

Beauty Sun Safety 2.0

BY ALISA HRUSTIC

Applying sunscreen may be second nature by now, but the sun is so powerful that even minor bad habits can be a big problem. “Sun damage can happen within minutes of unprotected sun exposure,” says Shari Marchbein, M.D., a dermatologist and a fellow of the American Academy of Dermatology. Here’s how to take your sun protection to the next level.

OLD HABIT: You stay in the shade.

Shade’s great, but it’s not enough to protect you from indirect sun exposure or when UV rays bounce off reflective surfaces like water, sand, and concrete. Even your favorite beach companion doesn’t cut it: One small industry-funded study published in *JAMA Dermatology* found that relying on a beach umbrella alone boosted

sunburn risk compared with using a high-SPF sunscreen.

SAFER BET: Slather on the SPF no matter what.

Sunscreen is nonnegotiable, Dr. Marchbein says. While larger, denser shaded areas (like a wraparound porch with solid roofing) are more effective in blocking harmful rays, “a combination of protective clothing, shade, and sunscreen is needed to achieve as much sun protection as possible,” she explains. Go for at least SPF 30, and reapply every two hours.

PREVENTION PICK:

Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch SPF 55, \$11, drugstores



OLD HABIT: The only SPF on your face is in makeup.

“Makeup with SPF is great for a few minutes of sun exposure here or there,” Dr. Marchbein says. “For any prolonged exposure, you really do need full SPF.” A foundation with SPF 30 would only be truly protective if you applied a nickel-size dollop to your face, but that’s likely to feel too heavy.



RACHEL REBIBO/THE LICENSING PROJECT.

SAFER BET: Apply sunscreen first.

You’ll never go wrong if you start with a lightweight, oil-free sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Then you can layer on your foundation or tinted moisturizer. But you’re not off the hook: Stick a powder SPF in your bag so you can reapply in two hours without disturbing your makeup.

PREVENTION PICKS:

Elta MD UV Clear SPF 46, \$36, dermstore.com; **Colorscience Sunforgettable Total Protection Brush-On Shield SPF 50**, \$65, colorscience.com



OLD HABIT: You skip sunscreen when you're going to be wearing a cover-up.

"Sheer clothing and cover-ups are not adequate," Dr. Marchbein says. To put it into perspective: "A T-shirt provides only an SPF of about 4," she says. One test: Hold your shirt up to the light. If you can see through it, it doesn't stand a chance against the sun's rays.

SAFER BET: Rework your summer wardrobe.

Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses as well as protective clothing, Dr. Marchbein says—but still wear sunscreen! Look for loose-fitting items that have a UPF 50+ label. Dark or bright colors should be your go-tos, as they more easily absorb UV rays.

OLD HABIT: You apply SPF 100...once.

While some research shows that a higher SPF like 100+ is more protective, it may also be giving you a false sense of security. SPF 30 blocks 97% of the sun's UVB rays, while SPF 100 hits a bit higher at 99%. Don't let that bump lead to forgetfulness. "No sunscreen, regardless of strength or number, protects longer than two hours without reapplication," Dr. Marchbein says.

SAFER BET: Don't skimp on your application.

Whether you use SPF 30 or SPF 100, the most crucial step is applying enough of the stuff—a shot glass-size amount for the body—every two hours, or right after you've been swimming or sweating.

OLD HABIT: You slather sunscreen (almost) everywhere.

You definitely got your arms, chest, and legs—but what about your ears, lips, eyelids, scalp, and the tops of your hands and feet? It's extremely common to miss these spots, and that can have dangerous consequences. Research shows that up to 20% of basal cell carcinomas that develop on the head and neck occur on the eyelids.

SAFER BET: Revamp your beach bag.

Your go-to body sunscreen doesn't do well around the eyes or in your hair, so get creative with your essentials. Apply an eye cream that contains SPF for the delicate skin in that area, an SPF-infused lip balm to protect your pout, and a protective powder for your scalp if you don't have a hat handy.

PREVENTION PICKS:

SkinCeuticals

Physical Eye UV Defense Sunscreen SPF 50, \$30, dermstore.com; **COOLA** Mineral Liplux Organic Tinted Lip Balm Sunscreen SPF 30, \$18, coola.com; **Supergoop!** Poof 100% Mineral Part and Scalp Powder SPF 45, \$34, sephora.com

