



10 easy beauty tips that make a big difference

By: Kristin Granero | September 17, 2021

Creating a beauty routine that works for you takes a lot of trial and error. However, when you find yourself running out of time, energy, and patience planning your makeup and hair, it helps to turn to others for advice. So, Shop TODAY contacted several experts to walk us through what small upgrades you can make in your daily routine that will save time and make the biggest impact overall.

From where to concentrate your foundation to adding a facial massage, read on as the pros help us break down what they consider some of the easiest and quickest rules you should know to make your beauty routine work harder and smarter for you.

1. Spot blot your foundation

Looking to achieve that effortless “no makeup” makeup glow? Experts say it comes down to optical illusion. “The eye is drawn to the center of the face. If these areas (including freckles, the bridge of the nose, and between the brows) have less product on them, it indicates that you’re wearing less makeup overall, while perfectly concealing any imperfections,” explains Leiah Scheibel, a makeup artist and beauty expert based in Arizona.

Approach it like a pro: Once you’ve completed applying your foundation, you’ll want to lighten up along the center. “Use the pads of your fingers or a slightly damp BeautyBlender to gently stipple from areas that collect a bit more foundation and powder.”

2. Change your concealer application

Instead of applying concealer in an upside-down triangle pattern underneath your eye, apply it to the dark inner corner and under the outer edge of the eye into your temple, advises Helen Phillips, a national makeup artist for Sephora Collection. “You don’t want the center of your cheeks next to your nose to be accentuated, as it can make your nasolabial folds appear more prominent and can age you. Instead, this application lifts and strategically brightens your undereye to create a more youthful effect,” she explains.

Approach it like a pro: Phillips suggests opting for a slightly lighter concealer with brightening qualities. “Dab and swipe your concealer in those under eye areas and let it dry down just a little before blending it into your skin. This will add coverage and make it easier to keep the concealer where you want it.” This top-rated pick from Fenty Beauty brightens and corrects.

3. Contour above your temple

“Contouring above your temple into your hairline instead of just up to your temple helps lift the eye,” says Phillips.

Approach it like a pro: Phillips suggests a multi-tasking palette to help achieve a lifted effect. “Using a narrow face brush, you’ll want to blend the contour shade from the top of your outer brow (just above the temple) diagonally up into your hairline. Then, use the same brush with the highlighting shade to highlight the high points of your cheeks, taking care to blend the edges so it doesn’t appear striped.” The palette we found above has a 4.5-star rating.

4. Twirl your powder brush

If you, like many, take the dip and swipe approach to your blush, experts say you’re missing out on a crucial step. “If you go straight from your loose or pressed powder to the face, most of the powder will transfer to wherever the brush lands, resulting in uneven powder application for the rest of the face,” cautions Scheibel.

Approach it like a pro: “Before applying your setting/finishing powder — I love Laura Mercier Translucent Loose Setting Powder — you’ll want to swirl your powdered brush in the palm of your clean hand, working the powder into the brush bristles. Then, evenly work the powder into the face using small circles (avoiding a sweeping motion).” And make sure you’re using a dedicated powder brush to get the most flawless application.

5. Line your upper lashes

“Applying liner to the upper lash line makes for a more defined eye and creates the illusion that your eyelashes are far more voluminous,” explains Scheibel.

Approach it like a pro: For precise application, she suggests tilting your head back and looking down into your mirror. “Using your favorite waterproof/resistant eyeliner pencil, drag your pencil the full length of the eye, beneath your top lash line.”

6. Always apply a light layer of eyeshadow base

Another one of Scheibel’s makeup rules to live by? Sticking to a thin layer of eyeshadow primer. “Our eyelids produce a lot of warmth from movement and get oily throughout the day, allowing your eyeshadow to crease and slide around,” she says. Adding a light layer of primer will minimize the appearance of creases.

Approach it like a pro: Once you’ve chosen an eyeshadow base, Scheibel advises using your finger to help melt the product into the skin. “Apply from the lash line to brow, inside to outside, covering your entire eyelid. If you decide to line your lower lash line, apply a small amount of eyeshadow base to the lower lash line prior to lining, as well.”

7. Expand your palette

Consider adding a pop of color. “After months of wearing masks, many are in need of a fresh start. Incorporating a colored eyeliner (such as green, blue, purple, or bronze for a more natural look) is an easy, fun way to update a simple look,” says Tai Young-Gardner, a celebrity makeup artist and author of *Glamdemic*.

Approach it like a pro: To help keep the color in focus, without being overwhelming, Young-Gardner suggests keeping the rest of your palette clean. “Stick to a blush with neutral tones, sweeping what’s left over on your blush brush across your eyelids to avoid having to use eye shadow. Then, use your angle brush to dip into a colored creme liner to create a cat eye.” Not an eyeliner person? Opt for a saturated lip color. “Anything to wake up your makeup routine!”

8. Go fuller (yet lighter) on your brows

According to experts, the trick to good, full brows is make sure they don't come across as heavy. “Strong brows can overpower your features if they aren’t natural. This technique adds maximum fluff without being heavy,” says Phillips.

Approach it like a pro: To begin, you’ll need both a brow gel and a brow pencil in your shade, like this pick from fan-favorite brand Tarte. “Start by brushing your brows up and out using a clear brow gel and letting them dry down a bit. Then, brush one more time for the final holding place. Once the gel has dried, use a brow pencil to lightly fill in any gaps and to give your brow more shape, focusing mostly on the brow tail where hair tends to be sparser.”

9. Add glycolic acid

Perfecting your beauty routine is nothing without proper skin care underneath. While generally recommended for those with acne-prone skin, glycolic acid is a powerhouse ingredient you should add to your regimen that does more than treat breakouts. “The game-changing ingredient is an exfoliant so it helps shed dead skin cells and reveal the newer, brighter layers. Because it has effective skin-renewing properties, it can also help smooth fine wrinkles, improve skin tone and texture, plump the skin, and help boost hydration levels,” explains Craig Ziering, MD, a board-certified dermatologist, hair transplantation surgeon and restoration specialist.

Approach it like a pro: If you’re a first-time user or have normal and combination skin, Dr. Ziering suggests starting out with lower concentrations to avoid a sensitive or drying skin response. This 7% toning solution from The Ordinary has high ratings, and though we have not used it ourselves, reviewers of the product have claimed it has helped with dark spots and rough skin texture.

10. Throw in a facial massage

Terrie Absher Kochman, a licensed medical aesthetician and founder of Total Glow considers a facial massage a non-negotiable when it comes to the health of your skin. “Just like it’s important to keep the body moving, the skin needs toning and circulation. We need to work our muscles to help firm and increase circulation, while also detoxifying the skin and providing a nice glow.”

Approach it like a pro: You can use a device like gua sha or a facial roller to help with your massage, or just use your hands. For a hands-only version, Kochman says, “Using your fingertips, start underneath your chin, massaging out and upwards behind the ears, then back down towards the collar bone. Because a gentle facial massage can help with the absorption of products, this is also a great time to integrate a high quality facial oil or serum. Just be careful to use the correct facial oil or serum for your skin type.”

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