

# 'I'M KATE MOSS' HAND DOUBLE'

Gemma Howorth, 24, from London has been the hands of Kate Moss and Lily Cole – it's no wonder her glam mitts are insured for over £1 million

When I was 15, a friend's mum – who is a very high-profile photographer – said, "Your hands are amazing, you should be a hand model." I didn't even know hand-modelling existed. She took me to an agency, who said my hands were fantastic and signed me up on the spot. The first job I did was for Rimmel, which was fun. When my agent told me how much I'd be paid I couldn't believe it. A hand model earns £200 for two hours' work – the most I've ever earned was £2,000 for one day's work.

Every job is different. I recently did a Rimmel shoot with Lily Cole – all the close-up shots of her hands were me. I had to put foundation on her face, so had to crouch behind her and put my arm up so it looked like my hand belonged on her arm. She was lovely, which meant it wasn't at all awkward. I also did a Kate Moss advert for Rimmel. Watching her in action is incredible. Directors say they don't even have to direct her because she knows what to do straight away. She was friendly, but I didn't have too much to do with her. I was doing the close-up shots – in one take I had to open a lipstick and in another I opened a lip gloss.

I modelled for a *Tatler* jewellery shoot and all the models were naked and sprayed in gold paint. They were sitting on stools and I was crouched by their legs with my arms around their waist, so it looked like my hands were theirs. That was fun and I had about £8 million-worth of rings on my hands. Another time I did a *Vogue* shoot with a £10m diamond ring. I had bodyguards with me the whole time, they even followed me to the toilet! Hand-modelling is harder than it sounds. It can be tricky holding a

**'I had to lie on top of actress Rose Byrne for four hours with my little finger in her mouth'**

position for hours and bending my neck so the camera can't see my head and I don't obstruct the lights. Last week I did a job and I had to keep my hand in position for six hours. And once I did a shoot with actress Rose Byrne, star of *Damages* and *Troy*. It was for Lancôme



KATE'S OWN HANDS

GEMMA'S HANDS



## Gemma's jobs



RIMMEL



JOHNSON & JOHNSON

MAX FACTOR



and I had to lie on top of her for four hours with my little finger in her mouth. Afterwards we just laughed about it. You have to have a certain personality to do this. Most of the time the people I

work with are great – but sometimes it's models who aren't that famous who say, "What's wrong with my hands?" Hand-modelling is

a 24-hour job, you have to be so careful. I can't do the washing-up or clean the house. Even silly things like changing the sheets – I did that a while ago and broke a nail the day before a big shoot and had to cancel. It sounds crazy, but if I break a nail it takes two to three

weeks to grow back, which is a lot of money in lost shoots. I moisturise my hands 20 times a day and always wear sunscreen. My husband thinks I'm crazy when we go on holiday and I have white cotton gloves on my hands, but I don't want wrinkles! If I'm cooking I have to wear gloves. My hands are insured for a seven-figure sum.

One of my ambitions was to set up a hand-modelling agency, which I did recently. I want to train young girls and pass on my knowledge. The oldest model in my agency is 60, she used to model with Twiggy and she still works. Obviously the young girls get a lot more work, because people want beautiful, young hands. But whatever age you are, there will always be a need for a hand.'

## HANDY (AHEM) TIPS FOR BEING A HAND MODEL

Gemma says: 'You need elegant, beautifully shaped hands, with long, straight fingers. Long nail beds and an even skin tone are essential. But more than that, you have to be extremely patient – you have to be able to hold your hand really still, and move it a millimetre to get the shot. You have to protect your hands and look after cuticles. I use cuticle oil 10 times a day, plus I moisturise and use nail treatments. One day I'd like my own product range.'

**WANT TO BE A HAND MODEL? HERE'S HOW**

Enter Jessica Natural Nail's search for a hand model at the Clothes Show London (29-31 May). First prize includes a hand modelling contract with Hand Models 1 and a tailored supply of Jessica goodies. Get an instant 10% discount off all products when you hand this page in at the Jessica stand at Clothes Show London (offer may not be used in conjunction with any other