

We all dream of flawless, glowing skin, but with new products constantly hitting the shelves and the seemingly endless skincare advice out there on the Internet, it's not always easy to figure out the skincare routine that's going to work best for you. You know the basics — drink plenty of water, get enough sleep, and wash your face, but what about everything in between? Luckily, there's no need to shell out tons of cash on any magical procedures or expensive creams to achieve flawless skin.

We spoke with dermatologists and top beauty experts to put together a list of some of the best skincare tips. From choosing the right cleanser for your skin type to the importance of cleaning your makeup brushes, these easy tricks — plus some top-tested product picks from the Good Housekeeping Institute Beauty Lab — will help guide you to glowing skin ASAP.

1. Use the correct cleanser for your skin type.

"For oily or acne-prone skin, a salicylic gel or benzoyl peroxide wash works great," says Dr. Ava Shamban, a dermatologist in Santa Monica. "For dry mature skin, use either a moisturizing glycolic or milky cleanser. For skin with brown spots or melasma, use a brightening wash, such as an alpha hydroxy acid cleanser."

2. Don't use too many products.

Layering on multiple skincare products all at once is a big no-no, says Dr. Julia Tzu, an NYC-based dermatologist. It can be harsh on the skin, resulting in more breakouts and clogged pores.

3. Moisturize both day and night.

"The best times to moisturize are right after you get out of the shower and right before you go to bed," explained Dr. Janet Prystowsky M.D., an NYC-based dermatologist. Avoid lotions with heavy fragrances and make sure you find a moisturizer gentle enough for every day use with zero irritation.

4. Don't touch your face.

Dr. Tzu says figuring out how to avoid touching your face is very important. It doesn't just spread bacteria and cause breakouts — it can lead to scarring, an increase in wrinkles, and even the flu or other viruses.

5. Hydrate inside and out.

Every skin expert we spoke to emphasized the importance of hydration. "A lack of water means less radiance and more sag," says Dr. Mona Gohara, a dermatologist in Connecticut. She suggests choosing products (cleansing, moisturizing, and anti-aging) that have hydrating formulas. And, of course, drink around eight glasses of water a day.

6. Avoid direct heat exposure.

Don't just watch out for the sun — getting too close to heaters and fireplaces can also wreak havoc on your skin. "It causes inflammation and collagen breakdown. I recommend staying at least ten feet away," explains Dr. Debbie Palmer, a New York dermatologist. So next time you're roasting chestnuts or s'mores over an open fire, take a step back.

7. Exfoliate a couple times per week.

"We lose 50 million skin cells a day, and without a little extra nudge, they may hang around leaving the skin looking sullen," says Dr. Gohara. To fight this, you should "choose a product that is pH neutral so it doesn't dry as it exfoliates." And don't just stop with your face — the skin on your body needs exfoliation, too.

8. Vitamins should go on your skin, too.

A balanced diet is important, but there's more than one way to give your skin vitamins. There are also topical antioxidants, which are serums and creams that contain ingredients that nourish the skin (think vitamin C serum!).

"These can really help to repair the skin from sun damage," says Dr. Palmer. Not sure how to use them? The best time to apply them is right after cleansing so that your skin can soak them in, or they can be layered under your sunscreen for added protection.

9. Get your greens.

Though it's tempting to grab a coffee the minute you wake up, Joanna Vargas, a skincare facialist in NYC, says choosing the right beverages can be a game changer. "Drink a shot of chlorophyll every morning to brighten, oxygenate, and hydrate your skin. Drinking chlorophyll also helps drain puffiness by stimulating the lymphatic system, so it's also good for cellulite."

If you're not keen on downing a shot of the stuff, chlorophyll supplements can be found at many drugstores and health food stores.

She also advised drinking green juices with lots of veggies in them: "It will transform your skin in a matter of days — and it helps oxygenate the skin and stimulates lymphatic drainage, so it's de-puffing, too."

0. Maintain a healthy diet.

"Your skin has a natural barrier to retain moisture, and essential to that is omega-3 fatty acid," Joanna advises. "Flax seeds on your salad or even walnuts will be an instant boost to your omega-3, thus increasing your skin's ability to hold onto moisture." And be sure to eat a diet low in foods with a high glycemic index (simple and complex carbohydrates).

11. Clean your makeup brushes regularly.

To fight infection and clogged pores, Dr. Prystowsky recommends washing concealer and foundation brushes once a week. For brushes you use around your eyes, she recommends twice per month, and for any other brushes, once a month is fine.

Here's how: Put a drop of a mild shampoo into the palm of your hand. Wet the bristles with lukewarm water. Then, massage the bristles into your palm to distribute the shampoo into the brush. Avoid getting the metal part of the brush wet/or the base of the brush hairs because the glue could soften and the bristles could fall out. Rinse the shampoo out and squeeze out the water with a towel. Lay the brushes on their side with the bristles hanging off the edge of the counter to dry.

12. Wear sunscreen 365 days a year — rain or shine, indoors or out.

"Many people feel they only need to protect themselves on sunny days or when visiting the beach," says Dr. Palmer. "But the truth is that we need to protect our skin even when we're driving a car, flying in an airplane, or running errands. It's the daily UV exposure that contributes to the visible signs of aging." What kind of sunscreen is best? Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a SPF of 30 or greater — and remember that it needs to be reapplied every 2 hours.

13. Sun protection doesn't stop at sunscreen.

We're talking SPF makeup, sunglasses, and broad-brimmed hats. "Preventing sun damage is a million times better for your skin than treating it after the fact," says Dr. Prystowsky.

14. Simplify your skincare routine.

"Fad products and fancy ingredients are fun to try, and sometimes they work well," says Dr. Prystowsky, "but usually they're off the shelves just as quickly as they're on them." Find a cleanser and moisturizer that you know work for you, and keep them at the core of your routine.

15. Sleep smarter.

It's not just about getting eight hours a night. Skin will also benefit from regularly using clean silk pillowcases. "The material glides easily and prevents creasing and wrinkles," says Jesleen Ahluwalia, M.D., a dermatologist from Spring Street Dermatology in New York City. "Silk is also easier on hair — it helps avoid tangles and breakage." Better hair and skin while you sleep? Yes, please.