

The Best Lip Balms to Rescue Your Chapped Lips

Try one of these best lip balms to soothe parched lips ASAP.

By **Amber Rambharose**

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'Tis the season for chapped, dry lips. Thanks to winter weather triggers like dipping temps outside and dry heat inside, chapped lips are more or less inevitable this time of year. Thankfully, there are some workarounds, starting with using the best lip balms for chapped lips, all expert-vetted below. Here, experts share their best advice for dealing with chapped lips plus tips, tricks, and ways to keep your lips from getting super-dry, cracked, and, you know, nasty.

What Causes Chapped Lips?

A lot of winter factors contribute to dryness on your lips, but lip skin is already sensitive and prone to dryness. "Unlike the rest of our skin, lips don't have sweat glands, so they're not able to produce their own sweat and oil," says [Nkem Ugonabo, M.D.](#), NYC-based board-certified dermatologist at [Union Derm](#). "They also have an overall decreased water content, which makes them more susceptible to becoming dry and rough." Because they can't produce their own oils or hold in moisture for very long, Dr. Ugonabo recommends patients always give their lips a little extra TLC by regularly reapplying balms or ointments.

There are also things you should avoid doing to your lips when they're already chapped, including one that might seem counterintuitive: licking your lips to wet them. "Licking your lips can actually make them drier," explains Dr. Ugonabo. "After saliva evaporates, the lips are often even drier than when it started." Also, please don't peel off any flaking lip skin, since this habit is also damaging to sensitive lip skin. "It doesn't always peel off evenly. You could be exposing even more of the lips and causing even more dryness." (Related: [These Are The 10 Best Lip Plumping Glosses, According to Reviews](#))

Potentially Irritating Ingredients to Avoid Using on Angry Lips

When it comes to picking the best lip balms for chapped lips, a good rule of thumb is to avoid anything that could be irritating, such as fragrances, [harsh essential oils](#), or flavoring. Chapped lips can crack, so if something could irritate a paper cut, you probably shouldn't slather it onto your mouth either.

According to Dr. Ugonabo, basic is usually better, at least when it comes to healing chapped lips. "You want to be sure [lip balms] don't have fragrances, menthol, camphor, or salicylic acid. If you're using a product and you feel like it's not getting better, you should generally consider switching to something more bland." Bland, in the beauty balm world means, essentially, boring: no scent, no tint, and fewer ingredients.

[Rachel Maiman, M.D.](#), board-certified dermatologist at [Marmur Medical](#) counts the following ingredients as potential irritants for chapped lips.

- Eucalyptus
- Flavorings such as cinnamon, citrus, mint, and peppermint flavors
- Fragrance
- Lanolin

- Menthol
- Octinoxate or oxybenzone
- Phenol (or phenyl)
- Propyl gallate

"If your lips burn, sting, or itch after using a lip product, stop using that product," adds Dr. Maiman. Not all of the ingredients listed above will irritate everyone, but if you are prone to irritation or chapped lips, you may want to avoid them. Finally, a quick tip that both derms suggest is seeking out hypoallergenic and fragrance-free products, which will keep a number of those potentially irritating ingredients off your lips.

What Ingredients Work Best for Chapped Lips?

"For dry lips, you want something that is moisturizing and occlusive, meaning that it's actually going to seal in the moisture," says Dr. Ugonabo, who recommends occlusive ingredients such as petroleum jelly, shea butter, [mineral oil](#), and [ceramides](#). Dr. Maiman also recommends looking for humectants, ingredients that draw water from the lower layer of the skin (the dermis), into the upper layer of the skin (the epidermis), helping to moisturize the the outer layers of skin to help heal and prevent chapping.

SPF is also key, even in winter. "Lip balms with mineral sunscreen ingredients, like titanium dioxide and/or zinc oxide, are typically the most optimal choice for those with chapped lips and should be reapplied every two hours while outdoors," advises Dr. Maiman. (BTW, yes, [you should still wear SPF every day, even if you're staying inside.](#))

The Best Lip Balms for Chapped Lips





CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

Vaseline Original Petroleum Jelly

BUY IT, \$3.50

Vaseline is a great choice if your lips are sensitive, irritated, or if you suffer from allergies. It's not the most exciting option as far as best lip balms for chapped lips, but it does exactly what a lip balm product should do. Vaseline is an occlusive emollient thanks to its main ingredient: petrolatum. "It

works to prevent already dehydrated, chapped lips hold onto water," shares Dr. Maiman. "This prevents further moisture loss, as may occur from environmental insults such as cold, dry winter weather, and also optimizes barrier repair." (See: [How to Strengthen Your Skin Barrier to Prevent Irritation and Sensitivity](#))



CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

Kosas Kosasport Lip Fuel

BUY IT, \$18

Hyaluronic acid is a moisturizing all-star, so it makes sense that it's featured front and center in this cult-favorite lip balm which also features vitamin E. In combination, these two ingredients attract much-needed moisture and lock it in without feeling goopy or sticky on your lips. Other occlusive ingredients include shea and cocoa seed butter. Worth noting: it does have a hint of peppermint, but it leans more towards refreshing as opposed to the stinging you'd feel on ultra-chapped lips treated with camphor or menthol. In addition to clear, it also comes in two tinted shades that add a pretty lovely blush to all skin tones.





CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

MILK Makeup Kush Lip Balm

BUY IT, \$16

This rich balm comes in tinted and clear options and packs a seriously hydrating punch courtesy of shea and [moringa butter](#), two occlusives that hydrate and soothe. It also boasts jojoba, coconut, and olive oils to seal in moisture. And while its heavy hitter ingredient, hemp-derived Cannabis

Sativa seed oil, hasn't been extensively studied, it is known for its soothing properties and the sheer number of five-star reviews this balm comes with support that theory. "I tried all types of lip balms and lip masks...but nothing really worked. I would wake up the next day with the same cracked, peeling lips. After using this lip balm, I don't have that problem anymore. It's literally magic," [one reviewer wrote](#). (Related: [Does Cannabis Belong In Your Skin-Care Products?](#))



CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

Aquaphor Healing Ointment

BUY IT, \$14

Like Vaseline, Aquaphor is an occlusive emollient, but it also contains a number of additional ingredients not found in Vaseline, including panthenol — making it a top pick for best lip balms for chapped lips. "Panthenol acts as a humectant," explains Dr. Maiman. "When you pair the function of a humectant with the moisture-preserving properties of petrolatum, you are left with a highly effective combination of ingredients that both optimizes water content and locks it in where it's needed."





CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

True Botanicals Moisture Lock Glossy Lip Balm

BUY IT, \$24

If your lips are chapped beyond recognition, this stuff is the good stuff, thanks to having basically all of the occlusive ingredients needed to lock in the moisture your lips can't create on their own. This balm includes glycerin, shea butter, moringa, avocado, coconut, and jojoba oils. It's also a great

option if you want a little scent without any potentially irritating chemicals (the scent here comes from rose oil) according to reviews. "The delicate vanilla-rose scent of this balm is so light it's almost not there," [one reviewer raved](#). "[It's] just enough to give your mood a lift but not more than that. Goes on very smoothly and hydrates the lips very well."



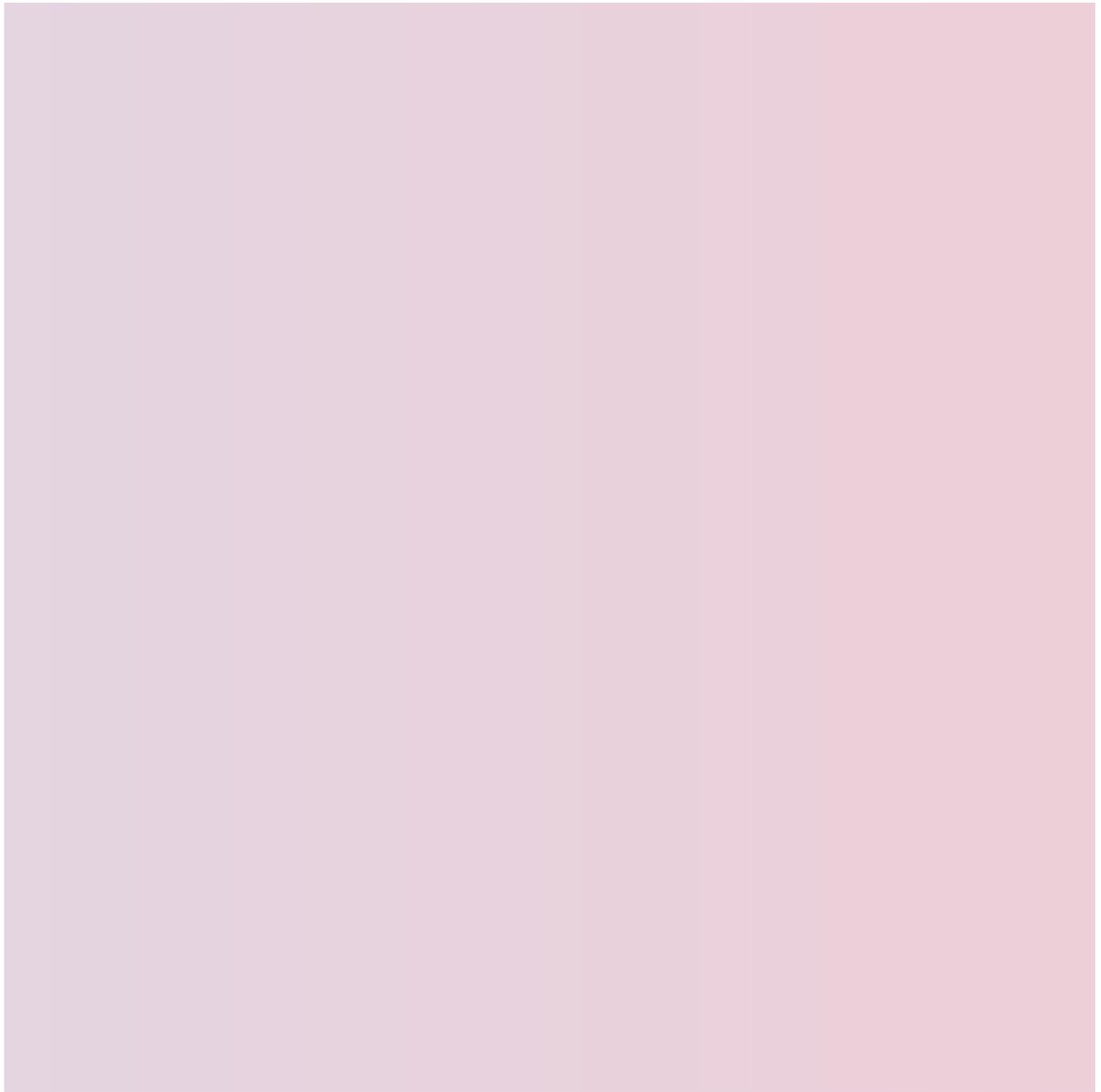
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Drunk Elephant Lippe Balm

BUY IT, \$18

This thick balm is a lip and body multitasker that's creamy enough to go on smoothly but doesn't get sucked up by thirsty lips right away. It's got the occlusive shea butter to seal in all the moisture it delivers via avocado oil, which is a bit of a powerhouse, delivering both omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins A, D, and E to chapped, dry lips (and skin, if you want to double-dip). Another key ingredient here is Mongongo oil, a hydrating ingredient commonly found in products for very, very thirsty hair.





CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANT

Lilah B. Lovingly Lip Hyaluronic Treatment Oil

BUY IT, \$30

If you want a lip balm for chapped lips that actually does its job in addition to adding a lovely — nonsticky, this is important — layer of gloss to your lips, stop scrolling. This treatment oil looks like a

gloss while delivering and sealing in moisture courtesy of hyaluronic acid and konjac root. (See: [Why You Should Be Using Lip Oil Instead of Lip Balm](#))



CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

Monastery Attar Balm

BUY IT, \$168

Another multitasker, this one can be used on the skin as well as lips and doubles as a repeated daily use balm or, in thicker coats, as an overnight lip mask. A "holy grail skin saver," according to [reviews](#), this lip balm for chapped lips is ideal if you're dealing with wounded skin because its key ingredients — hazelnut oil and jasmine wax — have antibacterial properties. Hazelnut oil also happens to be chock-full of Vitamin E which, combined with rose oil, soothes while it hydrates.



Biossance Squalane + Rose Vegan Lip Balm

BUY IT, \$14

This vegan balm features ceramides and hyaluronic acid, [glycerin](#) (a powerful occlusive ingredient), and [squalane](#), a lesser-known, but hard-working moisturizer. It's also fragrance-free, which is a major plus for sensitive-lipped folks out there, a fact that reviewers can't help but point out. "This is the first lip anything I can use that I don't break out. It's amazing," shares [one reviewer](#). (Not to mention, [Reese Witherspoon is a mega fan of the clean beauty brand.](#))





CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

Kari Gran Lip Perfector

BUY IT, \$16

This one isn't a balm, technically, but it does do an important job when it comes to healing chapped lips — and that job is gently buffing off dead skin without causing an increase in damage. The exfoliant here comes courtesy of sugar crystals, a favorite option of Dr. Maiman due to the natural

humectant properties in sugar. Avocado and jojoba oil lock in moisture and make this a multi-use product. Thanks to its hydrating qualities, it can be left on for a few minutes to give your lips a moisture boost before being buffed away.



CREDIT: COURTESY OF MERCHANTS

Laniege Lip Sleeping Mask

BUY IT, \$22

You've probably seen it on Instagram, and it gets a dermatologist's approval, too. Though it's technically a lip *mask*, and not a balm, this is still a winner in the fight against chapped lips. "The Laniece Lip Sleeping Mask is my absolute favorite addition to a good daily lip balm regimen for those with dry, chapped lips," shares Dr. Maiman. "The main ingredient is ceramides, which help retain moisture and optimize barrier function. It also contains ionized water, which helps return the skin barrier to its natural pH."