



NATHAN JOHNSON'S

TIPS FOR BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL MAKEUP ARTIST

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

NATHAN JOHNSON IS A NEW YORK CITY-based celebrity makeup artist with over 18 years of industry experience. Nathan has worked on over 300 famous faces including Paula Abdul, Lea Michele, Kyra Sedgwick, Kevin Bacon, Paul McCartney, and more.

Nathan's work has been featured in Glamour, Elle, Genre, Harper's Bazaar, Access Hollywood, Running with Heels, and more. He was a makeup artist on seasons four and five of Project Runway.

As the executive makeup artist for QC Makeup Academy, Nathan is featured in all the instructional videos for QC's makeup courses, and is responsible for ensuring that all the instructional materials are in line with best industry practices.

Nathan has tutored thousands of QC Makeup Academy students (and counting!) since 2012. His greatest passion is helping aspiring makeup artists reach their full potential and become successful professionals.



Nathan Johnson





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SO YOU WANT TO BE A MAKEUP ARTIST?

I can't blame you. It is a beautiful and inspiring career that is rich with opportunity. Makeup is a multibillion dollar industry and if you have passion for it, there is most definitely a place for you in the field!

If going from where you are now to living your makeup dream feels a million miles away...I can assure you, it is far closer than you might realize. Read on for my road map to achieving success in the amazing world of makeup.



EDUCATION

Having a proper education is one of the most important and sometimes overlooked elements of a starting artist.

Having a strong foundation early on can set you up for an incredibly successful career. There are varying ways to become educated. My advice would be to do all of them! What makes someone a master at anything is knowing a tremendous amount about a single subject!

The more you know, the more success you may have.

Formal Education

Formal makeup education can be achieved either online or at a brick and mortar location. There are pros and cons to both options.

ONLINE, you can learn at your own pace, practice as much as you would like and master each technique prior to submitting a unit for evaluation.

IN A BRICK AND MORTAR LOCATION, you do have the benefit of a teacher close by, but you also may be evaluated before you have fully grasped a technique and then keep moving along with no time to go back and master it.

You should choose the option that works best for you and your lifestyle!

Download this guide to find out more about how you can learn makeup online, and whether it's right for you!

Informal Education

There are countless books, YouTube videos, and articles detailing hundreds of thousands of techniques, trends and makeup variations available for you to learn from.

Continuing your education with these methods will be valuable because it will keep you on the pulse of what is on trend and you will easily be able to incorporate these aspects into your current makeup repertoire.

But... there is a danger to these options, especially YouTube videos, if you get your training solely from them. Most people online have very little formal training in makeup, what they have learned, they have learned from other videos or figured out from trial and error.

There is nothing wrong with this for a casual artist, but as a professional, one should understand all of the proper classic techniques and the reasons behind them. This understanding will allow you to be a well-rounded artist who is on top of the trends, not ruled by them.




Finding a Mentor

Being an apprentice to a professional makeup artist can be invaluable. It provides you (the growing artist) with a nurturing environment in which you will have the opportunity to learn the skills of the master in a professional setting.

A mentorship with a professional artist can be a supercharged education. Remember you'll need to be well-trained before approaching a mentor. Most will consider a solid education, well-practiced skills and a great attitude to be incredible assets.



A man with a beard and short hair is applying makeup to a woman's face. He is using a brush on her cheek. The woman has dark hair and is looking down. The background is dark and out of focus.

PRACTICE PERFECTED

Practicing only on your own face, or the face of one friend, will not make you a skilled or diverse artist. To be skilled and diverse, you must work on people of all ages, skin tones and skin types. People are diverse, so your skills and practice should be as well.

PRACTICE

Practice is the “X-Factor” for makeup artists. And guess what? Unlike many other professions, the magic ingredient is completely within your control!

As silly as it may seem, this often overlooked step is one of the main keys to major achievement and success in the industry. If you want to be a makeup artist — an actual real makeup artist who earns their living with brushes and colors — practice is the single most important step you can take toward achieving that goal.

If you are saying to yourself, “obviously, I already practice for several hours a day”, then trust me when I tell you, you are already leagues ahead of your competition. It is not your makeup education that will get you a job in the industry, it is your skill and drive that will. Education is a necessity, but it is the repetitive practice of, and experimentation with, those skills that will make you a master.

Talent, Skill, and Passion

People are drawn to a career in makeup for a variety of reasons. Whatever yours may be, I am going to offer you a bit of advice that may blow your mind: You do not need to have any natural ability with makeup to have a tremendously successful career.

Talent

Having a natural ability is always a great starting point. If you find you can easily duplicate the looks you see in magazines or your friends are always asking you to work on their faces, you most likely have talent.

This is wonderful, but talent can also be a dangerous trap. People with a natural talent sometimes think they do not require practice or education, which means they are limited to only their current level of ability.

Growth and expanded skills only come from increased knowledge and practice (there's that p-word again!). Talent can be a tremendous blessing, if it is teamed with a lifelong desire to learn and practice those skills.



Skill

Makeup is a skill, and like any other skill it can be learned and mastered. If you have no talent in makeup, just a deep desire to learn and be successful at it, then you have the potential to be further ahead than those blessed with talent.

Yes, talent can be a great help, but those who put in the time to develop and master a skill always come out on top. Now, if you possess both talent and the willingness to further master the skill, then the world better stand back!

Two tips for building your skill level:

- **Education:** Re-read the section on education in this book. Now make your plan to get that education. If you already have an education, then make the plan to advance your education! To be great, you can never, ever stop learning.
- **Practice:** Yes, it needs repeating! This is the most overlooked element for developing skill and mastery. Do it now. And do it daily.

Passion

This is the glue that holds everything together. It is that special little something that can turn the peasant into the king. Passion cannot be taught...passion shows, when you have it, your clients feel it. Passion alone cannot make you a great artist, but it often fuels the fire to master the craft. Passion can push the education and practice to a whole new level. Best of all, it is contagious!

Where you can practice and gain experience

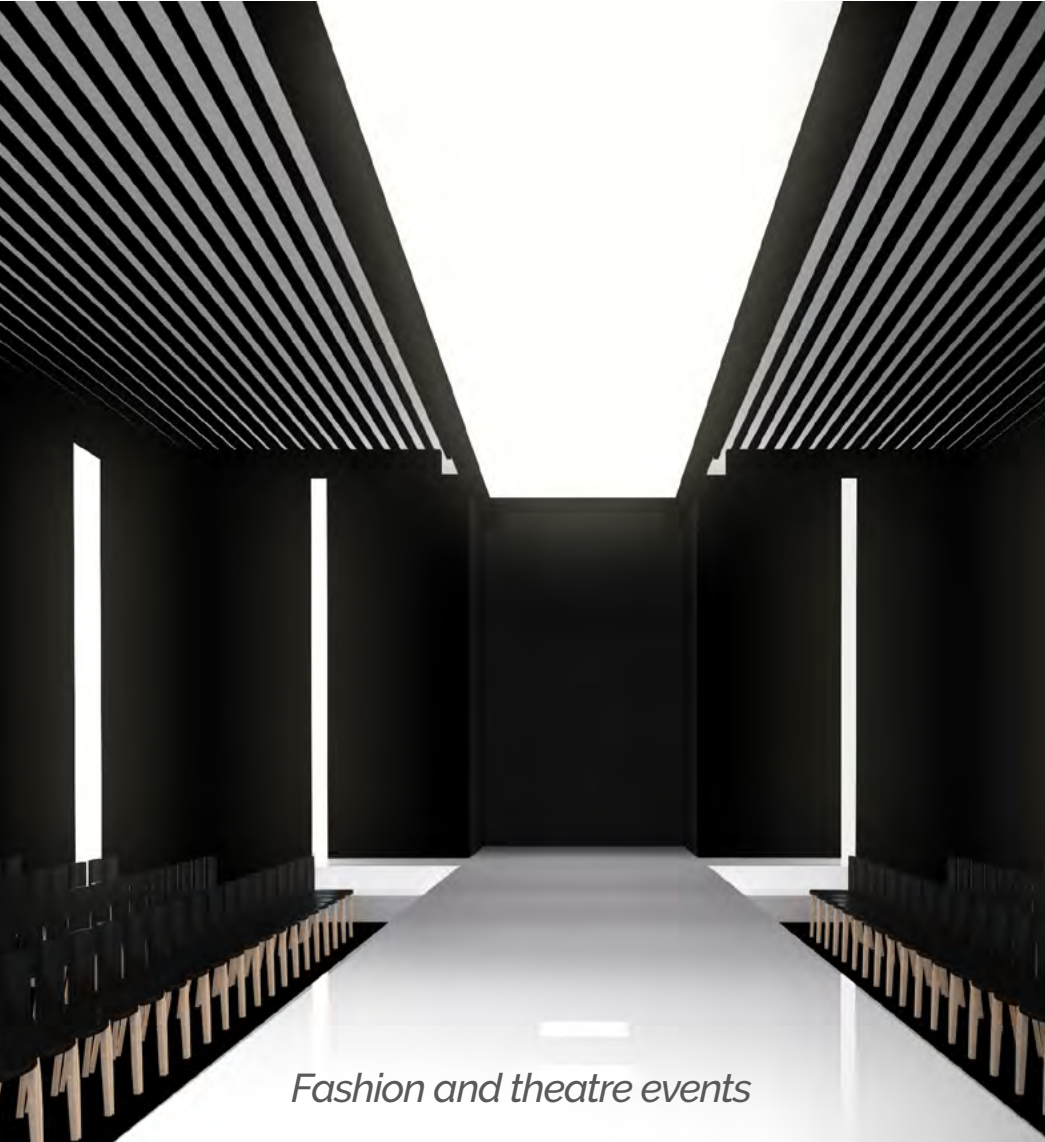
A lot of beginning artists aren't sure where they can go to practice their skills. Sure you can always practice on yourself, friends and family, but you need regular practice on a variety of faces – strangers' faces! – if you want to truly enhance your abilities. Here are a few suggestions on how to accomplish this:

Makeup Counter

Almost everyone either wants their makeup done or wants to learn some tips on how to do it better. If you want to gain real hands-on experience, think about getting a job behind the makeup counter.

No place has more diversity than a mall, and this will give you the amazing opportunity (or advantage) of working on people of all ages, skin types and ethnicities. Best of all, you actually get paid to perfect your craft!





Fashion and theatre events

Volunteer your time to work on the runway models and theatrical casts. This will not only give you a variety of people to work on, but it will also give you valuable insights into new mediums to use your talent.

Hospitals, churches and old age homes

This is a beautiful way to gain practice and be a better person. Hospitals, churches and old age homes are always willing to set up programs for people who want to volunteer their time and talents. Not only will you gain invaluable experience, you'll also get to brighten the days of those who might not be in the best of health or who just want a little company and kindness. This practice of volunteering will be good for you and the person you are working on!

Everyone you know

Practice your skills on every single one of your friends and family members.



PORTFOLIO

Having a collection of your work available for potential clients to see is critical to your advancement as an artist. Nothing will get you work faster than a diverse and beautiful catalogue that represents what you are capable of as an artist.

Would you hire someone to do your makeup if you could see no example of their work? Of course not! And no one else will either, so assembling the right portfolio is essential.

Your portfolio will need to consist of a variety of styles, but each will differ slightly based on where you want to specialize.

- For a well-rounded portfolio, I would recommend having several examples of straight makeup (a clean, simple but flawless look), along with a few examples of editorial makeup and avant garde, experimental, and/or fantasy makeup.
- If you want to work in bridal, it would be best to have a separate portfolio for that. Within, you can have varying levels of makeup appropriate for those clients.
- If you want to work in film and TV, a reel will work well in addition to your portfolio.





Portfolio Tips

Use Good Professional Photographs

The best way to showcase your talent is with professional images. You put so much time into perfecting your work, the quality of image should be able to convey this to your potential clients. This is an investment, but one that will yield tremendous returns.

Or photograph it yourself.

Of course this is not ideal, but it will give you examples to show potential clients while you work on getting professional images.

Taking your own portfolio photos? This might help:

**Taking Good
Makeup Photos**

Get a Variety of Models & Photos

Test and Trade shoots. Also known as "styled shoots," these are the perfect opportunity to get amazing shots for your portfolio. Everyone involved works at no charge in exchange for great images.

Volunteer Work. Find work on student films, small television and film production companies, fashion shows and local theatres. The film and TV projects will be filmed giving you work for your reel and the runway shows and theatre productions always have a professional photographer.

Types of Portfolios

Print Portfolio

This is the standard leather binder that contains plastic sleeves with actual images and tear sheets. They can be costly and are sometimes required by agencies and specific projects.

Online Portfolio

This is becoming the preferred portfolio. It can be kept on your website, your social media feeds and even in a tablet so you can carry it to meetings with potential clients.

MARKETING

If you do not properly market yourself, how is anyone going to find you? It is essential that you get yourself out there, if you plan to have a far-reaching career.

The internet is nearly all you need! Yes, you may want to get business cards, but how often do people really hand them to one another anymore... so get business cards printed when you can, but get yourself online now!

Focus on...

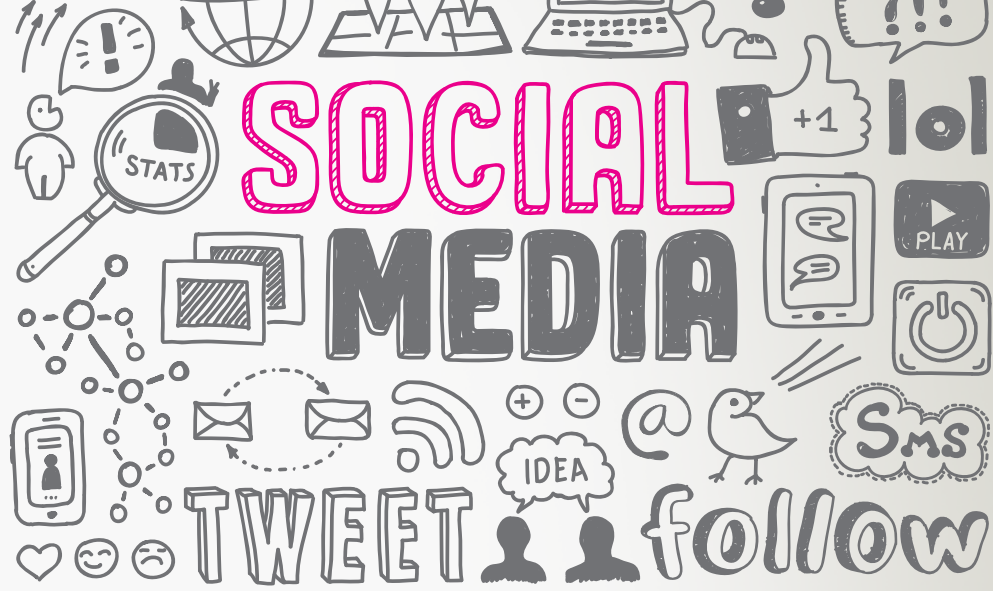
A Website

This is the easiest way to have your work available to the world 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A simple, clear page with contact information and another with access to your ever-expanding portfolio is an essential marketing tool.

A Blog

If you are blessed with the gift of writing and want to be heard, you should start a blog! This is an amazing opportunity for you to get your knowledge and expertise out there on a broader level. Whether you share product tips and knowledge, talk about your favorite trends, teach application, or all of the above, a blog can be a great way to get people to know your name.





Social Media

Possibly the most powerful of all marketing tools, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and every other platform have created celebrities across the globe! This could be an amazing opportunity for you. Even if your goal is not to monetize your social media efforts, the far reach of these sites could gain you worldwide fans and clients.

You can make a big impact if you establish yourself as a daily presence in the world social media.

Business Cards

It is the oldest marketing tool in the book and still a useful one! Have one or two in your pocket at all times. My tip with these...keep them simple.

Marketing Education

Don't be afraid to take some small business marketing or advertising seminars (even free ones online). This will give you invaluable insights into gaining customers, creating a brand and extending your reach.

When you get yourself online and begin proper marketing, you establish yourself as a brand. That is a powerful step necessary for a successful future. If you want to make an impact and broaden your career, it is essential that you take some, if not all, of the above steps.

Find more information on the Beauty Buzz Blog:

[How to Build a Website](#)

[How to Write a Blog](#)

[Social Media for Businesses](#)

[Additional Business Resources](#)

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Makeup is a career that is entirely about the satisfaction of the customer. Your education will teach you how to properly behave with a client, but only practice can make it second nature.

- **Listen:** Your client has come to you for a service and chances are they want something specific, whether it be a specific look, an event, or lessons. Your job is to hear and deliver.
- **Check the attitude:** If someone does not like what you do, correct it with a smile. As amazing as the look you created may be, the client has to wear it, so make them happy at all costs. Makeup is all about the feel-good factor and your client should feel good (no, GREAT!) when you are done, even if it requires a few small (or large) adjustments. It only take a few minutes to adjust it to their liking and you will most likely gain a referral.

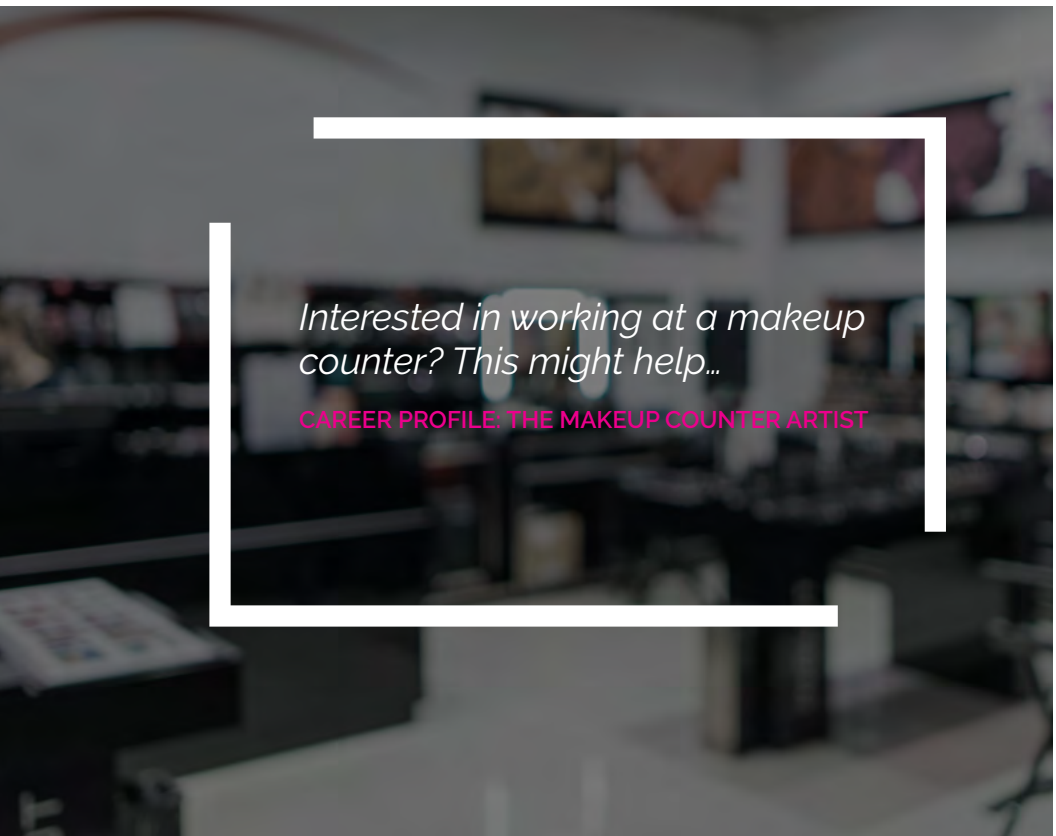


- **Stay positive:** Your excitement and passion is contagious to the client you work on. If you love what you do and share your service with a positive attitude, you are very likely to turn a one-time customer into a life-long client.
- **Go the extra mile:** When I am applying makeup, I always try to teach my secrets to my clients. Each and every time, I try to improve on their makeup knowledge a little. You might think this would leave me with no clients at all, but instead it has built me a dedicated roster. Share what you know.

Want to get a master class in customer service and learn a TON about applying makeup on every possible face?

Get a job at a makeup counter. You will have the opportunity to work with hundreds of people every week. You can practice listening and kindness while getting a ton of practical work on a multitude of different faces. This is the most amazing opportunity to get paid to learn!

Also, if you can learn to be calm under pressure in this "client comes first" environment, then you will be cool as a cucumber on film sets, with celebrity clients, major editorials or any other high profile job.



Interested in working at a makeup counter? This might help...

CAREER PROFILE: THE MAKEUP COUNTER ARTIST

NETWORK

To have a deep rooted, long term career, it will be essential that you have a broad network of contacts. Your continued success will rely on having enough contacts to keep you working year after year.

Networking Opportunities Include:

- Trade shows
- Event planners
- Bridal boutiques
- Local makeup counters
- Agents
- Production companies
- Spas
- Hair salons
- Morgues
- Theatres

There are countless opportunities to network! Keep your eyes open to all of them and stay in contact with everyone who might be beneficial to your future.

THE TAKEAWAYS

Many believe that a successful career in the highly competitive field of Makeup depends entirely upon luck. I agree...BUT I also believe we make our own luck!

If you want to step into this amazing world of artistry, you would be smart to follow the roadmap I laid out above.

Take a positive step toward achieving your dreams this very moment by watching a video, reading about a technique and signing up for the training program that is right for you. If makeup is your passion, then following that map will prepare you for success, and a person prepared for success is usually the one "lucky" enough to find it.

What career is better than one that gifts its clients with self-confidence? Isn't it time you join us in this beautiful and noble profession?

XOXOXO

nathan



ABOUT QC MAKEUP ACADEMY

QC Makeup Academy, a division of QC Career School, offers distance education training in makeup artistry all over the world. Our goal is to offer the highest quality training in makeup artistry possible.



4.8 STAR RATING ON FACEBOOK

Hundreds of QC students and graduates have rated the school on Facebook. QC's overall rating is an amazing 4.8 out of 5 stars! If you'd like to see what students are saying, head on over to **QC's Facebook Reviews!**

A+ RATING WITH THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

QC is proud to hold the highest possible consumer satisfaction rating (A+) with the Better Business Bureau. Join the thousands of students who have taken a QC program and gone on to launch a rewarding and successful career!

21-DAY FULL REFUND GUARANTEE

Once you receive your course materials, you'll have a full three weeks (21 days) to review your course. If you decide that the course does not match your needs, simply return the materials to the school, unused, and your fees will be immediately refunded!

[Click here to learn more](#)

ENROLL ONLINE TODAY AND TAKE YOUR FIRST STEP TO AN EXCITING CAREER!

ENROLL ONLINE

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STUDENT SHOWCASE

