

# Tattoo Placement Guide: Pain and Fading Chart

Use this chart to pick a spot that fits your life, your pain tolerance, and your long game. Pain and fading vary by person. This is a friendly starting point.

**Legend - Pain level:** 1 very low, 5 very high - **Visibility:** Low, Medium, High - **Fade risk:** Low, Medium, High - **Touch ups:** Rare, Sometimes, Often

## Quick Chart

Placement area	Pain level	Visibility	Fade risk	Friction or sun	Touch ups	Notes	Best for
Inner wrist	2	High	Medium	Hand washing, sun	Sometimes	Easy to see. Heals fast with care.	Symbols, micro script
Inner forearm	2	High	Low	Low sun if long sleeves	Rare	Clean look, great for future additions.	Fine lines, short phrases
Outer forearm	2 to 3	High	Low to Medium	Sun	Sometimes	More sun than inner side. Use SPF once healed.	Motifs, bolder lines
Upper arm	2	Medium	Low	Low	Rare	Ages well. Easy to cover for work.	Larger blends
Collarbone	3	Medium	Low to Medium	Some sun	Rare	Elegant, slight movement when you breathe.	Script and symbols
Behind ear	3	Low	Low	Low	Rare	Small canvas, discreet.	Tiny symbols
Shoulder blade	3	Low	Low	Low	Rare	Stays sharp for years with care.	Motifs, scenes
Rib side	4	Low	Low	Low	Rare	More pain, but ages well.	Script, lines

Placement area	Pain level	Visibility	Fade risk	Friction or sun	Touch ups	Notes	Best for
Ankle	3 to 4	Medium	High	Socks, shoes	Often	Friction can blur lines. Keep it simple.	Symbols, short text
Top of foot	4	Medium	High	Shoes, sun	Often	Slow healing. Plan for touch ups.	Minimal lines
Finger, sides	5	High	Very high	Constant use, washing	Often	Fast fade. Be ready for maintenance.	Very small marks
Hand, back	4	High	High	Sun, washing	Often	Bold lines last longer than hairlines.	Graphic symbols
Inner bicep	3	Low	Low	Low	Rare	Soft skin, reads well.	Script, symbols
Calf	2 to 3	Medium	Low	Low	Rare	Good aging, large canvas.	Motifs, landscapes

## How to use this

1. Pick two or three spots that fit your job and wardrobe.
2. Check pain and fade for each spot. Be honest about sun and friction.
3. Print two size mockups. Wear each for 24 hours. Take mirror and daylight photos.
4. Leave space to expand later if you think you will add to it.

## Area by area tips

### Wrist and forearm

- Wash and sun are the main fade drivers. SPF after healing helps a lot.
- Slightly thicker stroke, 1.0 to 1.2 mm, ages better than a hairline.
- Great for the G > ^ v symbol and short dates.

### Collarbone and behind the ear

- Elegant and discreet. Movement from breathing is normal on the collarbone.
- Keep designs simple in very small spaces.

## Ankles and feet

- Expect friction. Shoes and socks speed up fade.
- Choose simple lines. Plan for touch ups.

## Fingers and hands

- Highest fade risk. Ink breaks down from washing and sun.
- If you pick this area, accept maintenance as part of the plan.

## Upper arm, shoulder blade, calf

- Age well with normal care. Good spots if you want to avoid frequent touch ups.
- Great for blends if you might expand later.

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## Fade factors you can control

- Sun, use SPF 30 or higher when healed.
- Friction, avoid tight bands on fresh tattoos.
- Water and sweat, skip soaking while healing.
- Skin care, gentle soap and a light, studio approved moisturizer.

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## Quick decisions checklist

- ☐ I chose two possible spots that fit my daily life.
- ☐ I know the pain and fade trade offs for each spot.
- ☐ I printed mockups and tested size for a day.
- ☐ I left room to expand the design later.
- ☐ I have SPF and aftercare ready at home.

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