



## Best Sunscreens 2019: What You Need to Know From Experts -- Shop Our Editor's Picks!

By Amy Lee | July 30, 2019



We're currently in the thick of summer, which means applying sunscreen is more crucial than ever (however, sunscreen should be worn every single day throughout the year, rain or shine!).

Sunscreen has its cosmetic benefits, you know, preventing wrinkles, dark spots and burns. But more seriously, it helps to decrease the risk of developing skin cancer.

Choosing the right sunscreen can be a challenge. First, there are so many out there in the market. Second, there is a lot of information about sun protection to wrap your head around, which leads to a lot of questions when you're looking at a bottle: What is SPF exactly? What is the difference between UVA and UVB rays? What ingredients are the most effective? What does broad spectrum mean?

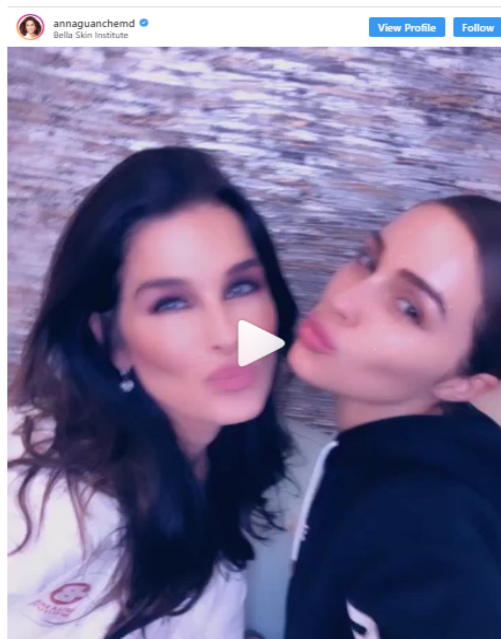


To help find the best sunscreen for your needs, ET Style tapped a celebrity dermatologist and esthetician to explain everything you need to know about the most important step in skincare.

### Difference Between UVA & UVB Rays

There are two types of UV rays: UVA and UVB. UVA rays cause long-term damage such as wrinkles and aging skin by breaking down collagen and elastin. UVB rays cause immediate damage such as sunburn (think A for aging and B for burn). UVB causes skin cancer faster than UVA.

"UVA is present all day long: it is a photo-aging wavelength and can cause skin cancer, but not as efficiently as UVB, which peaks between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.," Dr. Anna Guanche, a board-certified dermatologist and celebrity beauty expert, explains (Olivia Culpo is a patient). "[UVB] burns the skin more quickly and mutates cells more, thus causing skin cancer."



### What Is SPF?

SPF stands for sun protection factor and the number after it indicates the ability of the sunscreen to protect your skin from UVB rays before it burns.

"[The number] is a multiplier times your own skin's sun defense," says Dr. Guanche.



### Physical vs. Chemical Sunscreen

"These minerals coat the skin, reflecting and refracting UV rays so they are not able to penetrate the skin or cause damage to the DNA of skin cells," Dr. Guanche shares.

"Generally, chemical sunscreens are what we call 'cosmetically elegant,' because they are less greasy, less white and shiny and less likely to block the pores, although newer micronized mineral formulas are cosmetically elegant as well," Dr. Guanche says.

Dr. Guanche also recommends avoiding PABA (para-aminobenzoic acid) in sunscreen.

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