

SELF

I Tried Peel-Off 'Foundation' and It Was a Total Mess

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It took a lot of trial and error. Mostly error.



Korean beauty remains trendy for many reasons. Typically the products are fun, playful, and innovative. Case in point: a Korean peel-off “foundation” that’s been making its rounds online. The product is Not4U Real Skin Patch (\$20), and it’s actually not a foundation at all but a pre-makeup skin-care product. It’s meant to act as a barrier to keep pollution and other harmful elements that could easily clog pores away from the skin—and that includes makeup. On top of all that, the website claims that this skin-care patch can also fight acne.

After trying (and loving) a bunch of buzzy peel-off masks, I just had to get my hands on and test out this viral peel-off product.

Are there actually skin-care benefits?

Before I started slathering the product on my face, I wanted to talk to a few dermatologists to verify (or debunk) all the claims. It was impossible to get a full ingredient list and therefore understand how this skin patch works. Almost all the information on the package is written in Korean (which I don’t speak or read). But there’s one ingredient written in English on the front of the tube—“natural tea tree 60%” which tells me there’s a good amount of tea tree oil inside.



Dermatologist **William Kwan**, M.D., confirms that tea tree oil can, indeed, help calm acne because of its antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties, which can also result in less hyperpigmentation and redness.

As for the claims that it can keep nasty stuff off your skin, he tells SELF, “At the minimum it may help form an additional barrier on the skin to protect from the outside environment, which could be helpful, especially if heavy makeup is used.”

With that being said, he worries the product could leave behind a residue. “I would be concerned that the occlusive nature of the product could clog pores and cause additional acne breakouts,” he says.

Since the instructions were in Korean, I tested on my hands first.

Although the vloggers I watched on YouTube didn’t seem to have a great experience, I was determined to figure out a way to get this product to work so I could satisfyingly peel off my makeup. The problem was all the writing on the tube, the box, and online was in Korean. Since I couldn’t rely on helpful instructions to apply it correctly, I decided to test little patches of it on my hand.

First, I spread a pea-sized drop of the product onto the back of my left hand. After letting it dry for five minutes, I applied some Philosophy Renewed Hope In a Jar Skin Tint, my everyday foundation, over it. It was clear that this formula was too wet. It just kept spreading around on top of the Real Skin Patch. The tinted moisturizer is formulated to absorb into the skin, so this outcome made sense but was still disappointing.

When I redid the test on my right hand, I used my MatchCo foundation. It’s much heavier, so I typically save it for days when my skin is freaking out. This stayed in place better than the skin tint, but when I rubbed it around, the Real Skin Patch picked up and started lightly peeling off. Although I let the patch dry for five minutes and it felt settled, I figured I clearly didn’t wait long enough. So when I did it on my face, I decided I would wait double the amount of time, just to be safe. Either way, I felt confident enough to get started on my face.

<https://www.self.com/story/peel-off-foundation>