

# Practicing Safe Sun

By [Arlyn Hernandez](#)

I've heard all the excuses under the sun about why we skip the SPF in our beauty regime. "It makes me break out!" "I hate feeling like an oil slick." "I just don't have time to worry about another product." Yeah, yeah, yeah – I've spoken a few of those myself in past years. Somehow, we've managed to convince ourselves that finding the perfect night cream and lip balm overshadows the importance of being equipped with the right sunscreen. But why? Skin cancer and premature signs of aging are very much avertable if you just take pre-emptive steps and equip yourself with all the SPF info you need to know. Much like your trusty credit card, you shouldn't be leaving home without it – and yes, that statement holds true on a day-to-day basis, come rain or shine. Though it may be overwhelming at first when faced with the myriad of words, letters and numbers associated with sun care products, there's no time like the present to wise up, right? Oui! Luckily for all you BN readers, Manhattan dermatologist and NYU Medical Center assistant professor, Dr. Ariel Ostad, has broken down the basics and put you one leap closer to safe sun.

Here's a crash course on the vital facts:

- Ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B spectrums of the sun's rays differ in that UVB is what causes sunburns and leads to skin cancer, mainly basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma, and UVA penetrates deeper because of its longer wavelengths, therefore causing collagen breakdown and premature aging. It has also been shown to be responsible for melanoma – the scariest form of skin cancer.
- The difference between chemical and physical sunscreens is that chemical sunscreens contain ingredients such as oxybenzone or avobenzone, which tend to be somewhat irritating for those with more sensitive skins. However, physical sunscreens, which are proven to be more effective in blocking out the sun's harsh effects, are mainly made up of zinc oxide, titanium dioxide or mexoryl, do not get absorbed into the body and at the same time, do not create redness or pimples as you can see in chemical sunscreens.
- Sunscreen should be reapplied every 2-3 hours, as over the course of the day, it either gets washed off if exposed to water and sweat or the SPF concentration is reduced, so you are not getting complete protection as time passes. Also, you should be using at least one ounce (or a full shot glass' worth) over your entire body for sufficient coverage each time you apply.
- SPF 30 or higher, which blocks out 98.5% of the sun's rays, should be your go to number for daily use (yes, even if it's not that sunny) and is also sufficient for those long days grillin' out on the roof top.
- Only sunscreens that are marked broad-spectrum block out both UVA and UVB rays, many using ingredients such as zinc oxide, titanium dioxide or mexoryl. It is not enough just to use a high SPF number, since SPF corresponds only to UVB protection.

SPF technology has come a long way from the thicker-than-molasses varieties of yesteryear, so it's easier than ever to incorporate it into your beautification routine. So stop making excuses, and stock your beauty drawer with these SPF essentials.

*Put your best face forward...*



If you're anything like me and have a hard time finding a facial sunscreen that's moisturizing yet doesn't make your face oily or break out, **DDF Ultra-lite Oil-free Moisturizing Dew SPF 15** is sure to make you really excited. It's super lightweight and perfect for sensitive and acne prone skins. A little goes a long way, and the quick-absorbing fragrance-free formula leaves your face feeling dewy, healthy and protected.

Sephora and <http://www.ddfskincare.com>

For the slightly more mature face, or for those obsessed with preventing aging, **Kiehl's Abyssine Lotion SPF 15** is just what you're looking for. With Corallina extract – a new antioxidant ingredient in skin care – this Vitamin C and E enriched lotion helps minimize the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles and defends against free radical damage.

All major department stores and <http://www.kiehls.com>

Perhaps the most delicate part of your face is the skin around your eyes. This area tends to be forgotten when it comes to SPF, which is unfortunate since it's where wrinkles tend to rear their ugly lines first! Thank goodness for **Sun Wrinkle Control Eye Contour Care SPF 30 by Clarins**. BN's skin care editor Candice Sabatini loves this product, and it's not without reason. It doesn't sting, burn or irritate eyes and glides on thinly and effortlessly. Along with its broad-spectrum protection, this O-M-G inspiring eye cream brightens eyes subtly and isn't the least bit cakey.

Macy's and <http://www.clarins.com>

*Get caught lovely handed...*



Obviously, hands are not immune to sun damage, so there's no excuse for not protecting them. If you're already slathering on the lotion multiple times a day, why not switch to one that'll shield your hands while hailing that

cab in the blazing summer sun? Enter **Oraser Daily Hand Repair SPF 20** by **ZO Skin Health**. This super moisturizing cream evens skin tone, reduces the appearance of dark spots from past sun exposure and leaves your hands super soft and smooth.

Bliss spas and <http://www.zoskinhealth.com>

*SPF: does a body good...*



Brand new to the beauty scene, the **Ultra-light Sunscreen Spray Lotion SPF 55** by **Paula's Choice** definitely falls into the “don't leave home without it” category. The SPF 55 provides all the protection you could ask for even on the sunniest of days, and the spray nozzle makes it super easy and clean to apply. It's colorant and fragrance free for the most sensitive of skin types, rubs in quickly and leaves a nice matte finish on your skin.

Lynn's Electrolysis Studio and <http://www.paulaschoice.com>

Minerals – they are popping up everywhere. From your favorite makeup to your trusty sunscreen, like **AHAVA's Sun Protection Anti-Aging Moisturizer SPF 30**. This product's Dead Sea minerals moisturize, nourish and fight against premature aging. Paraben-free, oxybenzone-free and mineral oil-free, AHAVA's fussy skin-friendly moisturizer absorbs quickly without leaving a grease slick behind.

<http://www.ahavaus.com>



Honestly, there is nothing more convenient than **KINeSYS**'s new microsprays. The spritz-and-go ease of these little 1.7 oz. bottles is phenomenal for taking just about anywhere! If you love light, tropical scents try the **Oil-Free/Alcohol-Free Performance Sunscreen SPF 15**, or the **Fragrance-Free Spray Sunscreen SPF 30** for more protection. Either way, you can't go wrong!

Bike & Roll – NYC and <http://www.kinesys.com>

**Mederma**, the *skin care for scars* product recently released its new **SPF 30 Cream** which received the American Academy of Dermatology seal of approval. Scars are particularly sensitive to the sun's rays, which can worsen their appearance, so snag up this useful and sun-friendly cream if you're fighting the appearance of old and new stretch marks, acne scars or injuries.

All drug stores and <http://www.merzdirect.com>

For more information on sun care, skin cancer signs and prevention, visit the Skin Center Foundation at <http://www.skincancer.org>.