

How to get it right first time; follow the timeline to success!

THE ULTIMATE SALON PLANNER

6 MONTHS TO GO...

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO...
CHOOSE YOUR LOCATION**

Decide where to set up!

FOR all businesses location is important, but good locations cost so it's worthwhile writing down the key attributes your new salon location should have and listing them by order of priority. Size, parking, foot-traffic, proximity to town centre and public transport are all

important but highlighting those that are crucial from those that are desirable will better enable you to source the best possible premises for your budget.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO...
LOOK AT BUILDING REGULATIONS**

The different planning, environmental, archaeological and local council regulations that might be needed

FROM signage to environmental health, there are many different certificates and inspections that you may need for your salon. Failure to comply can mean anything from a slap on the wrist to a prison sentence so it's well

worth taking time to find out what's required.

⌘ Local Planning: This covers anything from major building work to change of use. Always contact your local planning office, telling them of the location, the work you would like to carry out and services you will offer once opened. They will advise you on what you will need.
⌘ Listed Buildings: If your premises have Listed Building status, you'll need to check what you can and can't do with the Department of Culture. http://www.culture.gov.uk/historic_environment/listing/
⌘ Archaeological: If you have a listed building or are in a conservation area the



project may be subject to an Archaeology Watching Brief. Check with the planning office.

- ⌘ Environmental Health: If you will be supplying food (even if it's free) you need to register with your local authority for an inspection. <http://www.food.gov.uk/>. Some local authorities will also want to carry out checks for certain beauty treatments (botox, body piercing, even manicuring in some places).
- ⌘ Alcohol: You will need an alcohol license from your local magistrate if you will be selling alcohol.
- ⌘ Fire Health & Safety: You may need a fire or Health & Safety certificate/inspection from your local authority before opening.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... START PLANNING:**
How to get the best out of your space, what services to offer and how A&F can help with this

CREATE a detailed business plan outlining the type of business you are planning, how it will be financed and growth and profit

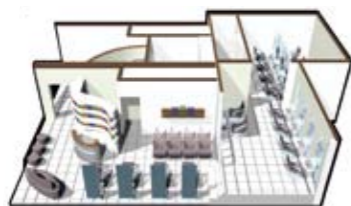
TopDesignTips
A&F Chief Designer Stephen Ewings has some useful tips on helping you create the best possible layout for your salon:

- ⌘ Give a detailed brief on what type of services you will offer
- ⌘ Supply accurate plans or measurements noting location of services, water, gas, electrics...
- ⌘ Give as much information as possible on the interior style, materials and colours you would like
- ⌘ Create a folder of cuttings, fabric samples and images that reflect the look and feel you want to create
- ⌘ Be realistic with both the budget and available space
- ⌘ Use Real Salons magazine for examples and inspiration

projections. This plan should define your business and ethos and will be a valuable tool for gaining finance as well as being a guide for builders and designers.

As part of the business plan you need to decide the types and varieties of services your salon will offer. List all the services you will provide and any specific features you'd like – fully reclining/massaging washpoints, a beauty room, a coffee bar, plasma screens etc. Make sure you consider other more fundamental aspects like a separate technical area and your ideal type of dispensary and waiting areas.

*** NOW ITS TIME TO... DESIGN, DESIGN, DESIGN**
Appearance is everything



IT'S advisable to involve a professional salon design service to help you get the most out of the available space. As well as creating a layout that has all the features you are looking to include, a professional designer will ensure you don't neglect to encompass legal requirements and more basic features that are easily overlooked. Aston & Fincher's professional salon designer will listen to your brief and create a computer-generated floor plan that is practical, has adequate working space and allows smooth client flow.

4 MONTHS TO GO...

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... CHECK SERVICES**
Will the gas, water, drains and boiler will be adequate for your short term and long term plans?

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... FIND A CONTRACTOR**
Sourcing competent tradesmen

⌘ Check their credentials. Ask if they are members of any trade bodies or organisations, also find out if they are a registered (limited) company and how long they've been in business.

⌘ Ask to see examples of their work. Check out at least two of their recent projects.

⌘ Who will do the work? Find out if they have their own team of workers or if they will use sub-contractors.

⌘ Terms and Conditions. Insist on a detailed quote, with time scales for work and payment, as well as a 'snagging' clause to ensure the work is completed.

Useful contacts:
THE Trust-Mark scheme <http://www.trustmark.org.uk/>
THE Federation of Master Builders <http://www.fmb.org.uk/>

“ Allow good time to do the work; insist on a detailed quote ”

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... TIMELINE A BUILDING SCHEDULE**
Planning and order of works, allow good time

DISCUSS a schedule with your contractors and create a timeline detailing the order in which the works will be carried out. This will also help you when ordering your furniture and equipment. Allow for delays!

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... BRAND PLAN:**
Brand image and what needs to be done: website, signage, stationary and imagery
CREATE a design brief for your brand. Write a brief synopsis outlining your brand ethos, market position and target clientele. Collect images and cuttings that reflect your brand.

3 MONTHS TO GO...

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... SOURCE HARDWARE SUPPLIERS**
Telephones, computers, music, coffee machines, boilers...

THE essentials which need to work smoothly in the background and blend seamlessly into your working environment. You don't want an over-complicated telephone system or an appointment booking system that doesn't work with your computers. Your Aston & Fincher branch manager will know what works for other salons and be able to provide some useful contacts.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... DESIGN STATIONERY AND SIGNAGE**
Carry out photo shoots for imagery

NOW you have your salon interior concept finalised it's time to start work on your image. Use the branding brief you've developed to work with graphic designers to create artwork and logos for stationery and signage.

- ⌘ Design your logo.
- ⌘ Decide on type and design of stationery and signage.
- ⌘ Design brochures, advertising, loyalty cards.
- ⌘ Create imagery and photography for website, stationery and branding.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... CHOOSE FURNITURE**
Are you sitting comfortably?

USE your brand image and interior concept brief to choose the equipment. The team at A&F are experts at finding the right furniture to suit your brand concept, floor plan and budget. Once you have selected the items, colours and materials, the A&F design team can produce drawings to give an accurate view of the salon.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... ORDER FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT**
Order the equipment to coincide delivery with the building program; styling units and washpoints need to be installed

ONCE you have chosen your furniture, A&F can advise you on how to order it to coincide with your building schedule. Not all your furniture may need to be delivered on site at the same time. Generally washpoints and styling units are needed first. A&F will work with you to deliver the equipment when it's required. It's also important to get fitting instructions and pass them to your contractors so there are no surprises when the equipment arrives. Unlike many, A&F have detailed instructions on all their furniture ranges.

SALON PLANNER CHECKLIST		
6 MONTHS BEFORE OPENING	✓	NOTES
Find unit and agree lease / rent / mortgage	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Formulate business plan including budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Secure finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source unit plans with measurements	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Decide on services the salon will offer and create a project brief using Real Salons magazine	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Planning / building regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Salon design – get layout drafted by A&F Salon Design service	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source architectural drawings if needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4 MONTHS BEFORE OPENING		
Check gas, water, sewerage and other services against long-term needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source reputable contractors and get quotes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Create a building works schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Branding - Create a detailed branding brief	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3 MONTHS BEFORE OPENING		
Source suppliers of key equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Telephone system	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Computers & software	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sanitary supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Boiler/water system	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Entertainment systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Design logo and artwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Signage – decide on look and design	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stationery – decide on needs and design	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Design brochures, adverts and loyalty cards, posters	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Photography – create imagery for website, stationary and branding	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Website – create brief covering look, functions and interactivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Choose and order salon furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	

2 MONTHS TO GO...

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... START RECRUITING

How and where best to advertise

MOST hairdressers work four weeks' notice so look to source new team members at around the eight-week mark. Remember you'll need to have somewhere to conduct interviews and possibly practical assessments.

Good places to find new staff:

- ⌘ Local newspapers
- ⌘ Trade publications
- ⌘ www.hji.co.uk/ www.head1st.net/ www.hair-recruitment.com
- ⌘ Advertise at your A&F branch
- ⌘ Word of mouth!

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... PREPARE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Brief advice on how to prepare contracts and what they might contain

SET out the rules and working practices for the salon. Draft contracts, training manuals, policies and procedures. There are a number of on-line sites that offer bulk standard contracts, but it may be worth seeking professional help. HABIA and the NHF often have useful information and contacts. www.nhf.biz/ www.habia.org

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... CHOOSE PRODUCT RANGES

Review the options available at A&F

TAKE a good look at all the wet lines and retail product ranges available and research those that will best suit your salon and your ethos. The team at A&F will be able to guide you through all the options and advise you of the support, education and benefits the various brands offer. You can also choose the best buying options for you and your salon e.g. visiting the cash and carry, a regular telesales call, a rep visit or buying online. You can choose all or any combination of these purchasing alternatives.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... PREPARE YOUR WEBSITE

Decide on what type of site the salon is to have: basic, interactive and/or on-line retailing

IF you've not already done so

“You'll need to have somewhere to conduct interviews and assessments”

you'll need to register your domain name and remember, keep it simple and easy to remember. Create a website design brief covering how the website will look and all the functions and interactivity you want. It's worthwhile considering on-line sales and appointment booking in the design stage, even if you don't plan on offering them straight away.

1 MONTH TO GO..

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... START PROMOTING

Get your advertising and PR started

HAVE posters printed for the window of your new salon during the shop-fit announcing your salon's imminent opening. These are not particularly expensive to produce and if you use eye-catching images and descriptions of the services you will help to build anticipation.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... PLAN THE OPENING STRATEGY

Think about promotions and offers for the opening and first month plus which companies and offices to approach

WITH a month to go you need to plan for your opening. Opening is often a salon's most newsworthy event so make sure you market its full potential.

- ⌘ Press releases for local and trade media
- ⌘ Opening promotions and offers
- ⌘ Introduce your salon to key local business, offices, nightclubs and bars
- ⌘ Plan and book local advertising
- ⌘ Promotional leaflets
- ⌘ Mail announcements to existing clients

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... PRINT SALON STATIONERY

Business cards, menus and leaflets

ORDER and print headed paper, business cards, menus, leaflets and any other stationery and marketing items you will need to ensure they will be ready for the opening. Use your branding brief to help with the look and layout and make sure you take time to check any proofs you get carefully.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... PLAN THE OPENING PARTY

Show off your new salon!

HOLDING an opening party is a great way to announce the arrival of your salon and to gain publicity. You need not hold the party on the actual opening day,

but you do want to try to keep it as close to the day as you can. Be sure to invite the local press, dignitaries, businesses and key clients. And if you know any celebrities they could really help it make it more newsworthy. Only set a date for your opening party once you are sure the salon will be ready on that date!

- ⌘ Source and book catering, drinks, glasses and waitresses
- ⌘ Arrange entertainment
- ⌘ Source and order items for goodie bags
- ⌘ Prepare invites
- ⌘ Prepare guest list
- ⌘ Source and order decorations such as flowers, balloons etc
- ⌘ Organise a photographer

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... TRAIN

Learn how to use computer software, telephone systems as well as any new product lines

YOUR new computers, telephones, entertainment systems as well as your new product lines may require some training so make sure you take time to investigate what you

and your team will need to know. Many suppliers will offer free initiation training so check out what's available. Prepare a training schedule.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... PLAN HEALTH AND SAFETY

Risk assessments, get advice on what systems need to be in place

YOUR salon will need to have health & safety, first aid and emergency action plans in place for when you open and it's worth getting started early. There are websites and companies that can help with this and the NHF also has useful information and advice. www.nhf.biz/

You will need:

- ⌘ A Health & Safety manual with risk assessments
- ⌘ Emergency equipment – fire extinguishers and exit signs
- ⌘ EAP (Emergency action plan) for fires and evacuations
- ⌘ First Aid – kits and possibly training
- ⌘ Consider a flood action plan and written disability procedures

SALON PLANNER CHECKLIST

2 MONTHS BEFORE OPENING	✓	NOTES
Advertise for new staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Arrange interview location	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare employment contracts	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare training and assessment manuals	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source wet product lines	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Correlate salon furniture installation details and instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Develop website	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1 MONTH BEFORE OPENING		
Plan opening marketing strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	
'Coming Soon' window poster	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare press releases	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Announce your plans and introduce yourself to local businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Create and book local advertising	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Inform existing clients by letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Print stationery, leaflets, loyalty cards etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Plan opening party	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source and book catering, drinks and glasses, and waitresses	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Arrange entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source and order items for goodie bags	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare invites	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare guest list	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source and order flowers, balloons etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Organise photographer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
New product training	<input type="checkbox"/>	
New equipment and software training	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare Health & Safety manual	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Order emergency equipment – fire extinguishers and exit signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare EAP (emergency action plan)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source first aid kits (and training)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare flood action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Write disabilities procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>	

“Holding an opening party is a great way to announce the arrival of your salon and to gain publicity”

3 WEEKS TO GO..

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... SEND OUT PRESS RELEASES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prepare a press release and announcement letter for all local media and clients

DRAFT and send out press releases to local newspapers and magazines. Keep the press release concise. Make sure it contains relevant information like opening date, highlights from the service menu and the salon's key features. Try and include an image or a logo. Also send an announcement letter to existing clientele advising them of the opening and any promotions or parties you will be having.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... ORDER SUNDRIES

Towels, cotton wool, tint bowls

VISIT your local A&F branch with a list of all the sundry items you will need such as towels, tint bowls, tail combs, pins and grips. They will be able to go over the list with you to make sure you've not forgotten anything, take the order and have it ready for when you need it.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... CHECK DELIVERY SCHEDULES:

Make sure deliveries are on time and the salon is ready for them

CONTACT all the companies that



*A&F standing by for last minute buys!

2 WEEKS TO GO..

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... SEND OUT OPENING PARTY INVITES

Who to invite and chase replies!

SEND out party invites. You will need to allocate time to chase RSVPs, which you should start doing after about five days.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... BOOK PHOTOGRAPHER

Pictures of the salon interior and opening party

INTERIOR shots of your new salon are really useful for gaining publicity in hair magazines, local papers and for use in your brochures and on the website. Book a photographer to shoot the interior as soon after the salon is ready as possible. It's worth getting a professional to do this as the better the images the more likely they are to be used by magazines and your local press. Remember, you will be using these images until you next re-fit so they'll need to be good. Shoot some with a clear salon

are delivering equipment and stock to confirm delivery dates. Make sure you confirm salon furniture deliveries at least 14 days prior to opening to allow for delays and snagging.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... SOURCE CLEANERS

Salon cleaners and window cleaners

SOURCE contract cleaners and window cleaners – neighbouring shops and business are good for contacts. Book the first visit just before your opening party and the second for the day after!

and some with models if you have the budget.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... FINALISE INSPECTIONS

Book them in before opening

MAKE sure you've arranged any health and safety, building regulations or environmental inspections you need.



* NOW IT'S TIME TO... SORT OUT THE APPOINTMENT SYSTEM AND HAVE IT OPERATIONAL

Start taking appointments!

YOU need to have your appointment system up and running for all the enquiries you will be receiving.

1 WEEK TO GO..

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... HAVE STAFF ORIENTATION

Orientate new team members and involve them in the opening

GATHER the staff together for orientation and training on products and procedures, as doing this will help ensure the first few weeks run as smoothly as possible. Prepare an itinerary

covering everything from the pre-opening prep and the party to health & safety and general working practices. If it's not practical to do this in the salon, hire a room or a venue.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... UNPACK STOCK

Stock your displays

UNPACK, price and set out your retail and dispensary stock. Retailing products generates additional turnover. Make sure your display is inviting and easy for customers to access. Think about how your favourite shops display their stock.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... BUY MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Coffee cups, saucers, spoons, tea towels

HAVE you remembered crockery, cutlery, toilet roll, hand towels, etc? Time to have a final check.

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... CHECK WASTE COLLECTION

Check the local refuse collection rules and schedule – buy appropriate bins.

CONTACT your local council to find out about refuse collection and recycling regulations. Buy any bins or recycling containers you might need.

“Book a photographer to shoot the interior. It's worth getting a professional to do this as the better the images, the more likely they are to be used by magazines”

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... BUY SUNDRIES

The last little touches

TAKE a trip to the supermarket. Get all the latest magazines. Don't forget champagne for the opening day!

* NOW IT'S TIME TO... SYSTEMS CHECK

Check the cash register, computer system and telephones!

SALON PLANNER CHECKLIST

3 WEEKS BEFORE OPENING	✓	NOTES
Draft press releases and announcement letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Order salon sundries from A&F	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Check delivery schedules	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Salon furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Telephones	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Stock and products	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Source cleaners and window cleaners	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2 WEEKS BEFORE OPENING		
Send out opening party invites and announcement letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Commence opening strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Book interior photographer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Book health and safety inspection	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Book environmental inspection	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Book building regulations inspection	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Initiate appointment system	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Buy bits and pieces: coffee cups, cutlery, tea towels	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Check waste collection dates and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1 WEEK BEFORE OPENING		
Staff orientation and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Buy general sundries and magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Systems check	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Telephones	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Website / Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Computer / Cash Register / Client Records	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Entertainment / DVD / Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	

1 DAY TO GO..

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... CLEAN THE SALON**

GIVE the salon a really good clean. You may want to use a professional contractor to get rid of any marks and stains left by the builders.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... CALL THE FLORIST**

GET some nice, bright fresh flowers in the right colours for your salon.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... PUT BALLOONS OUTSIDE**

PUT up balloons, bunting, banners and other decorations in keeping with your branding announcing your opening.

SALON PLANNER CHECKLIST		
1 DAY BEFORE OPENING	✓	NOTES
Clean the salon and prepare the salon	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Buy flowers	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Decorate the window and reception	<input type="checkbox"/>	
OPENING DAY		
Take loads of pictures	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Update website	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Send out press releases	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Send out interior images and profile	<input type="checkbox"/>	

NOTES:

The big day!

Enjoy yourself

IT has been lots of hard work getting to this point and there is still lots ahead, but enjoy the celebrations and get to talk to as many people as you can.

Doors open

MAKE sure you take loads of pictures of your opening day and party for use in press releases and on your website.

“Enjoy the celebrations and talk to loads of people”



The End?

There's still work to do... Make sure you send out press releases and images of your opening to the local newspapers and trade press to maximise your exposure. Keep your website updated with news, images and quotes from clients, dignitaries and celebrities. Plus don't forget to send out your interior images to the local publications, the hairdressing trade press and design publications.

*** NOW IT'S TIME TO... UPDATE WEBSITE**

Upload your party pictures to the website and change it regularly. Maximise your exposure in the local and trade press.

THE ULTIMATE SALON PLANNER BUDGET CHECKLIST

ITEM	BUDGET	ACTUAL COST
LEASE/MORTGAGE DEPOSIT/BUILD/REFURBISHMENT COSTS:		
General building works	£	£
Plumbing	£	£
Electrical	£	£
Flooring	£	£
Architect/surveyor	£	£
Shop front	£	£
Planning permissions / building regulations	£	£
Salon design	£	£
Salon furniture	£	£
Other furniture	£	£
SERVICE INSTALLATION/ UPGRADE:		
Gas	£	£
Electric	£	£
Water (boiler/pipe work)	£	£
Water (sewage)	£	£
Air conditioning/heating	£	£
KEY EQUIPMENT:		
Telephone system	£	£
Computers and software	£	£
Appliances: cooker/ fridge/coffee machine	£	£
Fire and burglar alarm	£	£
Entertainment systems	£	£
STOCK:		
Sundries and supplies – general	£	£
Sundries and supplies – salon	£	£

ITEM	BUDGET	ACTUAL COST
MARKETING & ADVERTISING:		
Logo, signage and artwork design	£	£
Stationary and brochures	£	£
Advertising – opening	£	£
Advertising - staff	£	£
Photography – fashion	£	£
Photography – interior	£	£
Website – design and build	£	£
PR	£	£
Opening party	£	£
OPERATIONS:		
Legal – employment contracts	£	£
Procedure/training/ health & safety documents	£	£
Contract cleaning	£	£
Staff training/orientation	£	£
MISC:		
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
	£	£
TOTAL	£	£