

Beauty Queen Kathy Phillips



Your beauty regime demystified with a foolproof list

I used to know what to do. It was cleanse, tone, moisturise, but now there's too much out there. When do you apply things like serum and day defence cream? Does eye cream go on before or after moisturiser? Please can I have a table?

Katie Lloyd, 30

Actually the term 'cleanse, tone and moisturise' was coined in the 1970s as a marketing strategy. A lot has happened since then. People don't realise just how much has been learned about skincare in the past two decades. Until then, there was no research on skin for women over 50 and any research there was had been carried out on men! From the 80s on we discovered many things including the benefits of exfoliation, how fruit acids aid skin renewal, how Retin A can be used to cure acne but, as it turns out, to reduce wrinkles too. Free radicals were first named in the 90s and antioxidants were discovered to be the things that fight their damage. Next came Vitamin C and ways to make it stable in a cream, and later still came the term 'cosmeceutical' when a cosmetic also claims pharmaceutical properties. Now dermatologists have got in on the cosmetics act with all their scientific terms, so no wonder you're confused. But there's more to come. So you need to gen up. Here's the list as easy as I can make it. Of course it's all about informed choice, learning what skin type you are and what is age-appropriate. Inveterate smokers and sunbathers need far more help than initiate monks for instance.

DAY Cleanse: the most important job of all. Economise on this and you either strip your skin's acid mantle or breed all sorts of blockages and build-up.

Tone: optional. Yes, with alcohol only if your skin is on the greasy side. Yes, for sensitive skins to refresh with natural floral waters (check it's really pure). Yes to cleanse a bit more, safely. It feels good.

Exfoliate: once a month if you have easy skin and are young. (Your skin starts to show signs of ageing after 20.) More if you have thick dark skin tending towards oily. Don't scrub hard and often if you have fine delicate skin, you don't need too. A good old rub with a hot flannel will do. For bad sun damage, try a gentle micro dermabrasion product at home before



**KATHY'S
HOT
PRODUCTS
OF THE
MONTH**

One of the big trends of this season is a Hollywood make-up – predominantly flawless skin and red lips. Here are my favourite ingredients to get the look: SKII's Signs Transform Foundation, £45 for foundation and £20 for the refillable compact (from 20 September exclusively at Harrods; nationwide from 11 October at selected department stores

(stockists: 08000 721 771), and Poppy King Lipstick Queen in Saints and Sinners, available from Space NK, £15 (020 8740 2085).

Kathy Phillips is beauty director of Condé Nast Asia. Author of four books, she has her own critically acclaimed aromatherapy range, *This Works*.

If you have a beauty question, send an email to observer.woman@observer.co.uk. The best one receives a product from This Works. Kathy Phillips's range (www.thisworks.com). For terms and conditions, see www.observer.co.uk/woman

Moisturise. always. Not down the T-zone if you have greasy skin. But on cheeks and neck, décolleté and eyelids all of which are delicate and need to be kept hydrated. Use your eye cream now if you want. Use a moisturiser with an SPF15 (I wouldn't bother with less) if you are going out in the daylight, or will be sitting in the sun – even behind a window. You can choose to put your SPF

on as a foundation if you prefer, but wear it and put it on the backs of your hands, too.

NIGHT Cleanse: be thorough but gentle.

Take off all signs of the SPF chemicals you used in the day. I prefer oil-based cleansers and a hot flannel. Wipes impregnated with chemicals are for

out SPF) but not too much round the eyes as it can make them look puffy in the morning. (You can use a serum again here instead if you like.) Oil is the fastest moisturiser – put it where your skin feels dry, don't use rich night creams if you are in your 20s – you don't need it yet.

I wear contact lenses and often find that my make-up either just disappears after a few hours, or smudges, and my eyes feel dry. I wear mostly No7 or Body Shop products, and wear eye shadow and a bit of eyeliner, and hypo-allergenic mascara. Can you recommend any products that are contact-lens friendly, and don't make your eyes feel dry or itchy, and which last more than a few hours.

Susie Kendall

It's difficult to know what's happening here, so I checked with Dr Susan Blakeney, optometric adviser to the College of Optometrists, who said: 'Your reader should first visit her optometrist to see if the cause of her dry itchy eyes can be determined. Even if the make-up she is using is hypo-allergenic she could still become allergic to it, so I would advise her to not wear any make-up for a few days to see if her eyes feel better. If she uses eyeliner on the 'wet' part

of her eyelid (between the base of the lashes and the eye itself) it can block the glands that produce part of the tears and this can lead to dryness. I would therefore advise that any eyeliner is used on the 'skin' part of the eyelid – outside the eyelashes – to avoid this happening. It is important to stress that the symptoms she is having may or may not be related to her make-up and so it is important that she has her eyes examined to exclude other causes. We would also advise that contact-lens wearers avoid using mascara that has fibres or filaments in it as these can get into the eye and become trapped behind the lens and scratch the cornea (the clear part of your eye that you look through). Water-soluble mascara and eyeliner is generally better for contact-lens wearers, as if it gets into the eye it can dissolve harmlessly in the tears.'

I would use an eye-shadow base and powder before putting on your colour. This will help it stay on (try MAC's Prep and Prime Eye £11, www.maccosmetics.co.uk). I find that Laura Mercier's eyeliner

