

# NYC's best beauty vloggers

Tune in to these local YouTubers' channels for free expert hair and makeup advice.

By **Cristina Velocci** Photographs by **Gabriela Herman**



## Franchesca Ramsey of Chescaleocs ([youtube.com/chescaleocs](http://youtube.com/chescaleocs))

**Who she is:** After a bad dye job caused most of her hair to break and fall out, Ramsey decided to dreadlock her tresses in 2004. Though she'd often consult online loc community Get Up Dread Up ([get-up-dread-up.livejournal.com](http://get-up-dread-up.livejournal.com)) for styling tips, Ramsey noticed a few gaps in the information that was available on the Internet. "The forum is mostly Caucasian, and while I still learned a lot, there were things [the members] didn't have the answers to because we have different hair textures," she says. "It encouraged me to use my voice to talk about my own experience." Ramsey also noticed a dearth in video content for natural hairstyling, so when she received an iMac with a built-in camera as a graduation present, it was just the catalyst the web-savvy graphic designer needed to create her first video in 2007.

**About her channel:** Initially, Ramsey posted a mix of hairstyle tutorials and

comedy videos on [youtube.com/chescaleigh](http://youtube.com/chescaleigh), but as her audience grew, she found a need to divide her two interests into separate channels. Shortly after moving to New York City from Miami in 2009, Ramsey launched Chescaleocs, which is almost exclusively dedicated to loc hairstyles. "I didn't realize how versatile my hair is," reflects the self-taught 28-year-old, who has earned nearly 22,000 subscribers for her entertaining, creative tutorials that range from how to fashion twisted faux-hawks to the logistics of loc extensions. "I don't have to see a style on someone that has locs in order to come up with my own version," notes Ramsey. To wit, she has successfully recreated Janelle Monáe's signature pompadour and Karmin singer Amy Heidemann's retro "suicide roll" for locs.

**Go-to product:** "Jamaican Black Castor Oil ([jamaicanblackcastoroil.com](http://jamaicanblackcastoroil.com)) is a great moisturizer," says Ramsey. "It has made a really big difference in the thickness and fullness of my hair."



## Raychel Wade of Cheek to Chic ([youtube.com/chicmakeup160](http://youtube.com/chicmakeup160))

**Who she is:** A professional makeup artist for the past ten years, Wade runs Cheek to Chic ([cheektochic.com](http://cheektochic.com)), the mobile makeup service she founded in 2002. "The whole genesis of the business was based on lessons," she says. "I try to demystify the industry and make it more user-friendly, and I think having a YouTube channel is a great way to do that." Wade started posting tutorials in March 2010 at no cost to her roughly 5,000 subscribers. "I'm in the trenches of photo shoots and in hundreds of real women's bathrooms giving lessons, so I truly know what women are looking for."

**About her channel:** Wade focuses strictly on makeup, and her tutorials are reflective of her professional experience. For instance, since she

often does weddings, there are a handful of bridal beauty how-tos. A *Jersey Shore* series details how Wade created photo shoot looks for each of the female cast members. "People want to know exactly what I did on the set," she says. Wade also demonstrates how to achieve the red carpet looks of celebrities she hasn't worked on, such as Eva Longoria at the Golden Globes—all presented with a self-deprecating attitude. "I'm not trying to solve world [hunger], I'm just showing people some new lipsticks," jokes Wade, who films out of her Chelsea apartment.

**Go-to product:** "I always gravitate towards Giorgio Armani Luminous Silk foundation ([giorgioarmanibeauty-usa.com](http://giorgioarmanibeauty-usa.com))," says Wade. "It has a great color range, it's buildable, and it feels weightless."

## Jessica Harlow of Miss Jessica Harlow ([youtube.com/missjessicaharlow](http://youtube.com/missjessicaharlow))

**Who she is:** Harlow first fell into makeup when she was a teen suffering from acne. "I had to find ways to cover it up using concealers," she explains. But that necessity soon turned into a passion, as she started taking an interest in the looks featured in magazines and music videos. While working at makeup counters such as Origins and MAC, Harlow started watching other people's beauty tutorials and was inspired to launch her own channel in February 2009.

**About her channel:** In addition to producing sexy, wearable looks plucked from pop culture (Megan Fox's sun-kissed visage, the gold-leaf eyes Emma Watson wore to a *Harry*

*Potter* premiere), Harlow isn't afraid to have fun with wild costume makeup—her videos recreating artist-model Rick Genest's "Zombie Boy" face and Natalie Portman's winged eyes from *Black Swan* make her channel one to bookmark for Halloween. But what sets the 22-year-old apart is the upbeat, positive attitude that has earned her close to 330,000 subscribers. Perhaps even more impressive is that the polished videos Harlow films and edits in her Queens home are rarely rehearsed. "I really never practice my looks before I do them," she admits.

**Go-to product:** One item Harlow constantly uses in her tutorials is Urban Decay's Eyeshadow Primer Potion ([urbandecay.com](http://urbandecay.com)). "It keeps your eye makeup on forever," swears Harlow.