .4 or C   | Copper           | Warm         | Bold copper and orange-red reflects.                   |
| .5 or M   | Mahogany         | Warm/Neutral | Rich brunette depth. Red-violet complexity.            |
| .6 or R   | Red              | Warm         | Vivid reds. Deep auburn. Fashion red.                  |
| .7        | Matte / Brunette | Cool         | Neutralizes red. Creates flat, cool brunettes.         |
| .8        | Blue / Pearl     | Cool         | Deep ash. Intense anti-orange on dark bases.           |

### Quick Practice: Decode These SOHO Shades

Before moving on, practice reading these shade codes. Cover the right column and see if you can decode each one on your own.

| SOHO SHADE CODE | WHAT IT MEANS                                                                                                   |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.1             | Level 5 Light Brown · Primary tone: Ash (Cool). Neutralizes the orange exposed at Level 5.                      |
| 8.2             | Level 8 Light Blonde · Primary tone: Violet/Pearl (Cool). Neutralizes yellow brassiness at Level 8.             |
| 6.43            | Level 6 Dark Blonde · Primary tone: Copper (Warm) + Secondary tone: Gold (Warm). Rich, warm copper-gold result. |
| 7.00            | Level 7 Medium Blonde · Intense Natural base. Use for 50%+ grey clients at this level.                          |
| 4.5             | Level 4 Medium Brown · Primary tone: Mahogany. Creates a rich, red-violet brunette depth.                       |

***"Know your wheel. Know your pigments. Know your tones. The rest is just mixing."***

# The SOHO Level System

*Level is the single most important number in any hair color formula. Get this right and everything else falls into place.*

## 3.1 What Levels Mean

The level system is a scale from 1 to 10 that measures how light or dark a hair color is. Level 1 is the darkest — pure black. Level 10 is the lightest — platinum blonde. Every number in between represents a specific depth of color.

Level measures DEPTH only. It tells you nothing about tone — whether the color is warm, cool, red, or ashy. That is what the second number in the SOHO shade code tells you. Level and tone work together, but they are two completely separate things.



| LEVEL | NAME                     | MELANIN DENSITY | TYPICAL NATURAL HAIR                  |
|-------|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1     | <b>Black</b>             | Maximum         | Jet black, no warmth visible          |
| 2     | <b>Darkest Brown</b>     | Very High       | Almost black with a slight brown cast |
| 3     | <b>Dark Brown</b>        | High            | Dark espresso, rich brown             |
| 4     | <b>Medium Brown</b>      | Medium-High     | Classic brunette, chocolate brown     |
| 5     | <b>Light Brown</b>       | Medium          | Warm light brown, transition zone     |
| 6     | <b>Dark Blonde</b>       | Medium-Low      | Dirty blonde, dark golden blonde      |
| 7     | <b>Medium Blonde</b>     | Low             | Classic blonde, natural golden blonde |
| 8     | <b>Light Blonde</b>      | Very Low        | Bright blonde, beach blonde           |
| 9     | <b>Very Light Blonde</b> | Trace           | Pale blonde, near-platinum            |
| 10    | <b>Lightest Blonde</b>   | Minimal         | Platinum, almost no natural pigment   |

## 3.2 How to Identify Your Client's Natural Level

Before you formulate anything, you must correctly identify your client's natural base level. Getting this wrong is the number one cause of unexpected color results. Follow these steps every single time.

### Step 1 — Work in good lighting.

Natural daylight or a daylight-balanced salon light is best. Tungsten lighting makes hair look warmer and darker than it actually is. Fluorescent lighting can make hair appear ashy and lighter.

### Step 2 — Look at the roots, not the ends.

The ends of the hair are almost always previously colored, faded, or lightened. The root area — the first half-inch of new growth — shows the true natural base level. That is your starting point.

### Step 3 — Part the hair and look at dry hair.

Wet hair always appears one level darker than it actually is. Always assess the natural level on dry hair before applying any product.

### Step 4 — Compare to your SOHO level swatches.

Hold your swatch book next to the client's roots. The level that most closely matches is your natural base. When in doubt, go one level lighter rather than darker — it is easier to add depth than to remove it.

### Step 5 — Note the percentage of grey.

If grey is present, note the approximate percentage. This will determine how much Natural base (.0 or .00) to add to your formula in Section 6.

#### The Most Common Mistake

Stylists often read the level of the ends instead of the roots. The ends can be two to three levels lighter than the natural base due to sun exposure, previous color, or fading. Always, always read the root. The root is the truth.

## How to Calculate Lift

Once you know the natural base level and the target level, calculating lift is simple subtraction.

| NATURAL BASE | TARGET LEVEL | LEVELS OF LIFT NEEDED | DEV               |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Level 4      | Level 5      | 1 level               | 20 Vol · 1:1      |
| Level 4      | Level 6      | 2 levels              | 20–30 Vol · 1:1   |
| Level 5      | Level 7      | 2 levels              | 20–30 Vol · 1:1   |
| Level 4      | Level 7      | 3 levels              | 30–40 Vol · 1:1   |
| Level 5      | Level 8      | 3 levels              | 30–40 Vol · 1:1   |
| Any Level    | Same Level   | 0 — Deposit Only      | 5 or 10 Vol · 1:2 |

### 3.3 The SOHO Developer Protocol

SOHO's shade-shifting developer system is what makes this color line unlike anything else on the market. One tube of SOHO color can perform two completely different chemical functions — permanent color OR demi-permanent gloss — just by changing the mixing ratio and developer volume.

| DEV    | RATIO | FUNCTION                        | LEVELS OF LIFT      | PROCESS TIME |
|--------|-------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 5 Vol  | 1:2   | Demi-Permanent Gloss / Toner    | <i>Deposit Only</i> | 20 min       |
| 10 Vol | 1:2   | Deposit Only / Color Refresh    | <i>Deposit Only</i> | 20 min       |
| 20 Vol | 1:1   | Permanent Color · Grey Coverage | <b>1–2 Levels</b>   | 35 min       |
| 30 Vol | 1:1   | Permanent Color · Moderate Lift | <b>2–3 Levels</b>   | 35 min       |
| 40 Vol | 1:1   | Permanent Color · Maximum Lift  | <b>3–4 Levels</b>   | 35 min       |

#### The Shade-Shifting Rule — Memorize This

1:1 ratio + 20/30/40 Vol = Permanent color. Opens the cuticle fully. Lifts and deposits. Grey coverage. Processing time: 35 minutes. 1:2 ratio + 5/10 Vol = Demi-permanent gloss. Barely opens the cuticle. Deposit only. Toning and glazing. Processing time: 20 minutes.

#### What Each Developer Volume Actually Does

| DEV    | H2O2 % | SOHO RATIO | WHAT IT DOES TO THE HAIR                           | BEST FOR                                                                                                                            |
|--------|--------|------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 Vol  | 1.5%   | 1:2        | Barely opens the cuticle. Zero lift. Pure deposit. | Toning lightened hair. Glazing for shine.                                                                                           |
| 10 Vol | 3%     | 1:2        | Slightly opens cuticle. No lift. Rich deposit.     | Refreshing faded color. Deposit on natural hair.                                                                                    |
| 20 Vol | 6%     | 1:1        | Opens cuticle fully. 1–2 levels of lift.           | Grey coverage. Gentle permanent lift. Most common choice.                                                                           |
| 30 Vol | 9%     | 1:1        | Wide cuticle opening. 2–3 levels of lift.          | Lifting dark bases. High-lift applications.                                                                                         |
| 40 Vol | 12%    | 1:1        | Maximum cuticle opening. 3–4 levels of lift.       | Maximum lift only. Not for grey coverage — aggressive lift dissipates deposited pigment before it can polymerize. Use with caution. |

### 3.4 Level-by-Level Formulation Guide

This guide walks you through what to expect at every level — what underlying pigment is exposed, which SOHO tones to use to neutralize or enhance it, and which developer to reach for. Use this as your chair-side reference.

|                   |                                                                                                             |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 1</b>    | <b>Black</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Deep Red-Crimson</b>                                                 |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Cannot lift with SOHO permanent color alone. Lightener required first. For deposit: use 5 or 10 Vol at 1:2. |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 4.5, 4.56, 5.56 — rich mahogany and red families work beautifully on Level 1.                               |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>Deposit only with 5/10 Vol • 1:2</b>                                                                     |

|                   |                                                                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 2</b>    | <b>Darkest Brown</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Deep Red</b>                |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Very resistant to lift. 40 Vol required for significant movement.          |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 3.0, 4.0, 5.56 — deep warm brunettes. Avoid light ash tones at this level. |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>40 Vol • 1:1 for lift / 5–10 Vol • 1:2 for deposit</b>                  |

|                   |                                                                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 3</b>    | <b>Dark Brown</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Dark Red</b>                         |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Stubborn red undertones. Matte (.7) is your neutralizer.                         |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 3.0, 4.5, 5.1 — cool brunettes. Use .7 to cancel red before adding fashion tone. |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>30–40 Vol • 1:1</b>                                                           |

|                   |                                                                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 4</b>    | <b>Medium Brown</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Red-Orange</b>                    |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Red-orange is dominant here. Ash (.1) neutralizes orange; Matte (.7) kills red. |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 4.0 — cool to neutral results. 4.43, 5.43 for warm copper.       |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>20–30 Vol • 1:1</b>                                                          |

|                   |                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 5</b>    | <b>Light Brown</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Pure Orange</b>                                                                                     |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | The most aggressive underlying pigment zone. Blue/Ash (.1) is essential for cool results. SOHO's built-in Blue/Violet base handles much of this. |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 5.1, 6.1, 7.1 — cool results. 5.43, 6.4 — warm copper-gold.                                                                                      |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>20–30 Vol • 1:1</b>                                                                                                                           |

|                   |                                                                                    |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 6</b>    | <b>Dark Blonde</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Orange-Yellow</b>                     |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Transitioning from orange to yellow. Blend of Ash (.1) and Violet (.2) works best. |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 6.1, 7.1 — cool blonde. 6.43, 7.3 — warm golden. 6.0 — neutral base.               |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>20–30 Vol • 1:1</b>                                                             |

|                   |                                                                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 7</b>    | <b>Medium Blonde</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Yellow-Orange</b>           |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Yellow-orange zone. Violet (.2) is your primary neutralizer at this level. |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 7.1, 7.2, 8.2 — cool platinum. 7.3, 7.43 — warm golden blonde.             |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>20 Vol • 1:1</b>                                                        |

|                   |                                                                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 8</b>    | <b>Light Blonde</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Pure Yellow</b>             |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Pure yellow. Violet (.2 Pearl/Iris) neutralizes yellow completely.        |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 8.2, 9.2 — icy blonde. 8.1 — cool ash. 9.0, 9.3 — natural to warm blonde. |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>20 Vol • 1:1</b>                                                       |

|                   |                                                                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL 9</b>    | <b>Very Light Blonde</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Light Yellow</b>      |
| <b>NOTES</b>      | Pale yellow. Sheer violet toning is all that is needed. Use 5 Vol gloss. |
| <b>SOHO TONES</b> | 9.2, 10.2 — silver-pearl tone. 9.0 — natural platinum.                   |
| <b>DEV</b>        | <b>5–10 Vol • 1:2 gloss only</b>                                         |

|                       |                                                                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LEVEL<br/>10</b>   | <b>Lightest Blonde</b><br>Underlying Pigment: <b>Pale Yellow</b>            |
| <b>NOTES</b>          | Near-empty cortex. Handle with care. Deposit-only gloss is the safe choice. |
| <b>SOHO<br/>TONES</b> | 10.2 — sheer violet pearl. 10.1 — icy ash. 10.0 — natural platinum.         |
| <b>DEV</b>            | <b>5 Vol · 1:2 gloss only</b>                                               |

*"The level tells you where you are. The tone tells you where you're going. The developer decides how fast you get there."*

— SOHO Education

# Understanding Every SOHO Tone

*This is your go-to reference for every tone family in the SOHO line. For each tone you will find exactly what it does, when to use it, ready-to-use formulas, and the mistakes to avoid.*

| CODE     | STONE           | TEMP    | PRIMARY USE                                           |
|----------|-----------------|---------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| .0 / N   | Natural         | Neutral | Grey coverage foundation. Balanced base.              |
| .00 / NN | Intense Natural | Neutral | 50%+ grey. Maximum pigment density.                   |
| .1 / A   | Ash             | Cool    | Neutralize orange. Smoky, cool brunettes and blondes. |
| .2 / V   | Violet / Pearl  | Cool    | Neutralize yellow. Icy, pearl, silver-toned blondes.  |
| .3 / G   | Gold            | Warm    | Enhance warmth. Sun-kissed, luminous golden results.  |
| .4 / C   | Copper          | Warm    | Bold copper, fiery orange-red fashion color.          |
| .5 / M   | Mahogany        | Warm    | Rich brunette depth with red-violet complexity.       |
| .6 / R   | Red             | Warm    | Vivid reds, deep auburn, bold fashion red.            |
| .7       | Matte           | Cool    | Neutralize red. Flat, cool, natural brunettes.        |
| .8       | Blue / Pearl    | Cool    | Deep ash, intense anti-orange on dark bases.          |



## Natural

Code: .0 / N | Temperature: Neutral

The Natural series is the backbone of the SOHO system. It contains a perfectly balanced mix of all three primary colors — red, blue, and yellow — calibrated to replicate the density of natural melanin. On its own it creates clean, dimensional, natural-looking results. Mixed with a fashion tone, it anchors the formula and provides the opacity needed to cover grey hair.

**NEUTRALIZES:**  
Nothing specifically — it is balanced across all tones.

**ENHANCES:**  
Natural depth and dimension. Mimics the look of uncolored hair.

**BEST LEVELS:**  
All levels. Most commonly used at Levels 3–7 for grey coverage.

## Formulation Examples

| GOAL                    | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA                  | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                           |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Natural brunette result | Level 4        | <b>5.0</b>                    | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Rich, natural medium brown with dimension |
| Grey coverage up to 25% | Level 5        | <b>6.0 + 6.43 (3/4 + 1/4)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Natural dark blonde, grey fully covered   |
| Grey coverage 26–50%    | Level 6        | <b>7.0 + 7.3 (1/2 + 1/2)</b>  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Warm medium blonde, complete coverage     |
| Deposit only / refresh  | Level 6        | <b>7.0</b>                    | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Refreshed, natural blonde gloss           |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Using Natural alone on 75%+ grey without upgrading to Intense Natural (.00). Result will look translucent.
- Skipping Natural series entirely on grey hair and using a fashion tone alone. Result will glow or look hollow.
- Using too dark a Natural level. Always match or go one level lighter than target.

### ★ Pro Tip

When in doubt on grey, always anchor with Natural first. A formula with no Natural base on white hair is a formula that will fail. Think of .0 as the foundation — the fashion tone is just the finish.

# RESULTS

ROOTS 6.0

GLOBAL TONE 8.63 + 8.0

By MOB Educator @emilyannelle.hair

SOHO Results · Natural brunette · Roots: 6.0 Natural Series · Global tone: 8.63 Violet-Gold + 8.0 Natural · By MOB Educator @emilyannelle.hair



## Intense Natural

Code: .00 / NN | Temperature: Neutral

The Intense Natural series is the Natural series on maximum power. It carries double the pigment density of the standard Natural — engineered specifically for clients with 50% or more grey hair, coarse or wiry grey strands, or highly resistant non-pigmented hair. It packs the cortex so densely that virtually no light passes through, guaranteeing total, 100% opaque coverage even on the most stubborn grey.

**NEUTRALIZES:**

Transparency and translucency in grey hair.

**ENHANCES:**

Absolute opacity and maximum color longevity on resistant grey.

**BEST LEVELS:**

All levels. Critical for 50–100% grey clients at any level.

## Formulation Examples

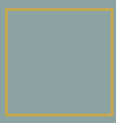
| GOAL                           | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA                   | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Full grey coverage<br>50–100%  | Level 6        | <b>6.00 + 6.43 (3/4 + 1/4)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Deep, opaque dark blonde.<br>Zero grey visible |
| Full grey coverage<br>50–100%  | Level 7        | <b>7.00 + 7.1 (3/4 + 1/4)</b>  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Cool medium blonde, solid opacity              |
| Resistant grey,<br>cool result | Level 5        | <b>5.00 + 5.1 (3/4 + 1/4)</b>  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Opaque cool light brown                        |
| Resistant grey,<br>warm result | Level 4        | <b>4.00 + 4.3 (3/4 + 1/4)</b>  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Opaque warm medium brown                       |

■ **Common Mistakes**

- Not compensating for the depth shift. A 7.00 will process to a visual Level 6. Always go one level lighter than target.
- Using .00 on fine hair with low grey percentage. The result will be too flat and heavy. Use standard .0 instead.
- Mixing .00 at 1:2 with low volume. Intense Natural requires 1:1 with 20 Vol to activate fully.

★ **Pro Tip**

The one-level-lighter rule is non-negotiable with Intense Natural. If your client wants a Level 6 result, formulate with a Level 7 Intense Natural. The double pigmentation will always process darker than the tube label suggests.



## Ash

Code: .1 / A | Temperature: **Cool**

The Ash series is your primary weapon against orange and red-orange brassiness. Built on a blue-green base, Ash tones deposit cool, smoky pigment that sits directly opposite orange on the color wheel. SOHO's Ash series is particularly powerful at the Level 4–6 range where orange and red-orange underlying pigments are most dominant. Used correctly it creates clean, cool, modern brunettes and cool blondes.

**NEUTRALIZES:**

Orange and red-orange underlying pigment (Levels 4–6).

**ENHANCES:**

Cool, smoky, slate-toned brunettes and cool blonde results.

**BEST LEVELS:**

Levels 4–8. Most powerful at Levels 5 and 6.

## Formulation Examples

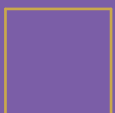
| GOAL                         | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA                 | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                         |
|------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Cool ash brunette            | Level 4        | <b>5.1</b>                   | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Smoky, cool light brown — no warmth     |
| Ash blonde                   | Level 5        | <b>7.1</b>                   | 30 Vol · 1:1 | Cool dark blonde from a Level 5 base    |
| Grey coverage<br>cool result | Level 6        | <b>6.0 + 6.1 (1/2 + 1/2)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Cool, neutral dark blonde, grey covered |
| Ash toner on<br>lightened    | Level 8        | <b>8.1</b>                   | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Icy cool ash tone on pre-lightened hair |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Over-using Ash on Levels 7–10. At these levels the underlying pigment is yellow, not orange. Ash will not neutralize yellow — use Violet (.2) instead.
- Using Ash on Level 3 and below. Red is the dominant pigment at these levels — use Matte (.7) or Blue (.8) instead.
- Applying Ash as a demi gloss on un-lightened dark hair. The result will be greenish. Ash requires lift to work correctly.

### ★ Pro Tip

For an ultra-cool, modern brunette, combine Ash with a touch of Matte: try 5.1 + a small portion of 5.7. The Ash handles the orange while the Matte handles any red, giving you a perfectly flat, editorial cool tone.



## Violet / Pearl

Code: .2 / V | Temperature: **Cool**

Violet and Pearl tones are the blonde colorist's most essential tool. The .2 series sits directly opposite yellow on the color wheel, making it the perfect neutralizer for the yellow and pale-yellow underlying pigments exposed at Levels 7 through 10. From a deep violet that creates dramatic platinum results to a sheer pearl that adds a whisper of silver shimmer, the .2 family covers the entire blonde spectrum.

### NEUTRALIZES:

Yellow and pale-yellow underlying pigment (Levels 7–10).

### ENHANCES:

Icy, silver, pearl, and platinum tones on blonde hair.

### BEST LEVELS:

Levels 7–10. Most powerful at Levels 8 and 9.

## Formulation Examples

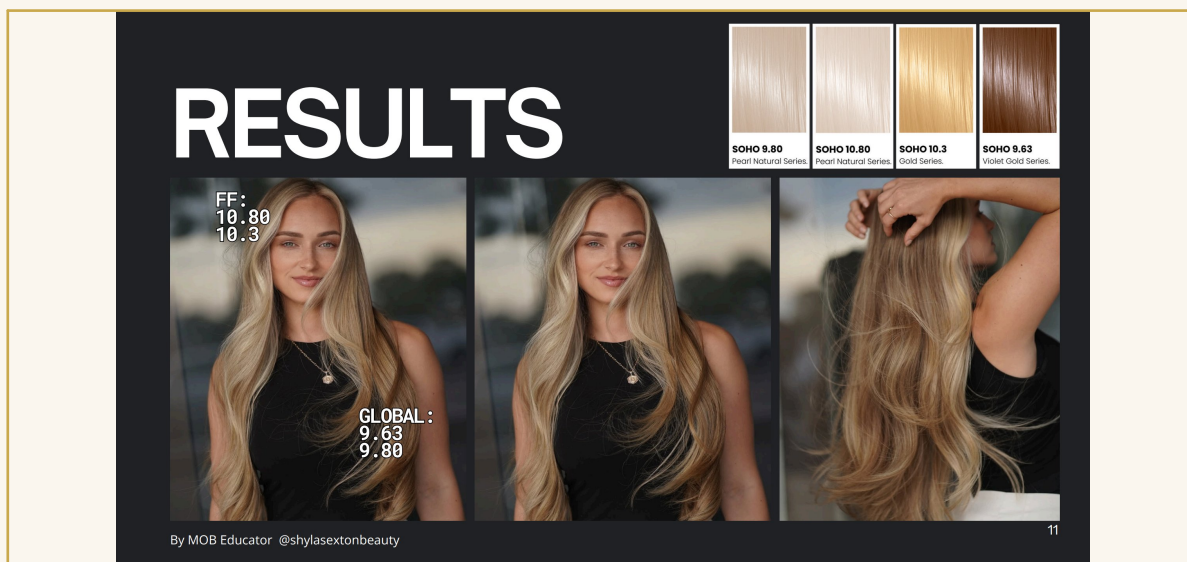
| GOAL                     | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA                 | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                          |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| Cool platinum blonde     | Level 9        | <b>9.2</b>                   | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Icy, silver-platinum result              |
| Pearl blonde toner       | Level 8        | <b>9.2</b>                   | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Sheer pearl gloss on lightened hair      |
| Violet-toned dark blonde | Level 6        | <b>7.2</b>                   | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Cool, dimensional dark blonde            |
| Silver grey gloss        | Level 9        | <b>10.2</b>                  | 5 Vol · 1:2  | Sheer silver-white tone on near-platinum |
| Grey blend iridescent    | Level 7        | <b>8.2 + 8.0 (1/2 + 1/2)</b> | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Soft iridescent grey blend               |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Using .2 on hair that still has strong orange tones (Level 6 and below). Orange + Violet = muddy brown. Remove orange with Ash first.
- Over-depositing violet on pale blonde. Hair will turn lavender. Use sheer concentrations — 5 Vol or dilute the formula.
- Using a dark .2 shade as a toner on Level 10 hair. Always use a Level 9 or 10 shade as a toner — never go darker than two levels below the hair.

### ★ Pro Tip

For the perfect platinum result, pre-tone at Level 10 with 10.2 at 5 Vol. Then follow with a final gloss of 10.1 mixed 1:2 to eliminate any remaining yellow while adding a mirror-like shine. Two-step toning is the secret to consistent, long-lasting platinum.



SOHO Results · Pearl platinum blonde · Foil formula: 10.80 Pearl Natural + 10.3 Gold · Global root shadow: 9.63 Violet-Gold + 9.80 Pearl Natural · By MOB Educator @shylasextonbeauty

## Gold

Code: **.3 / G** | Temperature: **Warm**

Gold is the warmth amplifier. Built on a pure yellow base, the .3 series enhances the natural golden pigments already present in the hair at the blonde levels. It does not fight underlying pigment — it embraces it, adding luminosity and a sun-kissed glow that looks effortlessly natural. Gold is the defining tone of the lived-in blonde aesthetic and works beautifully as a secondary modifier in almost any warm formula.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>NEUTRALIZES:</b></p> <p>Nothing — Gold is a warm tone that works with underlying pigment.</p> <p><b>ENHANCES:</b></p> <p>Golden warmth, luminosity, and natural sun-kissed dimension.</p> | <p><b>BEST LEVELS:</b></p> <p>Levels 6–10. Most flattering at Levels 7 and 8.</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Formulation Examples

| GOAL                     | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA               | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                       |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sun-kissed golden blonde | Level 7        | <b>8.3</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Warm, luminous golden blonde          |
| Warm blonde gloss        | Level 8        | <b>9.3</b>                 | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Rich golden gloss on lightened blonde |
| Golden brunette          | Level 5        | <b>6.3</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Warm, honey-toned dark blonde         |
| Copper-gold fashion      | Level 6        | <b>7.43</b>                | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Vibrant copper with golden depth      |
| Warm grey blend          | Level 7        | <b>8.3 + 8.0 (1/2+1/2)</b> | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Warm beige-blonde grey blend          |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Using Gold on a client who already has significant brassiness. Adding a warm tone to warm hair makes it more brassy, not less.
- Using Gold as a toner on freshly lightened hair that still shows orange. Gold will intensify the orange — use Ash first.
- Applying Gold on Level 4 and below. The underlying red-orange pigment will dominate and create a muddy, overly warm result.

### ★ Pro Tip

Gold shines brightest as a secondary tone. Try 8.13 (Ash primary, Gold secondary) for a cool blonde that still has warmth and life — the Ash neutralizes brassiness while the Gold prevents the result from going flat or grey.



## Copper

Code: .4 / C | Temperature: **Warm**

Copper is bold, fiery, and unforgettable. The .4 series is built on a pure orange base — one of the most visually impactful tone families in the SOHO line. At its richest, Copper creates stunning, vivid copper-red results. Used more subtly as a secondary tone it adds incredible warmth and dimension to brunettes and dark blondes. Because Copper works WITH the orange underlying pigment rather than against it, it performs best at Levels 5 through 7.

### NEUTRALIZES:

Nothing — Copper enhances and amplifies warm underlying pigment.

### ENHANCES:

Fiery copper, orange-red, and warm amber tones.

### BEST LEVELS:

Levels 5–8. Most vivid at Levels 6 and 7.

## Formulation Examples

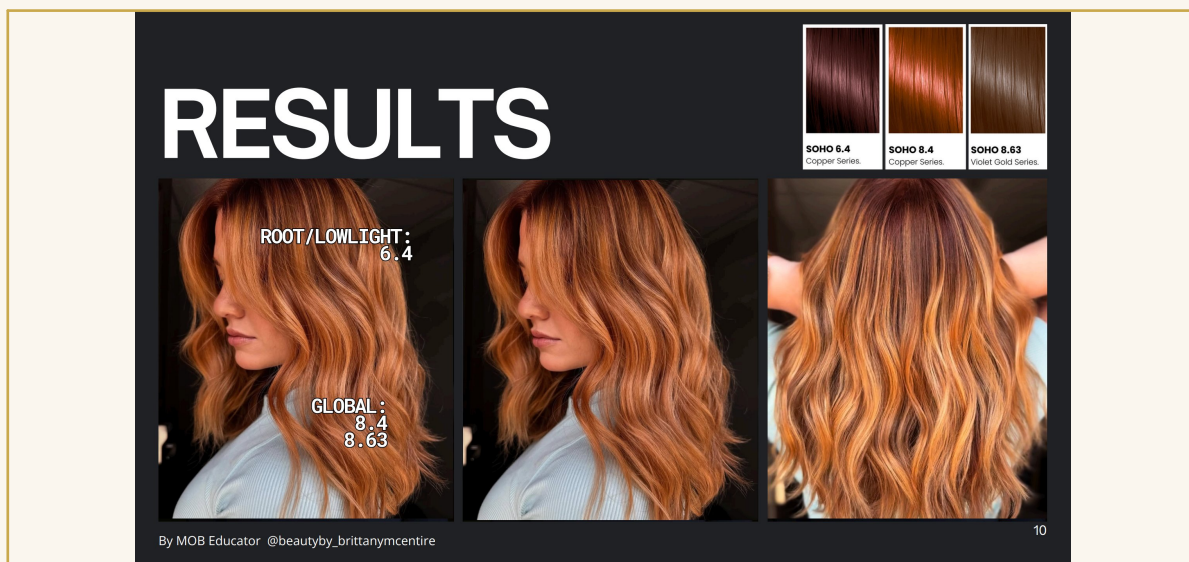
| GOAL                 | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA               | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                    |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Vivid copper fashion | Level 6        | <b>7.4</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Bold, vibrant copper-orange result |
| Warm copper brunette | Level 4        | <b>5.4</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Rich, warm copper-brown depth      |
| Copper-gold blonde   | Level 7        | <b>7.43</b>                | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Warm copper with golden softness   |
| Copper gloss refresh | Level 6        | <b>7.4</b>                 | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Vivid copper refresh on faded ends |
| Copper grey coverage | Level 5        | <b>5.0 + 6.4 (1/2+1/2)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Warm copper blonde, grey covered   |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Using Copper on dark Level 3–4 hair without pre-lifting. On dark bases, Copper will appear as a dull, muddy brown rather than vivid copper.
- Applying Copper as a toner on hair that still has blue or purple tones from a previous service. Blue + Orange = brown. Always remove previous tone first.
- Expecting Copper to last as long as cooler tones. Warm tones fade faster. Set client expectations and recommend a gloss refresh at 4–6 weeks.

### ★ Pro Tip

For the richest copper result, pre-lighten to a clean Level 7 orange-yellow before applying Copper. The pre-existing warm underlying pigment acts as a natural amplifier — your Copper will be more vivid and last significantly longer.



SOHO Results · Vivid copper balayage · Root/lowlight: 6.4 Copper Series · Global gloss: 8.4 + 8.63 Violet-Gold · By MOB Educator @beautyby\_brittanycentre



## Mahogany

Code: .5 / M | Temperature: Warm / Neutral

Mahogany is the most complex and nuanced tone in the SOHO line. Built on a red-violet base, it sits at the intersection of warm and cool — adding incredible richness, depth, and a multi-dimensional red-violet reflect that is impossible to achieve with a straight red or a straight brunette. Mahogany is the secret weapon for clients who want a rich brunette that has something special — a depth that catches the light and reveals its red-violet character only in certain conditions.

|                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>NEUTRALIZES:</b><br/>Subtle green tones. Softens flat or lifeless brunettes.</p> <p><b>ENHANCES:</b><br/>Red-violet depth, richness, and dimensional brunette complexity.</p> | <p><b>BEST LEVELS:</b><br/>Levels 3–6. Most dimensional at Levels 4 and 5.</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Formulation Examples

| GOAL                   | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA               | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                          |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------|
| Rich mahogany brunette | Level 3        | <b>4.5</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Deep, red-violet brunette with dimension |
| Mahogany medium brown  | Level 4        | <b>5.5</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Rich mahogany light brown                |
| Copper-mahogany        | Level 5        | <b>6.54</b>                | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Warm copper-mahogany dark blonde         |
| Mahogany gloss         | Level 4        | <b>5.5</b>                 | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Deep gloss refresh on brunette           |
| Grey coverage mahogany | Level 4        | <b>4.0 + 5.5 (1/2+1/2)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Mahogany brunette with full coverage     |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Using Mahogany alone on resistant grey. Without a Natural base anchor, the result will look translucent and red-toned on white strands.
- Applying Mahogany on Level 7+ hair. The red-violet base will appear too fashion-forward and bright on lighter levels — use Red (.6) instead.
- Mixing Mahogany with Ash. Red-violet + Blue-green = muddy. Never mix .5 and .1 in the same bowl.

### ★ Pro Tip

Mahogany is incredible as a secondary tone. Mix 5.35 (Mahogany primary, Red secondary) for a deeply dimensional auburn that has the warmth of red but the complexity and longevity of mahogany. It is one of the most requested results once clients see it.



## Red

Code: **.6 / R** | Temperature: **Warm**

Red is the most demanding tone family to formulate correctly — and the most rewarding when it is done right. The .6 series delivers pure, vivid, saturated red pigment. From deep garnet at the darker levels to bright, fire-engine red on lifted hair, the Red family requires careful attention to underlying pigment and a solid natural base anchor for lasting results. Red fades faster than any other tone family — but nothing in the salon creates more impact or more referrals.

### NEUTRALIZES:

Green tones (when used at correct level).

### ENHANCES:

Bold, vivid red. Deep auburn. Fire-engine red on blonde bases.

### BEST LEVELS:

Levels 4–8. Deepest at Levels 4–5. Most vivid at Levels 6–7.

## Formulation Examples

| GOAL                     | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA               | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                    |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Deep auburn red          | Level 4        | <b>5.6</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Rich, deep garnet-auburn           |
| Vivid fashion red        | Level 6        | <b>7.6</b>                 | 30 Vol · 1:1 | Bold, vivid red from Level 6 base  |
| Red-mahogany depth       | Level 3        | <b>4.56</b>                | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Deep, dimensional red-brunette     |
| Red gloss refresh        | Level 6        | <b>7.6</b>                 | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Vivid red refresh on faded ends    |
| Grey coverage red-auburn | Level 5        | <b>5.0 + 6.6 (1/2+1/2)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Auburn-red with full grey coverage |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Skipping the Natural base on grey clients. Red on white hair with no anchor will look neon and fade within days.
- Not managing client expectations on fade. Red molecules are the largest artificial dye molecules and escape the cuticle fastest. Book a gloss refresh at 4 weeks.
- Trying to achieve a bright red on Level 3 or below without pre-lifting. The result will be a subtle, barely-visible tint — not a true red.

### ★ Pro Tip

Fill before you formulate. If your client has previously lightened ends and natural roots, apply a filler (5.4 or 6.4) to the ends first at 5 Vol before the red formula. This pre-deposits warm pigment so the ends absorb and hold red color as evenly as the natural roots.



## Matte

Code: .7 | Temperature: **Cool**

Matte is the most misunderstood — and most underused — tone in professional hair color. Built on a green base, Matte sits directly opposite red on the color wheel, making it the only tone capable of truly neutralizing red and red-orange underlying pigments at the darker levels. In the SOHO system, Matte is also the key tone for creating the natural, flat grey coverage that mimics the look of organic, melanin-free silver hair — the matte grey coverage effect that clients increasingly request.

### NEUTRALIZES:

Red and red-orange underlying pigment (Levels 3–5).

### ENHANCES:

Flat, natural, cool brunettes. Matte grey coverage effect.

### BEST LEVELS:

Levels 3–6. Most powerful at Levels 3 and 4.

## Formulation Examples

| GOAL                | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA                | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                      |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cool flat brunette  | Level 4        | <b>5.7</b>                  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Flat, cool, natural-looking brown    |
| Matte ash brunette  | Level 5        | <b>6.17</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Cool brunette — Ash + Matte combined |
| Matte grey coverage | Level 5        | <b>5.00 + 5.7 (3/4+1/4)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Matte, natural-grey toned coverage   |
| Matte grey gloss    | Level 6        | <b>7.7</b>                  | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Flat, matte grey-brunette gloss      |
| Dark cool brunette  | Level 3        | <b>4.7</b>                  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Deep, red-free cool brunette         |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Using Matte on Level 7+ hair. At these levels the underlying pigment is yellow, not red. Matte will create a greenish-grey result.
- Over-concentrating Matte. A small amount goes a long way. Start with Matte as a secondary tone (.17 or .71) before using it as a primary.
- Using Matte on clients who want warmth. Matte is a neutralizer, not a fashion tone. If the client wants warmth, do not put Matte in the formula.

### ★ Pro Tip

For the most natural-looking matte grey coverage result on resistant grey, use 5.00 as your base anchor and add 5.7 as your fashion modifier at a 3:1 ratio. The Intense Natural provides the opacity while the Matte gives that flat, organic grey tone that looks like the client was born with silver hair.



## Blue / Pearl

Code: .8 | Temperature: Cool

The Blue/Pearl series is SOHO's most intensely cool tone family — the heavy artillery of anti-brassiness formulation. Built on a deep blue base, the .8 series is used for creating intensely deep, cool ash results on darker bases where standard Ash (.1) does not have enough canceling power. It also creates beautiful iridescent, pearl-toned grey coverage results — giving grey hair a luminous, almost holographic quality that clients describe as 'silver from the inside out'.

### NEUTRALIZES:

Intense orange on dark bases (Levels 3–5). Deep red-orange.

### ENHANCES:

Deep ash. Iridescent silver and pearl grey tones.

### BEST LEVELS:

Levels 3–6 for anti-brassiness. All levels for iridescent grey.

## Formulation Examples

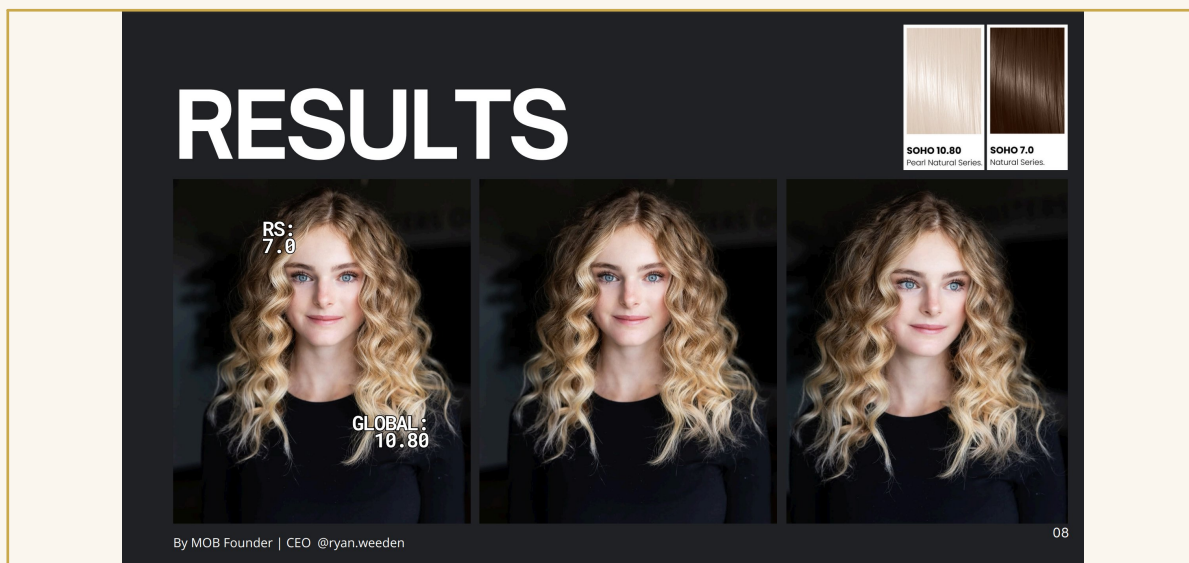
| GOAL                     | STARTING LEVEL | SOHO FORMULA                | DEV          | EXPECTED RESULT                     |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Deep blue-ash brunette   | Level 4        | <b>5.8</b>                  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Intensely cool, deep ash brunette   |
| Iridescent grey coverage | Level 6        | <b>6.00 + 7.8 (3/4+1/4)</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Pearl-toned, luminous grey coverage |
| Pearl grey gloss         | Level 7        | <b>8.8</b>                  | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Iridescent, holographic pearl grey  |
| Blue ash dark blonde     | Level 5        | <b>6.18</b>                 | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Very cool, smoky dark blonde        |
| Silver iridescent tone   | Level 8        | <b>9.8</b>                  | 5 Vol · 1:2  | Sheer, luminous silver-pearl toner  |

### ■ Common Mistakes

- Using .8 on warm-toned clients who are not ready for the intensity. Always do a strand test — Blue/Pearl is powerful and can read very cool on some skin tones.
- Applying Blue/Pearl on Level 7+ as a primary tone. At lighter levels the blue deposits too heavily and can appear dark grey. Use as a secondary modifier only at Levels 7+.
- Confusing Blue/Pearl (.8) with Violet/Pearl (.2). Blue neutralizes orange. Violet neutralizes yellow. Using the wrong one creates a muddy result. Never mix .8 and .2 in the same formula — they target different pigments and compete against each other, creating a flat, grey-brown result instead of a clean cool tone.

### ★ Pro Tip

For iridescent grey coverage that photographs like a magazine cover, try 7.00 + 8.8 at a 3:1 ratio with 20 Vol. The Intense Natural provides the opaque base while the Blue/Pearl wraps it in a luminous pearl shimmer that catches light differently at every angle. This is the formula that gets shared on social media.



SOHO Results · Dimensional blonde · Root shadow: 7.0 Natural Series · Global gloss: 10.80 Pearl Natural Series · By MOB Founder | CEO @ryan.weeden

#### Section 4 Summary — The Rules That Never Change

Cool tones cancel warm underlying pigment. Warm tones amplify it. Never mix a .5 with a .1. Never use a fashion tone alone on grey. Always anchor with Natural (.0) before adding a tone. Know your underlying pigment before you choose your tone. These four rules will make your color predictable every single time.

***"Every formula is a conversation between the chemistry and the hair. Your job is to know both sides."***

— Masters of Balayage

# The Shade-Shifting Developer Protocol

*One tube. Two completely different chemical functions. This is the feature that sets SOHO apart from every other color line.*

## 5.1 One Tube. Two Functions.

In a traditional salon, the color backbar requires two completely separate product lines. A full range of permanent color for lifting and grey coverage. A completely separate range of ammonia-free demi-permanent glosses for toning, refreshing, and glazing. That means double the inventory cost, double the storage space, and double the complexity at the mixing bowl.

SOHO eliminates this entirely. The same tube of SOHO permanent color performs both functions. The determining factor is not the product — it is the mixing ratio and the developer volume you choose.

| PERMANENT COLOR MODE   |                                                                                                         | DEMI-PERMANENT MODE    |                                                                                                      |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mixing Ratio</b>    | 1 part color : 1 part developer (1:1)                                                                   | <b>Mixing Ratio</b>    | 1 part color : 2 parts developer (1:2)                                                               |
| <b>Developer</b>       | 20, 30, or 40 Volume                                                                                    | <b>Developer</b>       | 5 or 10 Volume only                                                                                  |
| <b>What It Does</b>    | Opens the cuticle fully. Lifts natural melanin. Deposits permanent artificial color deep in the cortex. | <b>What It Does</b>    | Barely opens the cuticle. Zero lift. Deposits sheer color on the surface of the cortex.              |
| <b>Processing Time</b> | 35 minutes                                                                                              | <b>Processing Time</b> | 20 minutes                                                                                           |
| <b>Best For</b>        | Permanent color change. Grey coverage. Lifting 1–4 levels. Long-lasting results.                        | <b>Best For</b>        | Toning lightened hair. Refreshing faded color. Glazing for shine. Grey blending. Conditioning gloss. |

### Why This Works — The Chemistry

When you mix at 1:1 with high-volume developer, the ammonia in SOHO is concentrated enough to force the cuticle wide open and the peroxide is strong enough to destroy natural melanin. When you mix at 1:2 with 5 or 10 Vol, you dilute the ammonia so heavily that the cuticle barely opens — and the peroxide is too weak to touch the melanin. The same chemistry. Completely different results. The ratio is the switch.

## 5.2 Permanent Color — Step by Step

Use permanent mode any time you need to change the natural base, cover grey, or lift the hair. Follow these steps every time for consistent, predictable results.

1

### Diagnose the natural level and grey percentage

Look at dry hair in good light. Identify the natural base level (1–10) and estimate the percentage of grey or non-pigmented hair. This determines your formula and developer choice.

2

### Choose your target level and tone

Decide how light or dark you want to go and which SOHO tone family delivers the result. Remember to account for the underlying pigment that will be exposed at the target level.

3

### Select the correct developer volume

20 Vol for 1–2 levels of lift or grey coverage. 30 Vol for 2–3 levels. 40 Vol for 3–4 levels. When in doubt, use 20 Vol — it is the most versatile and forgiving.

4

### Mix at 1:1 in a non-metallic bowl

Measure 1 oz of SOHO color cream and 1 oz of developer. Mix thoroughly until completely combined with no streaks. Apply immediately — do not let the mixture sit before applying.

5

### Apply and process for 35 minutes

Apply to dry hair starting at the area with the most grey or the most resistant hair. Set a timer for 35 full minutes. Do not rinse early — the dye molecules need the full time to polymerize and lock inside the cortex.

6

### Emulsify and rinse thoroughly

Before rinsing, add a small amount of water to the hair and massage gently for 30 seconds. This emulsifies the color and helps remove it cleanly. Rinse until the water runs clear, then shampoo and condition.

### Permanent Color — Full Mixing Reference

| DESIRED RESULT            | COLOR     | DEV VOL | RATIO | PROCESS TIME | LEVELS OF LIFT |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------|-------|--------------|----------------|
| Grey Coverage             | 1 oz SOHO | 20 Vol  | 1:1   | 35 min       | 0–1            |
| Permanent • Gentle Lift   | 1 oz SOHO | 20 Vol  | 1:1   | 35 min       | 1–2            |
| Permanent • Moderate Lift | 1 oz SOHO | 30 Vol  | 1:1   | 35 min       | 2–3            |
| Permanent • Maximum Lift  | 1 oz SOHO | 40 Vol  | 1:1   | 35 min       | 3–4            |

## 5.3 Demi-Permanent Gloss — Step by Step

Use demi-permanent mode for toning, glazing, refreshing faded color, grey blending, and any service where you want shine and tone without permanently altering the natural base.

1

### Assess the current hair condition

Demi mode works on both natural and previously colored hair. Check the porosity — highly porous hair will absorb demi color faster and more intensely. On porous ends, consider diluting further or reducing processing time by 5 minutes.

2

### Choose your SOHO shade and developer volume

5 Vol for the sheerest, most conditioning result — ideal for toning platinum blonde or doing a final gloss. 10 Vol for slightly richer deposit — ideal for refreshing faded ends or grey blending.

3

### Mix at 1:2 in a non-metallic bowl

Measure 1 oz of SOHO color cream and 2 oz of developer. The doubled developer is what dilutes the ammonia and shifts the formula from permanent to demi-permanent. Mix thoroughly until smooth and fluid.

4

### Apply to damp or dry hair

Demi mode can be applied to slightly damp hair for more even distribution, or dry hair for more intense deposit. Work through the hair in sections from roots to ends. Comb through for even saturation.

5

### Process for 20 minutes — no heat required

Set a timer for 20 minutes. No heat needed — room temperature processing is sufficient. Do not exceed 20 minutes or the color may deposit unevenly on porous ends.

6

### Rinse, condition, and style

Rinse thoroughly until the water runs clear. Always follow with a conditioning treatment — the low-volume developer in demi mode is very gentle, but a finishing conditioner seals the cuticle and maximizes shine.

### Demi-Permanent Gloss — Full Mixing Reference

| SERVICE TYPE        | COLOR     | DEV VOL | RATIO | PROCESS TIME | BEST FOR                                               |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|-------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Sheer Toner / Gloss | 1 oz SOHO | 5 Vol   | 1:2   | 20 min       | Toning platinum. Final shine gloss. Very sheer result. |
| Deposit / Refresh   | 1 oz SOHO | 10 Vol  | 1:2   | 20 min       | Refreshing faded ends. Grey blending. Color-melting.   |

## 5.4 When to Use Which Mode

Choosing between permanent and demi mode is a clinical decision based on what the hair needs — not just what the client wants. Use this guide at every consultation.

| CLIENT SITUATION                    | MODE TO USE      | DEV                    | REASON                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grey hair present — any percentage  | <b>Permanent</b> | 20 Vol                 | Grey hair requires cuticle to open fully for pigment to penetrate and cover.     |
| Natural hair — wants a color change | <b>Permanent</b> | 20–40 Vol              | Permanent change requires full cuticle opening and melanin oxidation.            |
| Previously lightened — needs toning | <b>Demi</b>      | 5–10 Vol               | Lightened hair is porous. Demi deposits perfectly without over-darkening.        |
| Faded ends — needs refreshing       | <b>Demi</b>      | 10 Vol                 | Adds richness and shine to faded ends without lifting new growth.                |
| Grey blending — soften root line    | <b>Demi</b>      | 10 Vol                 | Translucent deposit softens the grey-to-color contrast without full coverage.    |
| Post-lightening gloss — add shine   | <b>Demi</b>      | 5 Vol                  | Seals the cuticle after bleach, adding conditioning and shine in one step.       |
| Corrective service — darkening back | <b>Permanent</b> | 20 Vol                 | Filling and re-darkening requires permanent color to penetrate the cortex fully. |
| Color-melt root to end blending     | <b>Both</b>      | Perm roots / Demi ends | Permanent at roots for grey coverage. Demi on ends for a soft, blended melt.     |

## 5.5 The Salon Inventory Advantage

Beyond the chemistry, the shade-shifting protocol delivers a real, measurable financial advantage for every salon that uses SOHO.

|                         | TRADITIONAL BACKBAR            | SOHO BACKBAR                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Permanent Color Line    | Full separate range required   | SOHO — one range covers both      |
| Demi / Gloss Line       | Full separate range required   | Same SOHO tubes · different ratio |
| Number of Product Lines | 2 complete lines               | 1 complete line                   |
| Inventory Cost          | Double                         | Reduced by up to 50%              |
| Storage Space           | Double                         | Half the space needed             |
| Formulation Complexity  | Two different systems to learn | One system. Two modes.            |

## 5.6 Full Master Developer Chart

This is your complete at-a-glance reference for every SOHO developer combination. Print this page and keep it at your mixing station.

| MODE | RATIO | DEV    | H2O2 % | LIFT    | TIME   | PRIMARY USE                                            |
|------|-------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| DEMI | 1:2   | 5 Vol  | 1.5%   | None    | 20 min | Sheer toner. Shine gloss. Platinum toning.             |
|      | 1:2   | 10 Vol | 3%     | None    | 20 min | Color refresh. Grey blend. Color melt on ends.         |
| PERM | 1:1   | 20 Vol | 6%     | 1–2 Lvl | 35 min | Grey coverage. Gentle lift. Most common service.       |
|      | 1:1   | 30 Vol | 9%     | 2–3 Lvl | 35 min | Moderate lift on natural bases. Dark to medium blonde. |
|      | 1:1   | 40 Vol | 12%    | 3–4 Lvl | 35 min | Maximum lift. Use with care. Not for grey coverage.    |

### The Only Two Rules You Need to Memorize

Rule 1: If the cuticle needs to open fully — use 1:1 with 20, 30, or 40 Vol. Rule 2: If the cuticle should stay mostly closed — use 1:2 with 5 or 10 Vol. Everything else in this section is just detail around those two rules.

# Grey Coverage Mastery

*Grey coverage is the most requested service in the salon — and the most technically demanding. Master this section and you will never have a failed grey service again.*

## 6.1 The Science of Grey Hair — Explained Simply

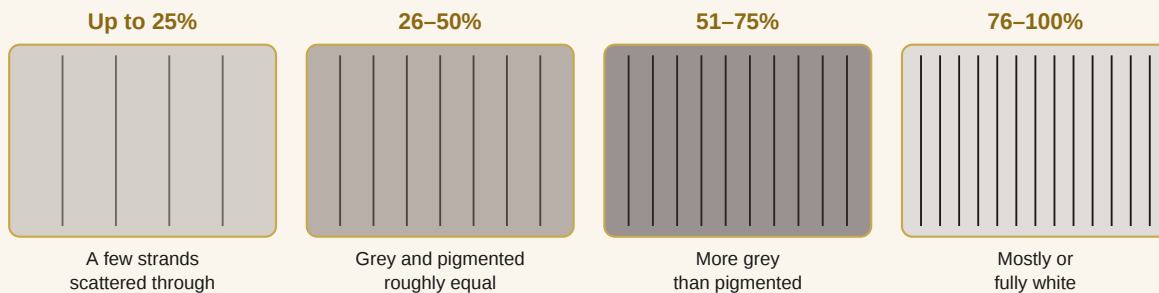
Hair does not turn grey overnight. It is a gradual biological process called achromotrichia — the slow failure of the melanocyte cells inside the hair follicle. As these cells stop producing melanin, new hairs grow in without pigment. Because there is no melanin to absorb light, the unpigmented strand reflects all wavelengths of light at once — making it appear white or silver.

The absence of melanin also changes the physical structure of the hair. Grey hair tends to be coarser, drier, and more resistant to chemical penetration than pigmented hair. The cuticle sits tighter and is harder to open. This is why grey hair requires a specific approach — the same formula that works beautifully on pigmented hair may give translucent, faded results on white strands.

| CHARACTERISTIC   | PIGMENTED HAIR                   | GREY / WHITE HAIR                                  |
|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Melanin Content  | Present — determines color       | Absent — transparent cortex                        |
| Cuticle          | Normal — opens easily            | Tight and resistant — harder to penetrate          |
| Texture          | Smooth and pliable               | Often coarse, wiry, and dry                        |
| Color Absorption | Reliable and predictable         | Can be uneven — needs anchoring with Natural base  |
| Required Formula | Fashion tone alone is sufficient | Must include Natural (.0) or Intense Natural (.00) |

## 6.2 Diagnosing Grey Percentage

Before you mix a single gram of color, you must accurately assess how much of the client's hair is non-pigmented. This single number determines the entire formulation — how much Natural base to use, which series (.0 vs .00) to reach for, and which application method is most appropriate.



### How to Assess Grey Percentage at the Chair

#### Part the hair in multiple places.

Do not rely on one section. Part at the crown, temples, and nape. Grey distribution is rarely uniform — some areas may be 80% grey while others are only 20%.

#### Look at the root zone only.

Previously colored lengths will not give you accurate information. Focus on the first inch of new growth at the scalp.

#### Estimate the ratio of white to pigmented strands.

You do not need to be exact — work in the four zones shown above: up to 25%, 26–50%, 51–75%, and 76–100%. When unsure, round up to the next zone for safety.

#### Note where the grey is concentrated.

Many clients are greyer at the temples than the crown. If distribution is very uneven, note each zone separately and consider adjusting the formula for those areas.

## 6.3 The SOHO Grey Coverage Mixing Algorithm

This is the most important formula in grey coverage. Once you understand this algorithm, you can formulate any grey coverage result with complete confidence — at any level, with any tone.

The rule is simple: the more grey the client has, the more Natural base you need in the bowl. The Natural base provides the opacity — the fashion tone provides the color. They work together.

| GREY %      | NATURAL BASE<br>(.0 or .00) | FASHION TONE   | DEV          | PROCESS TIME |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Up to 25%   | 1/4 oz (7 ml)               | 3/4 oz (22 ml) | 20 Vol · 1:1 | 35 min       |
| 26% to 50%  | 1/2 oz (15 ml)              | 1/2 oz (15 ml) | 20 Vol · 1:1 | 35 min       |
| 51% to 100% | 3/4 oz (22 ml)              | 1/4 oz (7 ml)  | 20 Vol · 1:1 | 35 min       |

### The .0 vs .00 Decision

Use standard Natural (.0) for clients with fine to medium hair and grey percentages up to 50%. The result will be dimensional and slightly translucent — natural looking. Use Intense Natural (.00) for clients with 50% or more grey, coarse or wiry grey hair, or any hair that has resisted coverage in the past. The double-pigment load guarantees full opacity. Critical reminder: When using .00, always formulate one full level lighter than your target. A 7.00 will process to a visual Level 6. Compensate before you mix.

## OPAQUE GREY COVERAGE — 100% Concealment



Opaque coverage is the traditional, full-concealment approach. Every grey strand is completely hidden under a dense, uniform layer of artificial color. The result is a solid, polished base with no grey visible at any angle. This method requires retouching every 4–6 weeks as new growth appears.

**Best For:** Clients who want zero grey visible. Clients with professional or formal lifestyles. Any client with 25–100% grey who wants full concealment.

### Formulation Guide

| GREY %    | NATURAL BASE      | FASHION TONE               | DEV          | RESULT                                    |
|-----------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Up to 25% | <b>1/4 oz .0</b>  | <b>3/4 oz fashion tone</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Natural, dimensional result with coverage |
| 26–50%    | <b>1/2 oz .0</b>  | <b>1/2 oz fashion tone</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Balanced opacity with color expression    |
| 51–100%   | <b>3/4 oz .00</b> | <b>1/4 oz fashion tone</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Maximum opacity — full concealment        |

### Application Steps

**1**

#### Section the hair into 4 quadrants.

Clip each section out of the way. This keeps application organized and ensures even saturation from root to mid-length.

**2**

#### Apply to the most resistant area first.

Temples and hairline grey is usually the most resistant. Start there so it gets the maximum processing time.

**3**

#### Work systematically through all 4 sections.

Apply root to mid-shaft only — do not pull through to the ends on a retouch service unless the ends have faded significantly.

**4**

#### Process for the full 35 minutes.

Do not rinse early. Grey hair needs the complete time for dye polymerization to finish. A 5-minute shortcut can mean 30% less coverage.

**5**

#### Emulsify before rinsing.

Add water to the hair and massage for 30 seconds before rinsing. This removes residual color cleanly and helps seal the cuticle.

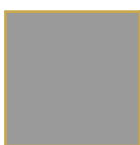
6

**Follow with an acidic conditioning treatment.**

The permanent process opens the cuticle. An acidic conditioner closes it back down, locks in the color, and restores shine.

**★ Pro Tip**

For clients who struggle with stubborn temple grey, apply to that area first with no heat — then apply the rest of the head and add gentle heat for the final 10 minutes. The temples get maximum processing time while the heat assists the rest of the head.

**MATTE GREY COVERAGE — Natural Flat Silver Tone**

Matte grey coverage creates a result that looks like the client was born with beautiful silver hair. Rather than covering the grey with a fashion color, the formula enhances and refines it — using the Matte (.7) tone to eliminate any yellow or warm cast from the white strands and create a flat, cool, perfectly natural silver result. This is the most low-maintenance grey service available.

**Best For:** Clients who are embracing their grey and want it to look intentional. Clients transitioning away from color. Silver, platinum, or natural-grey aesthetic clients.

**Formulation Guide**

| GREY %     | NATURAL BASE      | FASHION TONE                    | DEV          | RESULT                               |
|------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Up to 25%  | <b>1/4 oz .0</b>  | <b>3/4 oz fashion tone + .7</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Soft, natural silver with cool tone  |
| 26–50%     | <b>1/2 oz .0</b>  | <b>1/2 oz .7 or .17</b>         | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Balanced cool-grey with matte finish |
| 51–100%    | <b>3/4 oz .00</b> | <b>1/4 oz .7</b>                | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Full matte silver — opaque and flat  |
| Gloss only | <b>None</b>       | <b>Shade .7 or .17</b>          | 10 Vol · 1:2 | Refreshes and cools existing grey    |

**Application Steps**

1

**Assess the warmth of the existing grey.**

Some grey hair has a yellow or warm cast caused by product buildup, hard water, or sun exposure. The more yellow the grey, the more Matte (.7) you will need in the formula.

2

**Choose the correct Natural base level.**

Match the Natural base level to the client's desired depth. For a true silver result, use a Level 9 or 10 Natural base. For a darker pewter result, use Level 7 or 8.

3

**Add Matte (.7) as the fashion modifier.**

For a subtle cool tone, use .17 (Ash primary, Matte secondary). For a stronger flat-silver result, use .7 as the primary tone at a 3:1 ratio with the Natural base.

4

**Apply and process for 35 minutes.**

Same application as standard opaque coverage. Ensure full saturation at the roots for even results.

5

**Finish with a toning gloss if needed.**

After rinsing the permanent formula, assess the result. If any warmth remains, follow with a 10.7 or 10.17 demi gloss at 5 Vol for 20 minutes to perfect the cool tone.

**★ Pro Tip**

The secret to the most beautiful matte grey result is layering. Use permanent .00 + .7 for the root coverage, then follow with a demi gloss of 10.17 at 5 Vol pulled through the lengths and ends. The demi layer unifies the tone from root to tip and adds a conditioning shine that makes the grey look intentional and luxurious.

**IRIDESCENT GREY COVERAGE — Luminous Pearl Silver**

Iridescent grey coverage is the most requested premium grey service in modern salons. It creates a result that appears to shift and shimmer in different lighting — sometimes silver, sometimes pearl, sometimes with a whisper of violet or blue. The key is using the Blue/Pearl (.8) or Violet/Pearl (.2) family to wrap the grey in a luminous, holographic quality that clients describe as silver from the inside out. This result photographs beautifully and generates enormous referral traffic.

**Best For:** Clients who want their grey to look high-end and intentional. Silver, pearl, and platinum aesthetic clients. Any client who wants a maintenance-friendly, dimensional result.

**Formulation Guide**

| GREY %     | NATURAL BASE      | FASHION TONE           | DEV          | RESULT                                 |
|------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------|
| Up to 25%  | <b>1/4 oz .0</b>  | <b>3/4 oz .8 or .2</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Soft iridescent shimmer on light grey  |
| 26–50%     | <b>1/2 oz .00</b> | <b>1/2 oz .8 or .2</b> | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Balanced pearl-silver with luminosity  |
| 51–100%    | <b>3/4 oz .00</b> | <b>1/4 oz .8</b>       | 20 Vol · 1:1 | Full iridescent opaque silver coverage |
| Gloss only | <b>None</b>       | <b>9.2 or 10.8</b>     | 5 Vol · 1:2  | Pearl shimmer gloss — finish service   |

## Application Steps

1

### Pre-assess for yellow tone in the grey.

Yellow grey needs Violet (.2) to neutralize. Neutral or cool grey responds best to Blue/Pearl (.8). Choose your tonal modifier based on what you see at the roots.

2

### Build the formula using .00 for 50%+ grey.

The Intense Natural (.00) provides the opaque base. The .8 or .2 modifier wraps it in iridescent shimmer. The ratio is 3/4 oz .00 to 1/4 oz of your pearl modifier.

3

### Apply from the most resistant area inward.

Temples and hairline first — these areas are typically the whitest and most resistant. Ensure thorough saturation.

4

### Process for the full 35 minutes.

Do not rush this service. The pearl pigments need time to fully polymerize inside the cortex to achieve the iridescent effect.

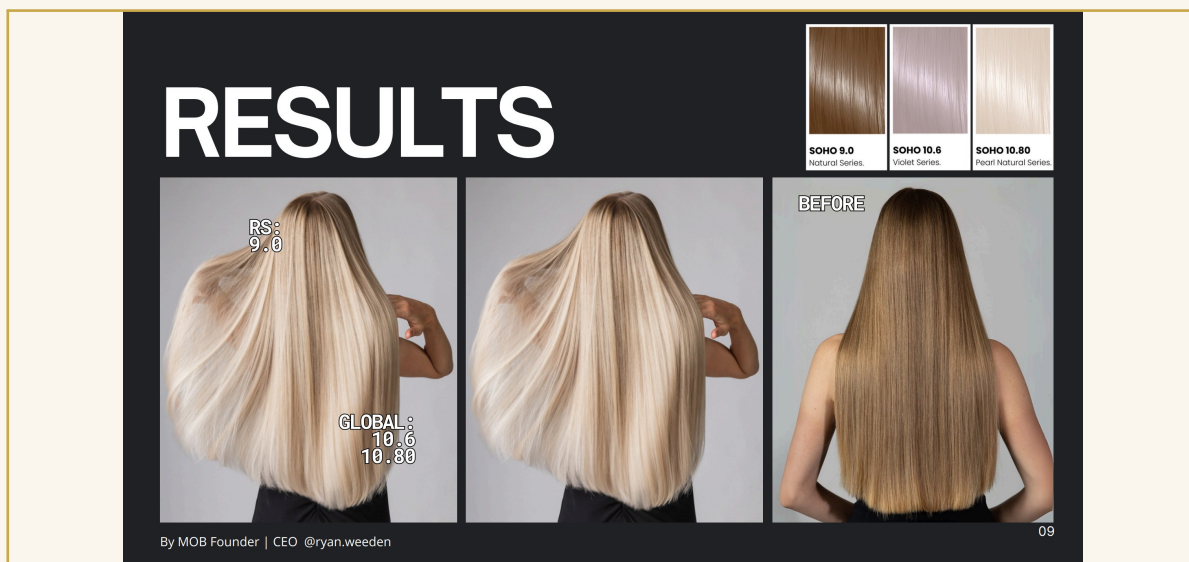
5

### Finish with a pearl gloss.

After rinsing the permanent formula, dry the hair briefly and assess the tone. Apply a final 10.2 or 10.8 demi gloss at 5 Vol for 15 minutes. This is what creates the signature 'lit from within' shimmer that makes this result so striking.

#### ★ Pro Tip

The two-step finish is the secret to truly stunning iridescent grey. Permanent formula at the roots for coverage, then a 10.8 demi gloss pulled through the entire head at 5 Vol for the final 15 minutes. The gloss layer creates a unified, luminous surface that catches light differently at every angle. Take a photo — your client will share it everywhere.



SOHO Results · Platinum transformation (before shown right) · Root shadow: 9.0 Natural Series · Global gloss: 10.6 Violet Series + 10.80 Pearl Natural · By MOB Founder | CEO @ryan.weeden

## 6.7 Grey Blending vs. Full Coverage

Not every grey client wants full concealment. Grey blending has surged in popularity as clients increasingly seek lower-maintenance, more natural results. Understanding when to recommend each approach is as important as knowing how to execute it.

|                     | FULL COVERAGE                      | GREY BLENDING                                           |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>What It Does</b> | Hides all grey completely          | Softens grey into the color — makes it look intentional |
| <b>Maintenance</b>  | Every 4–6 weeks — strict           | Every 10–16 weeks — flexible                            |
| <b>Best For</b>     | Clients who want zero grey visible | Clients who want low maintenance and a natural result   |
| <b>Grey %</b>       | Works at any percentage            | Works best at 25–75% grey                               |
| <b>SOHO Mode</b>    | Permanent 1:1 — 20 Vol             | Demi 1:2 — 10 Vol for blending gloss                    |
| <b>Grow-Out</b>     | Harsh line of demarcation          | Soft, diffused root — barely visible                    |
| <b>Revenue</b>      | High frequency, lower ticket       | Lower frequency, higher ticket per visit                |

### The Grey Blending Application Sequence

For clients who want dimensional grey blending with a lived-in finish, follow this optimized sequence. The order matters.

1

**Execute balayage or babylight highlights first.**

Work on dry, uncolored hair. Paint dimensional brightness through the mid-lengths and ends using bleach or a high-lift color. The lightened pieces will weave between the grey strands and create the blended, dimensional effect.

2

**Process and rinse the lightening service completely.**

Rinse, shampoo, and dry the hair thoroughly before moving to the color step. Do not apply permanent root color over wet hair.

3

**Apply permanent grey coverage to the root zone only.**

Mix the appropriate formula from the mixing algorithm above. Apply only to the root area — where the grey lives. Do not pull through the lightened lengths.

4

**Process roots for 35 minutes.**

Full processing time is non-negotiable for grey coverage. The lightened ends require no additional processing — they are already at the target level.

5

**Apply a demi color-melt gloss to the ends.**

While the roots are still processing (final 10–15 minutes) or after rinsing, apply a demi formula at 10 Vol pulled through the mid-lengths and ends. This melts the root color into the lightened pieces and creates a seamless gradient.

6

**Rinse and finish.**

Rinse thoroughly, condition, and style. The result is a multi-dimensional, grown-in color that disguises the grey line of demarcation and allows the client to stretch their next appointment significantly.

**Section 6 Summary — The Four Principles of Grey Coverage**

1. Always anchor with Natural (.0) or Intense Natural (.00). No Natural base = no coverage. 2. Match the Natural series to the grey percentage. More grey = more Natural base in the bowl. 3. When using .00, formulate one level lighter than target. Double pigment = darker result than the label suggests. 4. Never rush the processing time. Grey hair needs every one of those 35 minutes. A 5-minute shortcut can ruin the entire service.

***"Grey is not the absence of beauty. In the right hands, it is the most luxurious color in the salon."***

— Masters of Balayage

# Client Consultation Guide

*The best formula in the world fails if the consultation does not set the right expectations. This section gives you the exact words to use at the chair — so every client leaves informed, excited, and ready to rebook.*

## 7.1 How to Diagnose Hair at the Chair

Before you say a single word about color, spend two minutes with your hands in the client's hair. What you feel and see in those two minutes tells you more than any intake form.

| WHAT TO CHECK            | HOW TO CHECK IT                                               | WHAT IT TELLS YOU                                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Natural Level</b>     | Part the hair and look at the root zone in good light         | Starting point for formulation and lift calculation               |
| <b>Grey Percentage</b>   | Check multiple parts — crown, temples, nape                   | How much Natural base to use in the formula                       |
| <b>Porosity</b>          | Slide fingers up a strand from tip to root. Rough = porous    | Porous hair absorbs faster — may need less processing time        |
| <b>Texture / Density</b> | Feel the thickness of individual strands and overall fullness | Fine hair lifts faster. Coarse grey needs .00 and full 35 min     |
| <b>Existing Color</b>    | Ask when they last colored. Check for line of demarcation     | Determines if a filler, corrective, or standard service is needed |
| <b>Scalp Condition</b>   | Gently check for irritation, sensitivity, or open wounds      | Determines if chemical service is safe to proceed                 |

## 7.2 The 7 Questions to Ask Every Color Client

These seven questions give you every piece of information you need to formulate correctly and set the right expectations. Ask them in this order — each one builds on the last.

### Q1: What is your color goal today?

Let the client speak first. Do not suggest a result before you hear theirs. Listen for keywords: natural, bold, low maintenance, grey coverage, lighter, darker.

### Q2: Have you colored your hair before? When was the last service?

Previous color history determines whether you need a strand test, a filler, or a corrective approach. Never skip this question.

### Q3: How much maintenance are you willing to do?

This is the most important lifestyle question. A client who says 'I come in every 4 weeks' can handle full opaque grey coverage. A client who says 'I come in twice a year' needs grey blending.

**Q4: Have you ever had a reaction to hair color?**

Always ask. If yes, a patch test is mandatory 48 hours before the service. SOHO is PPD-free, but this question protects both the client and you.

**Q5: What did you not like about your last color?**

This tells you what to avoid. Too brassy, too dark, too flat, faded too fast — every complaint is a formulation clue.

**Q6: Do you have any photos of what you are hoping to achieve?**

Photos eliminate misunderstandings. Always ask. When a client shows you a photo, identify the level and tone first — then explain how you will get there with SOHO.

**Q7: How does your hair normally behave with color — does it fade fast?**

Clients who know their hair fades fast often have porous hair. This tells you to use a deeper shade or recommend a take-home color-safe maintenance routine.

## 7.3 Word-for-Word Consultation Scripts

These scripts are ready to use exactly as written. Adapt the tone to match your personality — but keep the key information the same. Every script explains the service, the process, and what the client can expect in plain, confident language.

### **SCENARIO: Client wants to cover grey — first time**

*"I can see you have some beautiful silver coming through. What I am going to do is mix a formula specifically designed to cover every strand completely. I use a color line called SOHO — it has no PPD, which is the ingredient that causes most reactions, so it is much gentler on the scalp. The formula I use includes a natural base that locks the color in and makes it last. We will process for 35 minutes and you will leave here with full coverage that should look great for four to six weeks."*

### **SCENARIO: Client wants grey blending — low maintenance**

*"What you are describing is what we call grey blending — and honestly it is one of my favorite services. Instead of covering the grey, we are going to make it look like it belongs there. I will weave some soft highlights through the hair so the grey diffuses into the color rather than creating a harsh line. The best part is you can stretch your appointments to every three or four months instead of every six weeks. The grow-out looks intentional — not like you missed an appointment."*

### **SCENARIO: Client is concerned about damage**

*"That is a totally valid concern and I want to address it directly. The color I use — SOHO — is formulated without the harsh chemical that causes most of the damage in traditional color. It also has meadowfoam seed oil and amino acids built right into every tube, so while the color is processing it is actually conditioning the hair at the same time. Most clients tell me their hair feels better after a SOHO service than it did before they sat in the chair."*

### **SCENARIO: Client wants warmer color**

*"Absolutely — warm tones are beautiful on you. What I am going to do is use a copper and gold formula that works with your natural underlying pigment rather than against it. Because SOHO has a built-in base that handles any brassiness, your warm tones are going to look rich and intentional — not brassy or orange. The warmth will be controlled and flattering. Just keep in mind that warm tones are the most vibrant when they are fresh, so I will recommend a gloss refresh at about six weeks to keep it looking exactly like this."*

**SCENARIO: Client wants cooler / ashier color**

*"Cool tones are very much having a moment and they look amazing on the right skin tone — which you have. Here is what I want you to know: I use a color that has a blue-violet base built into every shade, so it is already working against brassiness before I even add an ash tone to the formula. The result is going to be a really clean, cool, modern color — not flat or grey-looking, but genuinely cool and dimensional. It will catch the light beautifully."*

**SCENARIO: Client asking about the difference between permanent and gloss**

*"Great question — and it is actually one of the things I love about this color line. The same tube of color can do both. When I mix it one way — at a higher developer — it is a permanent color that opens the hair and makes a lasting change. When I mix it at a lower developer with more fluid, it becomes a demi-permanent gloss — it deposits a sheer layer of color and shine without permanently altering anything. So if you want to try a tone before committing to it, we can do a gloss first and see how you feel."*

## 7.4 Setting Realistic Expectations

Managing expectations is not about lowering them — it is about making sure what the client imagines and what chemistry can deliver are the same thing. Here is how to handle the most common expectation gaps.

| CLIENT EXPECTATION                                               | THE REALITY                                          | WHAT TO SAY                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'I want to go from Level 3 to platinum in one visit'             | Not possible safely. Multi-session process required. | 'I want to get you there beautifully and safely — that means a plan across a few visits. Rushing this causes breakage and we will both be disappointed.'                                                       |
| 'I want my grey covered but I only want to come in twice a year' | Full opaque coverage needs 4–6 week maintenance.     | 'For that schedule, grey blending is actually a better fit. It softens the grey so the grow-out looks intentional — not like a missed appointment.'                                                            |
| 'I want the exact same shade as this photo'                      | Results vary by starting level and hair history.     | 'This is a beautiful reference. I can absolutely get you in this direction — your starting point means we may land slightly warmer or lighter, but the overall feel will be very close.'                       |
| 'My last color faded in two weeks'                               | Likely porous hair or warm tones. Needs managing.    | 'Porous hair does fade faster — that is chemistry, not the stylist. I am going to formulate deeper than your target level and send you home with a color-safe shampoo. That will get you at least four weeks.' |

### The Most Important Thing You Can Say

At the end of every consultation, say this: 'Based on everything you have told me and what I can see in your hair, here is exactly what I am going to do and why — and here is what you can expect to see when you leave today.' That one sentence builds more trust than any amount of product knowledge.

## Quick Reference Charts

*Print these pages and keep them at your mixing station. Everything you need for every SOHO service — at a glance.*

### 8.1 Master Developer & Mixing Chart

| MODE | RATIO | DEV    | LIFT    | TIME   | USE WHEN...                                     |
|------|-------|--------|---------|--------|-------------------------------------------------|
| DEMI | 1:2   | 5 Vol  | None    | 20 min | Sheer toner, shine gloss, platinum toning       |
| DEMI | 1:2   | 10 Vol | None    | 20 min | Color refresh, grey blend, color melt on ends   |
| PERM | 1:1   | 20 Vol | 1–2 Lvl | 35 min | Grey coverage, gentle lift, most common service |
| PERM | 1:1   | 30 Vol | 2–3 Lvl | 35 min | Moderate lift, dark to medium blonde            |
| PERM | 1:1   | 40 Vol | 3–4 Lvl | 35 min | Maximum lift — use with caution, not for grey   |

## 8.2 Grey Coverage Mixing Algorithm

| GREY %    | NATURAL BASE | FASHION TONE | SERIES TO USE | DEV          | TIME   |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------|
| Up to 25% | 1/4 oz       | 3/4 oz       | Standard .0   | 20 Vol · 1:1 | 35 min |
| 26–50%    | 1/2 oz       | 1/2 oz       | Standard .0   | 20 Vol · 1:1 | 35 min |
| 51–100%   | 3/4 oz       | 1/4 oz       | Intense .00   | 20 Vol · 1:1 | 35 min |

### Remember:

When using Intense Natural (.00) — always formulate ONE FULL LEVEL LIGHTER than your target. The double pigmentation processes darker than the label. A 7.00 = visual Level 6 result.

## 8.3 Underlying Pigment Neutralization Cheat Sheet

| LEVEL | UNDERLYING PIGMENT     | NEUTRALIZE WITH    | ENHANCE WITH                |
|-------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1–3   | Deep Red / Red-Crimson | .7 Matte           | .6 Red · .5 Mahogany        |
| 4     | Red-Orange             | .7 Matte + .1 Ash  | .4 Copper · .5 Mahogany     |
| 5     | Pure Orange            | .1 Ash             | .4 Copper · .43 Copper-Gold |
| 6     | Orange-Yellow          | .1 Ash + .2 Violet | .3 Gold · .43 Copper-Gold   |
| 7     | Yellow-Orange          | .2 Violet + .1 Ash | .3 Gold · .4 Copper         |
| 8     | Pure Yellow            | .2 Violet / Pearl  | .3 Gold                     |
| 9     | Light Yellow           | .2 Violet / Pearl  | .3 Gold · .0 Natural        |
| 10    | Pale Yellow            | Sheer .2 at 5 Vol  | .0 Natural Platinum         |

## 8.4 Tone Family Quick Reference

| CODE | STONE           | TEMP    | NEUTRALIZES        | BEST LEVELS | NEVER MIX WITH         |
|------|-----------------|---------|--------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| .0   | Natural         | Neutral | Nothing — balanced | All         | Nothing — universal    |
| .00  | Intense Natural | Neutral | Nothing — balanced | All         | Do not use at 1:2 demi |
| .1   | Ash             | Cool    | Orange (Lvl 4–6)   | 4–8         | .5 Mahogany            |

|    |                       |      |                      |      |                            |
|----|-----------------------|------|----------------------|------|----------------------------|
| .2 | <b>Violet / Pearl</b> | Cool | Yellow (Lvl 7–10)    | 7–10 | Levels 6 and below         |
| .3 | <b>Gold</b>           | Warm | Enhances warmth      | 6–10 | Orange/brassy hair         |
| .4 | <b>Copper</b>         | Warm | Enhances warmth      | 5–8  | Blue/violet previous color |
| .5 | <b>Mahogany</b>       | Warm | Subtle green         | 3–6  | .1 Ash — creates mud       |
| .6 | <b>Red</b>            | Warm | Green                | 4–8  | No anchor on grey hair     |
| .7 | <b>Matte</b>          | Cool | Red (Lvl 3–5)        | 3–6  | Levels 7+ — turns green    |
| .8 | <b>Blue / Pearl</b>   | Cool | Orange on dark bases | 3–6  | .2 on same formula         |

## 8.5 Grey Coverage Type — Quick Selector

| IF THE CLIENT WANTS...                         | USE THIS APPROACH      | KEY FORMULA NOTES                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Zero grey visible — polished result            | <b>Opaque Coverage</b> | .0 or .00 anchor + fashion tone · 20 Vol · 1:1 · 35 min           |
| Natural silver look — grey enhanced not hidden | <b>Matte Grey</b>      | .00 + .7 Matte · 20 Vol · 1:1 · 35 min + demi .7 gloss finish     |
| Luminous, shimmery silver with pearl quality   | <b>Iridescent Grey</b> | .00 + .8 or .2 · 20 Vol · 1:1 · 35 min + 5 Vol pearl gloss finish |
| Low maintenance — grow-out looks intentional   | <b>Grey Blending</b>   | Balayage first — then permanent roots + demi color melt ends      |
| Refresh and tone between full services         | <b>Demi Gloss</b>      | Fashion tone · 10 Vol · 1:2 · 20 min                              |

### You Are Ready.

You now have everything you need to formulate any SOHO service with confidence — from a simple grey retouch to a complex dimensional balayage with iridescent grey coverage. The system works when you work the system. Trust the chemistry. Trust the ratios. And trust yourself at the chair.

***"Great color is not an accident. It is chemistry, artistry, and confidence — working together."***

— Masters of Balayage · SOHO Luxury Color

# Color Correction — When Things Don't Go to Plan

*Even the best colorists encounter unexpected results. The difference between a good colorist and a great one is knowing exactly what went wrong and precisely how to fix it. This guide covers the most common SOHO correction scenarios.*

## ■ Before Any Correction Service

Always perform a strand test before corrective work. Never lift compromised hair without first assessing its elasticity and tensile strength. If the strand stretches and does not return — stop. The hair cannot withstand additional chemical processing.

## The Correction Decision Chart

| PROBLEM                                       | MOST LIKELY CAUSE                                      | SOHO CORRECTION FORMULA                                                                                 | DEVELOPER & TIME              |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Result is too brassy / orange</b>          | Insufficient Ash or insufficient processing time       | Apply .1 Ash shade at target level as a demi gloss                                                      | 10 Vol · 1:2 · 20 min         |
| <b>Result is too yellow</b>                   | Needs violet neutralization at light blonde levels     | Apply .2 Pearl shade one level lighter as a toner                                                       | 5-10 Vol · 1:2 · 15-20 min    |
| <b>Result is too dark</b>                     | Over-absorption on porous hair or formula too deep     | Use a clarifying shampoo wash x2. If still too dark, use a gentle colour remover before re-formulating. | Do not lift over recent color |
| <b>Result is too flat / grey looking</b>      | Too much Ash or Matte — warmth completely cancelled    | Apply a .3 Gold or .43 Copper-Gold gloss at same level                                                  | 10 Vol · 1:2 · 20 min         |
| <b>Grey is not fully covered</b>              | Insufficient Natural base or premature rinse           | Re-apply with .00 Intense Natural as 3/4 of formula. Ensure full 35 min processing.                     | 20 Vol · 1:1 · 35 min         |
| <b>Color faded within 2 weeks</b>             | High porosity hair, warm tone, or insufficient deposit | Refresh with demi gloss. Go one level deeper on formula. Seal with acidic conditioner.                  | 10 Vol · 1:2 · 20 min         |
| <b>Uneven result — roots darker than ends</b> | Porous ends over-absorbed or timing error              | Apply lightening gloss to roots only at 5 Vol, then tone whole head to unify.                           | 5 Vol · 1:2 · 15 min          |

|                                             |                                                                  |                                                                                            |                       |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Red tone pulling through on brunette</b> | Underlying pheomelanin not neutralized                           | Add .7 Matte as secondary tone to formula. Apply as demi gloss to affected areas.          | 10 Vol · 1:2 · 20 min |
| <b>Result is green / muddy</b>              | Ash or Matte applied over warm tones — complementaries cancelled | Apply .4 Copper or .43 Copper-Gold gloss to add warmth back and neutralize the green cast. | 10 Vol · 1:2 · 20 min |

### **The Most Important Correction Rule**

Never apply more permanent color over a color problem without first understanding why the problem occurred. Stacking color on top of a mistake almost always makes it worse. Diagnose first. Correct second. A demi gloss correction is almost always safer and more reversible than a permanent one.

# Homecare & Maintenance Guide

*The service ends at the shampoo bowl. The result lives in the client's hands. What your client does at home in the next six weeks determines whether they come back raving — or disappointed. Give them this guidance every time.*

## The First 48 Hours — Critical

The cuticle continues to settle for 48 hours after a color service. What the client does in this window has an outsized impact on how long the color lasts.

| DO                                       | AVOID                                        |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Wait 48 hours before first shampoo       | Hot showers — use lukewarm water only        |
| Use a color-safe, sulfate-free shampoo   | Clarifying or anti-dandruff shampoos         |
| Apply a deep conditioning treatment      | Swimming in chlorinated or salt water        |
| Use cool water for the final rinse       | Prolonged sun exposure without UV protection |
| Use a heat protectant before any styling | Excessive heat styling above 375°F / 190°C   |

## Ongoing Maintenance by Color Type

| COLOR TYPE                            | FADE RATE                             | RECOMMENDED HOMECARE                                                   | GLOSS REFRESH   |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Platinum / Icy Blonde</b>          | Fast — yellow returns quickly         | Purple/violet toning shampoo 1-2x per week. Bond-building conditioner. | Every 3-4 weeks |
| <b>Cool Ash / Smoky Blonde</b>        | Moderate — brass appears at 4-6 weeks | Color-safe sulfate-free shampoo. Blue/silver toning conditioner.       | Every 4-6 weeks |
| <b>Warm Gold / Copper Blonde</b>      | Fast — warm tones fade to pale gold   | Color-depositing warm shampoo. UV protection spray for outdoors.       | Every 4 weeks   |
| <b>Natural / Dimensional Brunette</b> | Slow — very good longevity            | Color-safe shampoo. Monthly deep conditioning.                         | Every 6-8 weeks |
| <b>Vivid Red / Auburn</b>             | Fastest of all — fades at 2-3 weeks   | Red-depositing shampoo and conditioner. Avoid heat. Cold rinse always. | Every 3-4 weeks |

|                      |                                            |                                                                       |                 |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Grey Coverage</b> | Slow deposit — regrowth shows at 4-6 weeks | Color-safe shampoo. Anti-yellowing conditioner for grey/silver tones. | Every 4-6 weeks |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|

#### **The Single Most Important Homecare Tip**

Wash hair in the coolest water the client can tolerate. Hot water forces the cuticle open and releases color molecules on every wash. Cool water keeps the cuticle closed and locked. This one habit alone can extend color longevity by two to three weeks.

# Most Used SOHO Shades by Professional Colorists

*The SOHO intro collection is designed to give you everything you need from day one. These are the shades that professional colorists reach for most consistently across every service type — the workhorses of the SOHO line.*

| SOHO SHADE             | SERIES          | PRIMARY USE                              | WHY IT IS ESSENTIAL                                                           |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>5.0</b>             | Natural         | Grey coverage anchor — dark brunette     | Most used grey anchor at brown levels. Builds into almost every dark formula. |
| <b>7.0</b>             | Natural         | Grey coverage anchor — blonde levels     | Essential anchor for the most common grey coverage level range.               |
| <b>7.00</b>            | Intense Natural | Resistant / heavy grey coverage          | Non-negotiable for 50%+ grey clients at blonde levels.                        |
| <b>6.0</b>             | Natural         | Natural dark blonde base                 | Most requested natural result level. Versatile anchor shade.                  |
| <b>5.1</b>             | Ash             | Cool brunette / neutralize orange        | The go-to for any client wanting a cool, modern brunette result.              |
| <b>7.1</b>             | Ash             | Cool dark blonde / neutralize brassiness | Most used tone for clients lifting from brunette to cool blonde.              |
| <b>9.2</b>             | Violet / Pearl  | Platinum toner / neutralize yellow       | Essential for any blonde or platinum service. Covers yellow instantly.        |
| <b>7.3</b>             | Gold            | Warm golden blonde                       | The most popular warm blonde shade. Sun-kissed, luminous results.             |
| <b>7.4</b>             | Copper          | Copper / warm orange-red fashion         | Bold, high-impact fashion result. Excellent client retention shade.           |
| <b>5.5</b>             | Mahogany        | Rich red-violet brunette                 | Adds incredible depth and dimension to any brunette formula.                  |
| <b>10.80</b>           | Pearl Natural   | Iridescent pearl grey / platinum finish  | The signature SOHO iridescent grey shade. Highly requested by clients.        |
| <b>No. 5 Developer</b> | 5 Volume        | Demi gloss / sheer toner                 | Required for demi-permanent mode. Every salon needs this on hand.             |

## Ready to Get Started with SOHO Color?

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This manual was prepared exclusively for my clients to give you everything you need to formulate with confidence. If you are not yet using SOHO in your salon — or you are ready to expand your current inventory — call or text today:

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**Rich Rose**

**904-710-1988**

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*SOHO Luxury Color · Masters of Balayage · Professional Education*

*Currently using SOHO? Share this manual with a fellow stylist who deserves better color results.*

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