



Nail technician operators in New South Wales must be registered with their local council and comply with current legislation.

Unregistered nail technicians may charge less than other nail technicians but they may not take such a professional approach, and the risk of infection may be greater.

You may have to visit a few nail technician studios to find an operator who you feel confident can perform the process safely and who understands the look you are after. Once everything is executed to perfection, you will thank yourself for taking the time to choose a nail technician operator who you were happy with.

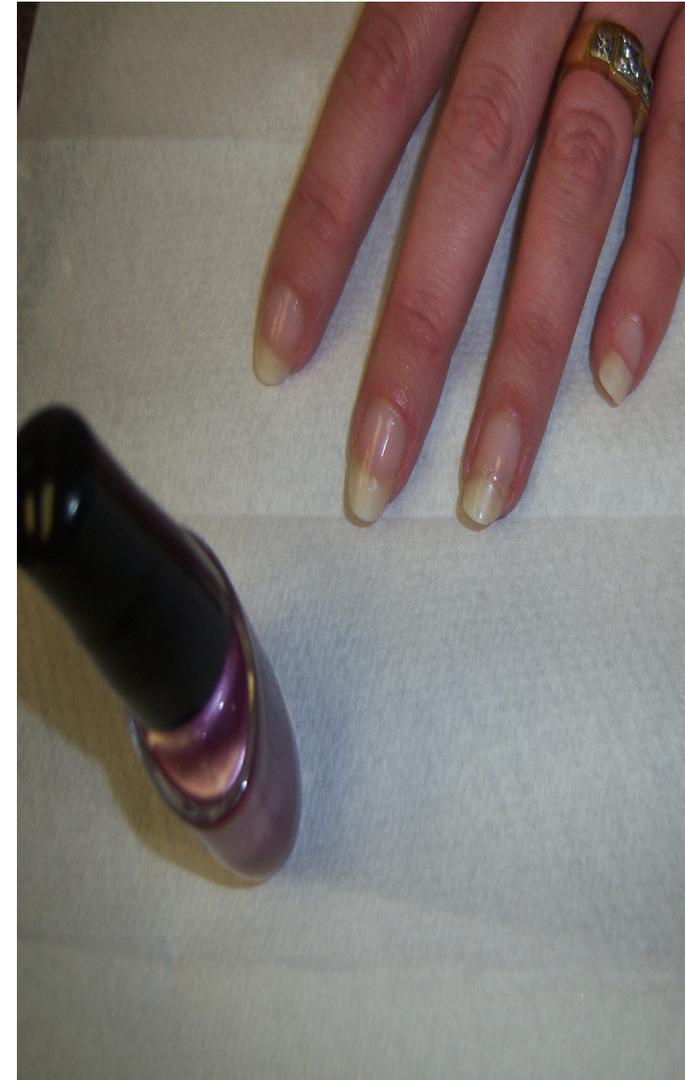
For more information on choosing a nail technician, current legislation or to check that the business is registered, please contact your local council.



The Hunter Regional Health Education Committee consists of representatives from all Hunter and Central Coast councils and the Central Coast Area Health Service, which combine to produce public and environmental health educational materials for the benefit of their communities.

Further information and fact sheets on body decoration and grooming including Manicures and Pedicures can be found at:
http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/PublicHealth/environment/general/body_grooming.asp

Choosing a Nail Technician



This information is provided by the Hunter Region Health Education Committee in the interests of community health and safety



Having your nails done is becoming more and more popular as society is growing more fashion conscious, and a nail application can leave you feeling glamorous.

Taking a minute or two to look around and ask a few questions can help make sure that getting a manicure or pedicure is a safe and rewarding experience.

So what are the risks?

Besides a nail polish colour that you don't like, there is also the risk of contracting disease or infection.

Filing of nails, nail cutting and many other procedures offered by nail technicians can cause accidental skin penetration. Cuticle cutting is a skin penetration procedure and can lead to problems such as:

- Fungal infection;
- Bacterial infections like Staphylococcus Aureus and Pseudomonas;
- Nail dust from electric nail files can also cause allergic reactions and affect those with respiratory conditions; and
- More serious blood borne diseases such as hepatitis, tetanus or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).



Infections can also occur where:

- Materials that come into contact with clients are not clean or are not handled and used hygienically;
- Proper operator hygiene is not observed; and
- The structural facilities, furnishings and fitting of the premises are not kept clean and in good repair.

What should you look out for?

The shop and especially the work area should be clean and tidy; this is a good indication of the general work practices of an operator.

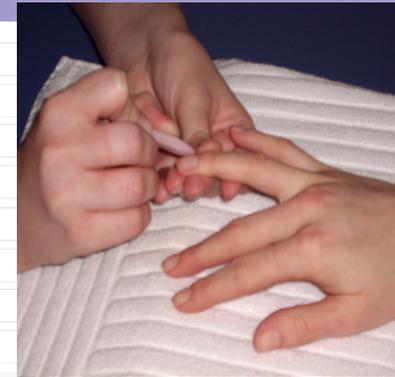
The equipment used should be clean and stored in clean containers.

The staff must wash their hands with warm water and soap, and dry them with disposable paper towel before and after every client.

Nail files, scissors and all other implements which come into contact with clients should be cleaned or disposed of between clients.

Cuticle cutters which perform skin penetration must be sterilised before reuse.

Implements which cause accidental skin penetration like scissors and other equipment that are normally not used for penetrating the skin, should be cleaned and disinfected before reuse.



Dust extractors should be installed in those salons that do not have suitable natural ventilation.

Questions to ask yourself... or the operator

Does the operator wash and dry their hands with warm running water and soap, and dry them with disposable towel before starting?

Is the equipment to be used single use (disposable) or reused - in which case has it been properly cleaned before being used on you?

Is equipment which pierces the skin single use (disposable) or reused? - in which case it must have been sterilised before being used on you.

How is the equipment sterilised?

Autoclaves and Dry Heat are the only acceptable methods of sterilising - the following do not sterilise: boiling, pasteurisation, disinfectants, pressure cookers, microwave ovens, ultraviolet cabinets and ultrasonic cleaners.

If the equipment is sterilised, is the sterilised bag opened in front of you?

Is there a yellow sharps container for disposal of sharps in order to avoid cross contamination or needle stick injuries?

What experience does the operator have?