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## How to Use Skin-Care Products With Acids During the Summer

Brittany Burhop Fallon | May 9, 2022



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With summertime quickly approaching, it means longer days, more sunshine and more time spent outdoors. So it's no surprise this is one of the top questions skin pros get this time of year: Can I still use acids in the summer? "We often get asked if we'd recommend acids in skin care during this time," says licensed medical aesthetician [Terrie Absher](#), founder of [Total Glow](#). "The answer is yes, you can, but given that exposure to UVA and UVB rays make our skin vulnerable to photodamage such as hyperpigmentation and photoaging, it's important to use acids correctly, in the right amount and right application for your skin type and your level of sun exposure, which can vary greatly."

So no, you don't have to stop using acids entirely, as there are many skin benefits when used correctly, but here are some tips to consider so you can incorporate them into your routine safely.

### Consider the Type of Acids You're Using

Not every acid contains photosensitizing properties (meaning they don't make your skin more sensitive to the sun). For example, hyaluronic acid contains "acid" in its name, but it is practically the opposite of a resurfacing acid like glycolic acid in terms of benefits it offers the skin: hydration and plumping. The purest form of vitamin C (L-ascorbic acid) is also in a league of its own. "L-ascorbic acid is an incredibly potent antioxidant that every skin-care routine needs," says Absher. It also pairs well with sunscreen when layered underneath, offering additional

free-radical defense against UV damage. “Lactic acid is one we recommend continuing to use throughout the summer, as it helps keep skin hydrated and plump, which is something we love in the summer months when we’re showing off our skin,” Absher adds. “I use it daily on my face and body.” Two NewBeauty Award–winning, lactic acid–infused formulas we love are Shani Darden Lactic Acid Serum (for face) and Ameliorate Transforming Body Lotion (for body).

### **Get the Benefits of Acids Via Your Cleanser Instead**

“One safe and gentle way to incorporate acids into your routine in the summer is using them in the form of a cleanser,” says Tam Lamarre, aesthetic nurse practitioner at SkinSpirit NYC. “Cleansers only sit on the skin for a short period of time and then get rinsed off, rather than a serum or cream that stays on the skin all day or night.”

### **Stay Sun-Safe**

To avoid damaging your skin, be careful about sun exposure and higher UV levels in the summer. “This really applies year-round when we can sometimes slip into a false sense of security about the amount of sun exposure we are receiving,” Absher explains. “We all enjoy being outdoors, but we need to be on a tailored skin-care routine that’s beneficial and protective. It never hurts to cultivate a hat habit, too. Sun hats used to be a problem for fashion-conscious people, however, that’s in the past. Find a hat that has a brim wide enough to shield your face. Sun protection clothing has also come a long way as well. Find a light, long-sleeve cover that works for your outdoor time. Those beautiful windows in your home, and in other places when you are away, can expose you to plenty of sun rays, too, so make it a habit of applying sunscreen first thing in the morning during the summer months.”

### **Avoid Retinoic Acid Unless...**

Boston facial plastic surgeon Jaimie DeRosa, MD says her recommendation is “to avoid retinoic acid and retinols in the summer unless you are vigilant about sun protection—wearing sunscreen, avoiding tanning, and wearing hats that cover your face—usually a 3-inch brim or wider—and sunglasses. The reason for this is that these acids increase the risk for sunburn, as they increase cell turnover, so the ‘new skin’ is vulnerable to the sun’s rays. I suggest a physical sunscreen that contains zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide. Most good sunscreens these days use micronized minerals, so that they don’t leave a thick white tint on your skin.”

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