



Nifty shades



Ask our expert

The expert: Bobbi Brown
Who: Make-up artist, founder and CCO of Bobbi Brown Cosmetics



Q I didn't get eight hours last night: how do I fake some Zzzs?

A Eyeliner is key to making your eyes look more alert. Take a pencil in a nude shade and line the inner rim of the lower lid to cover any redness; this will also brighten the eye. Next draw a dark liner shade like mahogany or black along the upper lash line – end with a subtle flick on the outer corner to visually lift the eye. Don't apply liner on the bottom as this draws your eyes downward and makes them look heavy. Still looking shattered? Your only option is caffeine.

Q Is it true that my make-up bag has more germs than a loo seat?

A Hate to break it to you, but your make-up bag is quite the breeding ground for bacteria. But don't panic: tossing out products when they're past their prime will help and is important to keep your skin clear. Keep a list of when you buy new products to stay on track and throw out anything that's dried, smells a bit 'chemically' or has changed colour. Here's a basic guide: foundation, concealer, powder, eye shadow, blush, moisturiser and sunscreen last for two years; lipstick, lip pencils and eye pencils are good for a year to 18 months; and mascara and eye cream? Get rid after six months.

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DARK

YOUR ETHNICITY: African; Eastern Indian; Indonesian
YOUR SKIN ISSUE: Overactive oil glands

Large oil glands, found on black skin, can cause background inflammation, which makes conditions like acne worse. It's a vicious cycle: the sebum becomes trapped under the skin causing imperfections, while preventing more oil escaping to the skin's surface. Dr Sturm found evidence that the increased amount of melanocytes (melanin-forming cells responsible for darker pigment) cause extra inflammation. The upshot? A regular cleanser won't cut the mustard. You need to degrease the skin and exfoliate with salicylic acid to prevent clogging. It's doubly effective, according to Dr Eckel: 'It will prevent acne and patchy skin in the first place.' But be careful with overzealous scrubbing – it can cause hyperpigmentation. The reason? 'Black skin has melanosomes or "pigment packages" within cells that react aggressively to the slightest irritation,' explains skin therapist Shani Darden. One bit of (rather obvious) good news is that darker skin has a higher SPF – it's around 12. But that's not an excuse to skip the sunscreen. 'Your skin might not burn, but sunlight will cause inflammation and increase oil production,' says Dr Eckel.

INVEST IN:

OIL-ABSORBING EXFOLIATOR

Dr Barbara Sturm Cleanser, £40
Salicylic acid gently exfoliates skin cells while magnolia bark reduces inflammation.



NON-CHALKY SUNSCREEN

Exuviance Sheer Daily Protector SPF 50, £34
This has a PA++++ rating. Translation: it's the strongest defence against UVA.



MULTI-RACIAL

YOUR ETHNICITY: Diverse
YOUR SKIN ISSUE: Patchy skin

Let's start with the best news, shall we? A study carried out by Cardiff University found that people of mixed origins were perceived by their peers to be more attractive than those with a more linear heritage. The only problem? Your skin's characteristics are going to fall somewhere in between those of your parents (depending on which genetic traits you've inherited) so your future skin-health diagnosis can be somewhat blurry. If you have patches of oiliness and dryness inherited from either side, you will need to regularly exfoliate with a gentle product that simultaneously hydrates. Try glycolic acid, an AHA that boosts water-rich hyaluronic acid in the lower skin layer as it sloughs away dead skin

from the surface. Plus, whether your skin is light or dark, it might be slightly patchy in terms of pigment, according to Dr Eckel. 'Protecting your skin against UV light is important to prevent dark patches becoming darker and more distinct and the skin appearing mottled,' she says. Best avoided.

INVEST IN:

INTENSIVE MASK

Mario Badescu Enzyme Revitalizing Mask, £16
Vitamins A and E brighten and moisturise where needed, avoiding any oil slicks. #balance.



DARK SPOT ERASER

SkinCeuticals Advanced Pigment Corrector, £89
Contains ellagic acid (a natural antioxidant) that fights free radicals to prevent pigment deepening. Smart. WH

