

## NEWBEAUTY™ Why Everyone Is Talking About “Smartphone Face”

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The idea of “smartphone face” has been circulating as people discuss why some faces look timeless, like they could blend into a period piece, while other faces look like they’ve certainly seen a smartphone. This discussion was seemingly sparked by *Daisy Jones & The Six*, the majority of which was set in the ’70s. Could all the characters believably exist in the ’70s? Does everyone in *Little Women* truly look more familiar with an outhouse than the Paris filter? This concept got us thinking about the evolution of faces, so we asked some experts about their thoughts on “smartphone face.”

Beverly Hills, CA facial plastic surgeon **Kimberly J. Lee, MD** says people are “seeking more of a refined face, particularly in the lower half of the face, not so round or healthy, nowadays.” Experts think this is more trend-related than genetic. Washington D.C. dermatologist Neelam Khan, MD says, “The faces and genetics themselves haven’t necessarily evolved to look different.” Perhaps an example of this is seeing similarities between you and a grandparent in a photo at the same age. However, what we do with our faces these days, including makeup techniques, in-office treatments, dental work and higher-quality skin care has affected what facial features are more commonly seen in 2023. Dr. Khan notes “a snatched jawline, fuller lips, high cheekbones and lifted eyebrows” as some of the more modern facial features we see a lot of today.

### What does a “smartphone face” look like?

“I feel like modern faces are more angled and refined. With the advent of social media and selfies, people are paying a lot of attention to the angles of the face,” says Dr. Lee. “If you think about it, this isn’t a foreign concept. Actors were often chosen for their refined and chiseled

features.” She adds that “magazines, movies and media influence the way people perceive beauty, so this has resulted in people desiring more of a refined look.”

### **Modern cosmetic treatments and surgeries play a big part**

“In today’s world, there are many signs that can make a face look more modern or current, the most obvious being signs of filler in the cheeks, lips, jawline and chin,” says Dr. Khan. “The other would be lack of movement in the upper face via Botox.” She notes that the first FDA-approved filler arrived in the 1980s, and the practice didn’t become popular until the 2010s. Similarly, Botox Cosmetic was approved in the 1990s “and completely revolutionized the options for aging.” Threadlifts are even more recent.

Faces that have one or a combination of these treatments “in a more noticeable, exaggerated way can look much more ‘modern’ and current than those that haven’t or those that have done so in a more subtle, less noticeable way,” she says. Scottsdale, AZ facial plastic surgeon James Bouzoukis, MD says in the past, people had fully expressive faces “that developed lines and wrinkles over time. Flawless, youthful-looking skin was not common then.”

### **Our lifestyles and goals have shifted**

“As we’ve become more immersed in a healthy lifestyle and habits, we’ve become more fit with healthier bodies. Naturally, this results in more refined facial features,” says Dr. Lee. Furthermore, noting that caring about our skin has also come a long way. “In the ’70s, many people were into tanning and sun worship,” says Dr. Bouzoukis. “There was not widespread use of good quality sunscreen. Younger people often had freckles and fine lines as signs of early sun damage.” Dr. Bouzoukis also credits the fact that smoking was more commonplace and contributed to premature aging.

### **Skin care has improved**

The skin-care industry has massively expanded over the past few decades. Previously there were “limited medical-grade skin care products available that could maintain collagen and elastin with age,” says Dr. Bouzoukis. Furthermore, society’s understanding of how essential skin care is has grown over the years. Now, taking care of our skin is considered part of a daily routine and is more accessible.

### **Perfect teeth can give it away**

Of course, there were beautiful smiles throughout history, but perfectly aligned veneers and sparkling white teeth can be a clear give away that a person is from the modern era. “It wasn’t until 1989 that a widespread method for teeth whitening became available. Although veneers were available in the 1920s, it was in the 1980s that veneers became easier to apply, more affordable and more popular,” says Dr. Bouzoukis. Until the past few decades, “few people outside Hollywood had pearly white, perfectly straight teeth.”

### **Modern-looking celebrities vs more classic looks**

If you still can't quite picture the variation, the experts have a few stars they can point to as examples. "Stars with a more modern look would be Hailey Bieber and Bella Hadid—both have very well-defined jawlines that have been trending over the last few years, along with enhanced cheekbones and brows, which is a very popular look right now," says Dr. Khan. Dr. Lee credits Mila Kunis, Scarlett Johansson and Charlize Theron as having more modern looks. "The perfect example of a star with a more classic look is Lily Collins," says Dr. Khan. "She has a soft natural look that is timeless." Dr. Lee says Marilyn Monroe, Margot Robbie and Emma Stone are other good examples of stars with a more timeless look.

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