

# 1940s Hair Roll Tutorial

From eileensbasement.wordpress.com

The inspiration for this project comes from an original hair “rat” from the Forties that I was lucky enough to win on ebay. It was created using human hair sewn into a hair net with brown cording on either side. It’s placed on the crown of the head and the hair is tucked up and over it and secured with pins to form a roll. The first time I used it I snagged the hairnet on my pin and tore a hole which inspired me to create one using modern day supplies that could take more of a beating. Now, on to the tutorial!

First, you’ll need to gather your supplies.



What you’ll need is about 1/2 yard of ribbon or cord, two [chignon foundations](#), needle and thread, and a pair of scissors. If you’re a sewist you’ll have many of these things lying around the house.

- First, take your ribbon and use it to measure your head from the base of your skull up to the crown of the head. Add two inches to this and cut the ribbon. For example, my head measurement is 22 inches so I’d cut a 24 inch piece of ribbon. For my hair rat, I’m using 1 inch wide red velvet ribbon. Cut the ends at an angle to prevent the ribbon fraying. If you have some Fray-Check you can add it to the tips of the ribbon as well.

- Next, open your chignon foundations. Fresh from the package they look like donuts. Make one cut through them to open them up. Do this to both foundations. They'll look like this:



- Take the two chignon foundations and whipstitch them together using your needle and some waxed thread so that they form one long foundation. This is the foundation for your roll. It doesn't have to be neat as it will later be hidden underneath your hair. To



illustrate, mine looks like this:

- Now take your piece of ribbon and cut it in half. Stitch each half to one end of the roll foundation that you've just created. If you want a dressier look, use a fun ribbon. If you'd like the roll to be hidden, you can use a length of cord that matches your hair color here much like the original. Again, your stitching doesn't have to look pretty because it will be hidden by your hair. This is what it should look like when you've finished:



### I Heart Hair Rolls

- At this point you can do one of two things; if you think you'd like to tie your roll onto your head and make a pretty bow then you are finished! I opted to add a few snaps to the top of the ribbon to secure the two ends together but again, this is entirely up to you. What I did was place the roll at the back of my head and sew snaps to the ribbon where the cut ends overlap. I cut off the excess ribbon at this point.

Now, the fun part- using your new hair roll! First, I curled the top of my hair into a backwards roll at the top of my head. I put the back of my hair up in a loose ponytail. I took the hair elastic and slid it down to about an inch away from the ends of my hair:



Slide the hair elastic to the ends of your hair

Then, take your new roll foundation and place the center of it on top of where you slid the hair elastic to. You can then begin to roll your hair up towards your head.



### Rolling Hair Upwards

Once you've got it up to the base of your head, you'll take the two ends of ribbon and either snap them (as in my case) or you'll tie them in a pretty bow. For extra security, take two bobby pins and pin the ribbon or cord to your hair just behind your ears. Layered hair like mine will have a lot of ends hanging loose; at this point take any stragglers up and over the top of your roll and stuff and pin them down. Smooth the hair and arrange it in a fashion to where the roll is no longer showing. Secure with a liberal use of bobby pins. It should then look like this:



From Behind



From the Front



Side View

Viola! Now go rock your fabulous vintage 'do with pride. But don't be surprised when you get questioned as to how you got your hair to do this. I got stopped more than a few times when I wore this to the mall!