

GLOW RECIPE

NATURAL KOREAN BEAUTY, HAND-PICKED WITH LOVE

Sun Gels Are the SPF Your Skin Needs BY LINDSEY UNTERBERGER | JULY 3, 2018

If there is one skincare lesson we've learned from every dermatologist and aesthetician on the planet, it's to always wear sunscreen. The cardinal rule applies regardless of the weather, where you're going, or how much time you spend outside. We can go on and on (and on and on) about why daily sunscreen application is so important, but the biggies include protection against skin cancer and signs of pre-mature aging like wrinkles and hyperpigmentation.

Despite being fully aware of sunscreen's importance, applying it before we leave the house in the morning (and then again every few hours after, as most docs recommend) is still a struggle. So, why, if we have no problem remembering an essence, moisturizer, primer and everything else, is this one still so hard?



Well, for one thing, many people are under the false impression that the SPF in their everyday foundation and moisturizer will keep them safe. Unfortunately, the SPF included in these products generally won't cut it — simply because you're not using as much of it as you'd need to in order to get the full benefits. The other reason is that most sunscreens just don't feel or look that great on your skin. The textures are usually greasy and the finish can be chalky — a major buzz-kill for your #motd look.

You don't have to compromise though! Enter the sun gel. It's a K-beauty staple that has infiltrated the U.S. (it even made an appearance at the royal wedding) and is destined to become your skin savior this summer (although, really, you should start using it now). "Gel sunscreens are new formulations that are typically lighter when applied on the skin than most other formulations like creams and sticks," says Dr. **William Kwan**, a San Francisco-based dermatologist and ethnic skincare expert. "They go on clear and don't appear white on the skin, and because they dry on the skin, makeup goes on smoothly after without looking cake-y. Also, most gel sunscreens go on matte, so you don't look shiny."



Dr. Sejal Shah, a New York City-based cosmetic dermatologist and founder of SmarterSkin Dermatology, has also seen an uptick in gel formulas in recent years and says they can be just as effective as their traditional counterparts. "They can offer similar protection to other sunscreen formulations, but they generally do not offer physical (mineral) protection," she notes. "Gels usually only contain chemical sunscreen ingredients that absorb harmful UV radiation rather than physically block it as mineral sunscreens do."

Both derms say the most important things to look for in a gel sunscreen are the sun protection factor (make sure you're using at least an SPF 30) and whether it provides broad-spectrum coverage, meaning it will protect you against both UVA and UVB rays. "Also, be careful that the gel doesn't contain too much alcohol, which can dry or irritate the skin," adds Kwan.

Ready to give sun gels a chance? Try one of our three favorite K-beauty options below (all SPF 50 and broad-spectrum). We tried each one on both very light and very dark skin tones and had our testers apply a large amount before applying makeup in the

morning and then several times over their makeup throughout the day. They all reported no white cast, minimal stickiness, and zero caking.

Make P:rem Capsule Sun Gel, \$32



If we didn't know this product was a sunscreen, we'd swear it was a serum. It has a lightweight texture, goes on completely clear, and absorbs into skin immediately. Seriously, in less than a minute, our skin felt completely dry, noticeably smoother, and slightly more hydrated, thanks to the birch sap and sunflower seed extracts in its formula. It also imparts a subtle citrus scent that is far more evocative of a fancy moisturizer than an overpowering, coconut-infused sunscreen.

Earth's Recipe Waterful Sun Gel, \$25



At first glance, this looks and feel like any other liquid sunscreen. Once you start rubbing it in, though, you realize it's completely different: It takes minimal effort to emulsify even a large amount of product and it's far more hydrating due to the sparkling mineral water and glycerin used in the formulation. In fact, if your skin is on the drier side, we recommend this sun gel above the others, which are better suited for those with oily or combination skin types.

Make P:rem Blue Ray Sun Gel, \$32



After the success of its original Capsule Sun Gel, Make P:rem released another version that not only protects the skin from UVA and UVB rays, but claims to counteract the damage caused by infrared waves and radiation from the heat of the sun. It's more opaque when it comes out of the bottle and lacks the citrus scent but absorbs just as quickly and leaves no trace of white residue.

See, getting proper sun protection doesn't have to a pain in the you-know-what. Just don't forget to reapply — and while you're at it, extend your application to your chest and neck. They're just as sensitive to sun damage as your face. You'll thank us later.

<https://blog.glowrecipe.com/2018/07/03/sun-gels-are-the-spf-your-skin-needs/>