

# AmidaZuri

## The Loc Care Guide

*Nairobi hands, Arlington chair.*

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**Everything I tell my clients** about washing, moisture, retwists, styling, and knowing when something's wrong — written down so you have it.



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Locs · Microlocs · Loc Extensions

LUX Salon Suites — Arlington, TX

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## Locs Are Freedom, Not Fuss

Most people come to locs for one of two reasons. Either they're tired of fighting their hair every single morning, or they've watched their length disappear into shrinkage and breakage for years and want to finally see what they've been growing.

Both are good reasons. Both are why I do this.

This guide is for you if you have locs, you're starting locs, or you're still deciding. It covers what actually keeps locs healthy — not the myths you've heard from people who've never had them. If you take one thing away, let it be this: **clean, wet locs are healthy locs.** Almost everything else follows from that.

*This is care guidance, not a substitute for being seen in person. If your scalp is painful, inflamed, or losing hair, get eyes on it.*

## Wash Your Locs. More Than You Think.

Here's the myth I spend the most time undoing: *locs shouldn't get wet.*

Wrong. Backwards, actually. Water is what makes locs lock. The friction of wet hair drying and contracting is a big part of what turns loose hair into a solid loc. Keeping your locs dry doesn't protect them — it slows them down and lets buildup sit on your scalp.

**How often:** at least once a week. I wash mine two to three times a week. If you work out, wear a helmet, work nights, or live in Texas summer — wash more, not less.

### How to wash without unravelling:

1. Section your hair loosely before you get in — four to six sections, tied at the ends if you're in the early stages.
2. Use a clarifying or residue-free shampoo. Creamy, moisturizing shampoos leave film inside the loc that you cannot rinse out later.
3. Focus on the **scalp**, not the length. Scrub with your fingertips. The water running down the locs cleans them well enough.
4. Rinse longer than feels necessary. Then rinse again. Trapped shampoo is the number one cause of that dull, dingy look.
5. Squeeze — don't wring or twist — the water out with a microfiber towel or an old t-shirt.

**Drying matters as much as washing.** Locs that stay damp for a day and a half develop a mildew smell that is very hard to get out. Sit under a hooded dryer, use a blow dryer on cool, or wash in the morning so you have daylight hours to air dry. Never go to bed with wet locs.

**Early-stage note:** in the first few months, baby locs can loosen in the wash. That's normal, not a failure. A wash cap or a loose stocking cap over your sections gives you the cleaning without the agitation.

## Spritz and Go

This is the part clients fall in love with. Your whole morning routine is a spray bottle.

**The spritz:** water, and that's most of it. If your hair runs dry, a few drops of a very light oil — nothing heavier. Mist the length, smooth with your hands, go. Thirty seconds.

### What to skip:

- **Heavy butters and waxes.** Shea butter, beeswax, and thick pomades do not rinse out of a loc. They build up inside it, attract lint, and eventually make the loc heavy and grey-looking from the inside.
- **Anything labeled "loc gel" that feels sticky.** If it's tacky on your fingers, it's tacky inside your hair.
- **Daily oiling of the scalp.** Once or twice a week is plenty. More than that clogs follicles.

Light oils — jojoba, grapeseed, sweet almond — are fine in small amounts. The rule of thumb: if you can't rinse it out with water and shampoo, don't put it in.

**Oil your scalp only once your hair is fully dry**, and never right before a wash. Oiling a damp scalp traps moisture where you don't want it, and oiling the day before you wash just adds a layer of product for the shampoo to fight through. Save it for after.

**At night:** satin or silk. A bonnet, a scarf, or a pillowcase. Cotton pulls moisture out of your locs and grabs at them while you sleep, which is where a lot of frizz and lint comes from. This one small habit makes a visible difference within a month.

If your locs are long enough to feel weight, don't sleep with them tightly gathered in the same spot every night — vary where you tie them so you're not pulling the same roots every time.

## Retwists: Less Often Than You'd Like

A retwist is not a wash. It is maintenance on the new growth at your root, and it is the single easiest way to damage locs when it's done too often or too tight.

**Timing:** every four to eight weeks for most people. Microlocs can go longer — I'd rather see you at ten or twelve weeks with healthy roots than every three weeks with thinning ones.

### Signs you're retwisting too often:

- Roots that feel tender or sore for days afterward

- Locs that are noticeably thinner at the root than along the shaft
- Small bumps or tenderness along the hairline
- Locs that have started to detach or feel loose at the scalp despite being "maintained"

That thinning at the root is the thing to watch. A loc that's pencil-width in the middle and thread-width at the scalp is a loc that will snap off. It doesn't grow back to thickness — the fix is to stop the tension and let the new growth build.

**Tight is not the same as neat.** If you leave a maintenance appointment unable to move your eyebrows, that was too tight. Good work looks clean without pulling. Say something in the chair. Any locician worth your money would rather hear it than lose your hair.

**In between:** you can absolutely wash, wear, and live in your locs between retwists. Frizz at the root is normal. It's hair growing. Some of the healthiest heads I've worked on are on a long maintenance cycle and just let the roots be a little fuzzy.

## Locs Are Not One Look

The other myth I hear: *locs are boring, you just have them.*

Locs are art. They take shape, they hold curl, they carry adornment in a way loose hair can't. Once you have length, your options open up.

**Curls.** Rod sets, flexi rods, braid-outs, pipe cleaners. Wet locs, set them, dry fully, unwrap. The curl holds for days — often a week or more — because a loc holds a shape far better than loose hair does.

**Updos and shapes.** Buns, halos, sculpted styles, partial pin-ups. Length gives you structure to work with. This is where the art comes in.

**Adornment.** Cuffs, beads, wraps, wire, shells. Locs were made to be decorated. Two cautions: don't load one loc with heavy hardware, and don't leave tight cuffs in for months — they can wear a thin spot where they sit.

**Colour.** Possible, but go to someone who has coloured locs before. Bleach on a loc behaves differently than bleach on loose hair — it soaks into the core and it doesn't rinse out on the same timeline. Botched colour on locs often ends in cutting.

**Heat.** Use it sparingly. A loc that gets heat-damaged can't be conditioned back; the damage is locked inside.

## When Something Feels Off

**Itchy scalp.** Usually product buildup or not washing enough — not dryness, which is what people assume and then treat with more oil, making it worse. Try a clarifying wash first. If it persists past a couple of washes, or you see flaking with redness, see a dermatologist. Scalp conditions are medical, not styling.

**Buildup / dull grey cast.** That's residue inside the loc. An apple cider vinegar rinse or a proper clarifying shampoo helps. A deep soak (sometimes called a detox) can pull a surprising amount out. Rinse thoroughly and dry completely afterward.

**Lint.** Comes from cotton — towels, pillowcases, hats, hoodies. Prevention is easier than removal; once lint is locked in, you're often picking it out with tweezers or living with it. Satin everything.

**Thinning roots.** Covered above, but worth repeating: this is tension damage. Stop retwisting for a while, loosen any tight styles, and let new growth build thickness. If it's happening across your whole head rather than at specific locs, that's worth a doctor's visit — it may not be your hair care at all.

**Heavy locs pulling at the scalp.** Long locs get heavy. If you feel constant pull, headaches, or soreness at the roots, your hair is telling you something. Stop wearing them gathered up. Sleep with them loose or supported. And consider length — see the next section.

**A loc that's thinning in the middle.** Weak point. It will break there eventually. Sometimes it can be repaired or merged with a neighbour; sometimes the honest answer is to cut and restart that one. Better a deliberate cut than a surprise one.

**Smell.** Almost always incomplete drying. Wash, dry completely under a hooded dryer, and change your wash timing so you're never going to bed damp.

## Knowing When to Let a Loc Go

Most guides won't tell you this part. I will, because I'd rather you keep your hair than keep your length.

Locs are an investment of years, and people get attached to the length. I understand it completely. But locs are not permanent in the way people think — they're hair, and hair has limits.

**Let go when:**

- The weight is consistently pulling at your scalp — soreness, headaches, tenderness that doesn't resolve
- A loc has gone thin and thready in the middle and keeps getting thinner
- Your roots are thinning across the head and reducing tension hasn't turned it around
- The loc is so long it's breaking off on its own anyway

**What letting go looks like:** it's rarely all of it. Usually it's trimming a few inches off the length to take the weight down, or retiring one or two compromised locs while the rest stay. A trim on locs is not the tragedy people imagine — the ends of very old locs are often thin and weak anyway, and cutting them can make the whole head look fuller.

**The reframe:** your hair grows. Locs can be started again. What doesn't come back easily is a follicle that's been under tension for years. Protect the scalp, and the length takes care of itself.

If you're not sure whether you're at that point, that's exactly what a consult is for. Bring it to me and I'll tell you honestly.

## Come Sit in My Chair

I've been doing hair since 2018. I trained at Ngara Market in Nairobi, where twenty clients a day was an ordinary Tuesday, and later studied under loc master Kris McDread — which is where I learned to crochet and install locs on every hair type, including straight hair.

My mother has done hair for more than thirty years. Her hands paid our school fees. I grew up watching her work, and I inherited the same hands — gentle enough that clients fall asleep in my chair.

She wasn't sold on locs at first. Like a lot of African parents, she'd grown up around a bad reputation attached to them — some people even said locs were dirty. I installed her microlocs anyway, and she has loved them ever since.

**AmidaZuri** is locs and microlocs only — installs, retwists, and temporary loc extensions. That's it. I'd rather be excellent at one thing than adequate at ten.

If you're starting locs, maintaining locs, or just want someone to look at your scalp and tell you the truth about it, book a consult.

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