



## Angelic Nails: Know your product

### Are gels made of acrylic?

To understand gels, it is important to know the history of artificial nails. Where it all began and how products have evolved through the years. When acrylics were first developed in early 1970s, an ingredient called MMA (Methyl Methacrylate) was used to create acrylics. This product was not suitable for the nail industry, so manufacturers started using EMA (Ethyl Methacrylate). MMA was accused of damaging the nail plate and causing allergic reactions, however there is no scientific evidence of this. Damage was caused by over buffing the nail plate and allergic reactions was caused due to over exposure of the product onto the skin. This still happens today as nail technicians over work the nail plate and touches the skin with products (gels and acrylics).

Gels are often sold as being 'not acrylic', but this cannot be. Gels are based on both the **methacrylate** and the **acrylate** family. Check your gel product ingredient list; if one of these words are mentioned in one form or the other, the product has a measure of acrylic in it. MMA and EMA are from the same family but their properties are immensely different.

### What is gel?

Gel is typically a pre-mixed **polymer** and **monomer** that is first applied to the nails and then cured under ultra-violet lights. This mixture is called **oligomers**. An oligomer is a single chain that is several thousand monomers long. This makes gels more flexible and removable. Acrylics are short polymer chains that link with each other and across each other making it really strong and much harder to remove.

In short, gels, acrylics and even wrap systems all come from the same family. Their mixtures differ to get different strengths; some are more flexible and others much harder to suit different clients needs.

### Educate yourself!

Don't just take our word for it, go and Google the information provided in this article. There are so many articles written by Scientists all over the world explaining how nail products work. Nobody keeps it a secret. Everyone knows that all gels have some measure of acrylic in it, no matter how big or small.

### References:

[www.hooked-on-nails.com](http://www.hooked-on-nails.com) / [www.schoonscientific.com/index.html](http://www.schoonscientific.com/index.html)

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