

# YOUR GREAT SKIN

*proper  
hydration!*

*GIVE YOUR FACE WHAT  
IT **CRAVES MOST**  
AND IT WILL BE  
SOFTER, SMOOTHER,  
AND CLEARER, TOO.*

# MASTER CLASS

BY CAROLINE SCHAEFER



***ARE YOU  
USING ENOUGH  
MOISTURIZER?***

Probably not, experts say. Skin gets drier with age, so slather on facial cream twice a day—especially on your cheeks (typically the driest area).

# FIND THE RIGHT FORMULA FOR YOU

You don't always feel like drinking water: Sometimes you crave juice or tea instead. Your skin, too, wants different things depending on the season, hormonal shifts, and even your level of sun exposure. To find your best pick, start here:

**“My T-zone is so shiny it could temporarily blind you.”**

“Lightweight gel moisturizers are good for people who have very oily skin,” says Karen Kim, MD, a dermatologist in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. “Because their oil glands are so active, they don’t need a lot of extra hydration, and a gel (make sure it’s oil-free) won’t be too heavy or clog pores.” Try (3) Origins Make A Difference Plus + Rejuvenating Treatment (\$40; origins.com).

**“A little tightness here, some oiliness there. I need something for my multiple-personality skin.”**

If you have dry patches among normal areas, try a light, oil-free lotion that will hydrate dry spots while providing moisture where it’s needed, Dr. Kim says. We like (1) Elizabeth Arden Visible Difference Oil-Free Lotion (\$40; elizabetharden.com). Or use a rich cream on dry spots and a light lotion where you’re slick.

**“Welcome to Dullsville. My skin looks flat and feels dry all over.”**

Dullness—along with itchiness, tightness, or flaking—is the hallmark of dehydrated skin. That means you should swap lotions for richer creams, which contain more hydrating ingredients, explains Macrene Alexiades-Armenakas, MD, an assistant clinical professor at the Yale School of Medicine. One to try: (2) Garnier Skin Renew Daily Regenerating Moisture Cream (\$13; garnierusa.com).

**“Ouch! My skin is flaky around my lips and eyes.”**

For extra-parched areas, spot-treat with balm to protect against further moisture loss, Dr. Kim says. “It seals in moisture that’s naturally occurring in the skin,” she adds. “Balms are great in winter, but since they tend to be greasy, they’re best for small areas.” Try (4) Bobbi Brown Extra Repair Moisturizing Balm SPF 25 (\$90; bobbibrowncosmetics.com). Use a lighter moisturizer on the rest of your face.

# WHEN

**IT COMES TO MUST-DOS, MOISTURIZING YOUR SKIN IS** right up there with brushing your teeth. But why is it so crucial? “It makes your skin look fresher and more dewy,” says D’Anne Kleinsmith, MD, a dermatologist in West Bloomfield, Michigan. “Think of it like putting a raisin in water. As soon as it absorbs the moisture, it plumps up and looks better.” But lotions and creams are also key to skin’s *health*: They protect your body’s largest organ from moisture vampires (wind, heat) and other environmental assault. “Moisturizers increase skin’s water content and repair its barrier,” says Jeannette Graf, MD, a dermatologist in Great Neck, New York. The result? Healthy, gorgeous skin!

## WHAT’S INSIDE YOUR MOISTURIZER?

You know moisturizers come in many forms (lotions, creams, gels, and balms, to name a few), but they all fall into three basic types, explains Ron Robinson, a cosmetic chemist in NYC and founder of BeautyStat.com:

### ▶ OCCLUSIVES

Likely the first kind of moisturizer you ever used (think diaper balm), these create a barrier so moisture can’t escape. (It’s like shrink-wrapping a muffin so it stays moist.) **What you’ll see on the label:** petrolatum, dimethicone, lanolin, mineral oil

### ▶ EMOLLIENTS

These softeners smooth your skin

by preventing moisture loss from cells. **What you’ll see on the label:** keratin, ceramides, stearyl alcohol

### ▶ HUMECTANTS

This type of super-moisturizer acts like a sponge, attracting water from deeper layers of skin into the top layer to boost moisture. **What you’ll see on the label:** hyaluronic acid, glycerin



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**CAN YOU USE A BODY MOISTURIZER ON YOUR FACE, AND VICE VERSA?**

If you're stuck and your face is parched, you can dab on a little body lotion, but don't make it a habit. "Body moisturizers tend to be heavier and a bit greasier because they're made for areas where skin is thicker and less prone to irritation," Dr. Kim explains. Facial moisturizers, on the other hand, are lighter, less irritating, and may deliver anti-aging benefits—all of which add to their cost, making them too much of a splurge for everyday body care.

**SPF SMARTS**

Should you combine your SPF with your skin cream? "In the summer, you need more sun protection than a regular day lotion provides," says Jeannette Graf, MD, so layer on a moisturizer, then your sunblock. The rest of the year, use a face cream that contains broad-spectrum SPF 15 or 30, such as StriVectin-SH Age Protect SPF 30 (\$49; strivectin.com) or Eucerin Daily Protection Moisturizing Face Lotion SPF 30 (\$9; mass retailers).



**DRY? HERE'S HOW TO APPLY**

**▶ MOISTURIZE POST-WASH**

"The best time to apply moisturizer is right after a wash when skin is damp, so you trap the moisture on its surface," Dr. Kim says. It's fine to lube up between washings, too—"like putting lip balm on dry lips," Dr. Kleinsmith says. "Moisturizing skin that's not damp will still make it look and feel better."

**▶ APPLY WITH CLEAN HANDS**

Give your fingers and palms a good lathering to prevent the introduction of any potentially irritating or pore-clogging dirt or

bacteria onto your face. Next, pat a small dab of moisturizer onto your cheeks, forehead, chin, and nose (skipping oily areas).

**▶ LET IT SINK IN**  
Give moisturizer at least two minutes to dry and penetrate skin before moving on to makeup.

**▶ KNOW WHEN YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH (OR NOT)**  
"When your skin is well moisturized, it's dewy and light bounces off it," Dr. Graf says. "If it's shiny, that means it's crossed the line into greasy. If your skin looks dull, chalky, or ashy, it needs a more effective moisturizer."



**WHAT WORKS BEST AT EVERY AGE**

Your skin gets drier, thinner, and more sensitive over time, so the moisturizer you loved in your 20s might not be as effective a decade or two later, says Karen Kim, MD. Check out the top concerns and ways to switch up your routine:

**YOUR 20s**

"Fighting acne is usually the number-one priority," Dr. Kleinsmith says. Look for a water-based, oil-free lotion or gel with salicylic acid. Try Philosophy Clear Days Ahead Oil-Free Salicylic Acid Acne Treatment and Moisturizer (\$39; philosophy.com).

**YOUR 30s**

"Fine lines and wrinkles appear, and skin tone becomes more uneven," says Whitney Bowe, MD, a dermatologist in Ossining, New York, who suggests anti-agers like retinol. An MD favorite: Neutrogena Rapid Tone Repair Moisturizer Night (\$20; mass retailers).

**YOUR 40s**

Wrinkles and age spots have likely set in, Dr. Kleinsmith notes. Her solution? Peptide-packed moisturizers. "Peptides even out pigment and increase collagen," she says. Try Olay Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream Fragrance-Free (\$25; mass retailers).

**YOUR 50s+**

Hormonal changes can lead to dehydrated skin, Dr. Kim says. Counteract these effects by using glycolic acid; it revs up cell turnover, so skin stays smooth. A good option: Dermadoctor PH Correcting & Renewing Glycolic Acid Facial Moisturizer (\$52; Ulta).