

M'KAI - Makeup and Costuming Technical Guide

Makeup

M'kai are a **makeup-heavy** species.

At minimum, all visible skin should be covered in purple makeup. M'kai skin shades vary from lavender through dark purple and players can pick a purple makeup that is comfortable for them, as long as none of their normal skintone is visible. **Players can minimize the areas they need to put makeup on by wearing gloves, long sleeves, leggings and tights.** M'kai lips are a shade of purple in their natural state, so lipstick is recommended. Eyeshadow is common but optional, as is nail polish.

We recommend at least two shades of purple so that you can contour your face, but one will suffice. For the example to the right, we have used Tulip Lavender face paint. This is a water-based face paint, applied with a paintbrush.

Process:

M'kai costuming **requires a yarn wig or alternative head covering**, so you should tie back your hair and put on any shirts that you need to pull over your head before you begin applying makeup. If applying moisturizer or barrier spray, do that at this point. Fixative spray can be applied throughout the process, or just at the end.

- Lay down a base coat of purple. It should cover your entire face and any visible portions of your neck.
- If contouring: Using a darker purple shade, add shadows to contour your face - this is largely by your preference and face shape: areas we shaded were the hollows of the cheeks, the temples, under the bottom lip, between the eyebrows, under the nose and along the jawline. (These are masculine shadow areas, a more feminine M'kai may wish to shade less dramatically).
- If highlighting: Using a lighter shade of purple or a white or pink powder, blend small amounts into your purple base on any areas that are prominent - the ridge of the nose, cheekbones, chin and forehead. You don't want to use a lot, just enough to lighten the purple up a bit. If you apply too much, you can paint over it with more of your base color.
- When you are satisfied with your base layer and contouring, add lipstick and eyeshadow/liner, if using it.
- If you're not wearing gloves, don't forget to apply your base coat color to your hands! This will most likely wear off of your palms, so focus more on the tops of your hands and fingers. If wearing nail polish, apply that first.
- Apply a makeup fixative, and you should be good to go!

Suggestions:

We recommend players look into lightweight purple body coverings for their arms and legs. These can be found by searching for "arm socks" online. They are often used for cosplay of characters from Homestuck and Steven Universe.



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Costume

M'kai costuming is as strange and quirky as the M'kai themselves. They are fond of asymmetry and love bright, loud colors and florid patterns. The K'laxxon brood in particular has a preference for shades of teal, turquoise, blue, purple and magenta. M'kai gender is a complicated topic, suffice to say most clothing items can be unisex.

M'kai gaudiness is, in a cultural sense, a way of maintaining or promoting visibility in a society that values social standing above all else. Steer away from neutral colors like tan, brown and gray. You want to walk into a room and be noticed!

Suggestions: Saturated solid colors. Asymmetrical and weird cuts. Mid-length jackets. Turtlenecks or colored tights as an under-layer (to cover more of your skin). Contrasting colorblock patterns. Cyberpunk and Rave-inspired clothing.



Key Accessories

Hair: If you are playing a M'kai, a **yarn wig is required**. If you do not wish to wear a yarn wig but still want to play a M'kai, you will need to cover your head completely - head-scarves or cloth wrappings are common M'kai attire, and you should be able to pin yarn into the wrapping to imply the rest of your hair is hidden. This is also a good way to handle M'kai hair in warm weather. Dread wigs and yarn-dread wigs are acceptable as long as they are brightly colored. Yarn/faux hair mixes are also acceptable, but should be mostly yarn and appropriately colored.

- Yarn wigs can be purchased online, or you can make your own.
- K'laxxon brood M'kai all have similar K hair colors: teal, turquoise, blue, purple and magenta*. Gradient yarn encouraged!
(*Non-playable M'kai broods will use other colors. Stick with these colors for now).
- **Safety Advisory:** We used a knit cap to make M'kai wigs, and found it to be far too warm to wear most months of the year. An alternative option is to create a hat-wig combo piece that you can wear in the summer months (similar in concept to the head-scarf). If wearing a hat, you should attach a relatively thick fringe of yarn hair to the inner rim of the hat.



Horns: M'kai have delicate, branching crystalline horns that are purple at the base, frosted in the middle, and clear at the tips. These grow to about 6" high and are about 1/2" wide at the bottom. Many M'kai have damaged horns, and those with fully intact horns are extremely proud and protective of them. Most high-gender M'kai have both complete horns.

- M'kai horns are unusual in design, so it is suggested that players make or commission their own. Our initial horns were built using wire and hot glue, painted purple at the base and attached to hair clips. Thermoplastic such as Friendly Plastic is a good option, clear resin and other casting materials could also be used.

