

Understanding Skin Types

Understanding Skin Types – Study Notes

1. Why Knowing Your Skin Type Matters

- **Product selection:** Choose cleansers, moisturizers, sunscreens, and treatments that work with—not against—your skin.
- **Preventing problems:** Tailored care reduces irritation, breakouts, dryness, and premature aging.
- **Optimizing results:** Active ingredients (e.g., retinoids, acids, antioxidants) perform best when matched to the skin’s baseline condition.

2. The Classic Skin Type Classification

Skin Type	Key Characteristics	Typical Concerns	Ideal Care Tips
Normal	Balanced oil & moisture, smooth texture, few imperfections, no visible pores	Occasional minor dryness or oiliness	Gentle cleanser, lightweight moisturizer, broad-spectrum SPF
Dry	Tight, flaky, or rough feeling; dull appearance; fine lines more visible; enlarged pores may appear	Dehydration, irritation, premature fine lines	Rich, ceramide-rich moisturizers, hydrating serums (hyaluronic acid), avoid harsh surfactants
Oily	Shiny appearance, enlarged pores, frequent acne or blackheads, thicker sebum production	Acne, clogged pores, enlarged pores	Foaming or gel cleanser, oil-free/moisturizer, niacinamide or salicylic acid, regular exfoliation
Combination	Oily T-zone (forehead, nose, chin) + normal/dry cheeks	Mixed breakouts, uneven texture	Dual-phase routine: light cleanser + targeted spot treatment for T-zone, richer moisturizer for drier areas

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Skin Type	Key Characteristics	Typical Concerns	Ideal Care Tips
Sensitive	Redness, stinging, burning, or itching after product use; easily reactive to environmental triggers	Inflammation, eczema, rosacea flare-ups	Minimalist routine, fragrance-free, hypoallergenic formulas, barrier-supporting ingredients (ceramides, panthenol)
Acne-prone <i>(often overlapping with oily or combination)</i>	Frequent papules, pustules, cysts; may have post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation	Active lesions, scarring	Non-comedogenic products, benzoyl peroxide or salicylic acid, consistent topical retinoids, avoid occlusive heavy creams

Tip: Skin type can shift with seasons, hormones, diet, stress, and age. Re-evaluate every 3–6 months.

3. How to Determine Your Skin Type

Step	Action	What to Look For
1. Cleanse	Use a gentle, non-stripping cleanser; rinse and pat dry.	Removes makeup, sunscreen, and surface oil.
2. Wait 1 hour	No products applied; let skin return to its natural state.	Allows sebum production to normalize.
3. Observe	- Shine: Notice any glossy areas (especially T-zone). - Tightness: Does the skin feel stretched or dry? - Pores: Are they visibly enlarged? - Reaction: Any redness or itching after the waiting period?	• Normal: No excess shine, no tightness, smooth texture. • Dry: Tight, flaky, little to no shine. • Oily: Noticeable shine, enlarged pores, especially on forehead/nose. • Combination: Shine on T-zone, normal/dry elsewhere. • Sensitive: Redness or irritation without external stimulus.
4. Optional – The Blotting Test	Press a clean tissue on	