

Makeup Removers

For all the time we spend perfecting our smoky eye, taking it off should be the easy part. "The rule for eye-makeup remover is that you should be able to take it off with one or two swipes—no rubbing," says makeup artist Brigitte Reiss-Andersen. We asked her to test the latest formulas. —LAUREN COHEN

The Body Shop Waterproof Eye Makeup Remover

THE CLAIM: "Gently and effectively removes waterproof eye makeup ...soothes skin" with organic chamomile.

REISS-ANDERSEN SAYS: "The chamomile depuffs the eye area, but I had to work to remove heavy eyeliner."

TheBalm BalmsAway Eye Makeup Break-Up

THE CLAIM: A "skin-soothing eye-makeup removing balm" that leaves behind "vitamins A, C, and E, and a blend of lipids to hydrate skin."

REISS-ANDERSEN SAYS: "It's a modern take on cold cream and removes makeup easily, but I didn't like the greasy film."

Decleor Eye Make-Up Remover Gel

THE CLAIM: "Gently removes all types of eye makeup, including waterproof mascara, with an exclusive blend of essential oils and floral waters."

REISS-ANDERSEN SAYS: "The light texture is great, but the makeup didn't budge without major scrubbing."

Boots Expert Sensitive Gentle Eye Make-up Removal Pads

THE CLAIM: "Hypoallergenic and fragrance-free; a blend of oils sweeps away even waterproof makeup."

REISS-ANDERSEN SAYS: "The pads are practical and take off makeup very well, but they are extremely oily."

Benefit Gee...That Was Quick! Oil-Free Makeup Remover

THE CLAIM: "The oil-free formula thoroughly removes even the most stubborn mascara in one swipe."

REISS-ANDERSEN SAYS: "I love the watery consistency of this and how it really takes makeup off quickly. Plus, it's not at all oily."

Yves Saint Laurent Cleansing Silky Balm Radiance Revealer

THE CLAIM: The creamy cleanser "melts to become light...oils that absorb all types of makeup."

REISS-ANDERSEN SAYS: "Creams can be messy—but this wasn't. It's not specifically for the eyes, but it took off all the makeup."

Master the Cleanse

Sure, you've been washing your face for as long as you can remember, but there is a certain art to coming clean the right way. Here, dermatologists share their wisdom.

DON'T OVERDO IT. Cleansing too often "will strip the skin of the oils it needs to maintain an intact barrier, which can leave skin dry, scaly, red, and irritated," says Jody Levine, clinical instructor of dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. Generally, Levine says, people with dry skin shouldn't wash more than once a day (at night is best), while those with normal or oily skin can handle washing twice. Though exfoliating cleansers with gritty particles should only be used a few times a week, oily skin can tolerate a glycolic or salicylic acid cleanser with every wash, Levine says.

WARM UP. "Very hot water dries the skin," Levine says. "Use warm water instead." If you choose to wash your face in the shower, turn the temperature down as low as the rest of your body can take it when you wash and rinse your face.

WATCH THE LATHER. The only reason you may want to leave a cleanser on your skin a few seconds longer than 60 is if you are washing acne-prone skin with a benzoyl peroxide or glycolic acid cleanser. Otherwise, "the longer a cleanser is on the skin, the drier skin will become," Levine says. "Rub on the cleanser, produce a lather and then rinse it off."

GIVE IT A RUB. Massaging the cleanser can increase the blood flow slightly and bring oxygen beneath the skin, clearing away carbon dioxide and leading to healthier skin tissue.

DRY GENTLY. Use a towel to blot skin dry; rubbing can cause irritation. Finally, applying a moisturizer to slightly damp skin will maximize its effect, says dermatologist Jeannette Graf, assistant professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City.

The Truth About Toners

Dermatologists have long said that toner is unnecessary. In fact, because many astringents contain alcohol, they can make skin uncomfortably dry. But recently, this neglected middle child of skin care has evolved.

The newest toners are packed with antioxidants, peptides, and moisturizers, and are focused more on hydrating skin and countering signs of aging than on stripping it of oil. They are appropriate for all skin types and all areas of the face, while the previous toners, designed for oily and acne-prone skin, were intended mostly for the T-zone, says Amy B. Lewis, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the Yale School of Medicine. She says antioxidants (such as green tea and vitamin C) in toners like Care by Stella McCartney Toning Floral Water can help

combat free radicals; hyaluronic acid or glycerin, in Estee Lauder Soft Clean Silky Hydration Lotion and Sothys Flower, will moisturize; and peptides, in Dermalogica Age Smart Antioxidant Mydra-Mist, are known to stimulate collagen production.

Are these new products more beneficial than the originals? If you do have sensitive or oily skin and tend to break out from heavy creams, these toners could be an appealing alternative to moisturizer says David E. Bank, associate professor of clinical dermatology at Columbia University. For everyone else, "using a moisturizer that includes these hydrating or anti-aging ingredients would be more effective, because creams penetrate deeper into the skin and remain active for longer," Bank says.

—KAYLEIGH DONAHUE