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# 11 Beauty Editors Reveal the Moisturizers They Actually Use—From \$15

Perfecting our skin, one layer at a time.

By [Irene Richardson](#) | Published on June 28, 2025 @ 05:00AM



Credit: InStyle

## THE GIST

- [CeraVe's Daily Moisturizing Lotion](#) is our best overall pick. The tried-and-true lotion provides unbeatable hydration without [irritating sensitive or acne-prone skin](#). The price is also stellar.
- Moisturizers containing ceramides and hyaluronic acid help the

skin stay hydrated.

- The best anti-aging moisturizers for mature skin typically incorporate peptides, antioxidants, and offer an SPF of 30 or higher.

There's never a bad time to put on moisturizer. While not as flashy as a fun [face mask](#) or promising [serum](#), I still don't think face lotions get enough credit. In my opinion, the seemingly unsexy beauty product is the most exciting because the best moisturizers hydrate, brighten, and even out the skin, nearly eliminating the need for various serums and treatments. Although your chosen formula depends on your skin type and needs, experts recommend moisturizers with a high concentration of humectants, such as glycerin, [hyaluronic acid](#), polyglutamic acid, or sodium PCA. "These can attract water into the skin, not just prevent it from escaping, and are worth seeking out if your skin feels constantly dehydrated," says [Kristyn Smith](#), a master aesthetician and founder of [Practise NYC](#).

At *InStyle*, our editors have [tested](#) moisturizers for decades. So, we huddled up to discuss the best options for various skin types, ranging from aging to acne-prone and dry to oily. What we found was that the best aren't necessarily the most expensive or luxurious. In fact, our favorite moisturizer overall is among the least costly (and aesthetically pleasing) of the bunch. Other picks include an anti-aging blend that rivals [skin-tightening creams](#), [lotions](#) formulated to treat eczema, and stellar [moisturizers with SPF](#) sans the white cast.

## Our Top Picks

### BEST OVERALL:

[CeraVe Daily Moisturizing Lotion at Amazon | \\$15](#)

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

### BEST ANTI-AGING:

[Lancer UltraRich Barrier Cream at Nordstrom | \\$110](#)

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST FOR OILY SKIN:**

**[Peach & Lily Matcha Pudding Antioxidant Cream at Ulta](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST FOR DRY SKIN:**

**[Point of View Whip It Hydrating Whipped Cream at Povbeauty.com](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST FOR ROSACEA:**

**[Medik8 Total Moisture Daily Face Cream at Amazon | \\$49](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST FOR ECZEMA:**

**[Tatcha Indigo Calming Cream at QVC | \\$92](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST K-BEAUTY:**

**[Innisfree Green Tea Hyaluronic Acid Moisturizer at Amazon | \\$30](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST MOISTURIZER WITH SPF:**

**[SALE Aveeno Positively Radiant Daily Moisturizer at Amazon | \\$25 \\$17](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST FOR COMBINATION SKIN:**

**[Kiehl's Ultra Facial Cream at Amazon | \\$26](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)

**BEST FOR ACNE-PRONE SKIN:**

**[Mantle The Barrier Cream at Libertylondon.com](#)**

↓ [Jump to Review](#)



Video placeholder image

**BEST OVERALL**

CeraVe Daily Moisturizing Lotion



Credit: Ulta

~~\$15~~  
**\$13 at Amazon**

**\$18 at Ulta**

**[View on Walmart](#)**

**Why We Love It:** Like a '90s rom-com you never tire of watching, you return to the classics for a reason. Consider CeraVe, the *When Harry Met Sally* of moisturizer: It's reliable, never leaves you wanting more, and will always put you in a good mood. The brand has perfected the oil-free moisturizer over the years, and it now contains three different types of ceramides to penetrate deeply into your skin barrier, all while feeling incredibly lightweight.

**Who It's For:** Maybe you've just experienced an aggressive [retinol](#) treatment or your skin is freaking out due to a change in weather—either way, the CeraVe moisturizing lotion is a good reset for fragile skin. Its fragrance-free formula leaves out potentially irritating chemical and synthetic ingredients, so stick with this one if you have sensitive skin or just want something that'll get the job done.

**Worth Noting:** Fortunately, the bottle is large and the formula is affordable, as you'll likely need a couple of pumps to cover your skin thoroughly.

**Key Ingredients:** Ceramides, hyaluronic acid | **Size:** 12 oz



A person after applying CeraVe Daily Moisturizing Lotion

Credit: InStyle

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**Tessa Petak**, news editor with sensitive skin: “It's lightweight, suitable for all skin types, and layers well under makeup. I like its super simple and nonirritating ingredients.”

## **BEST ANTI-AGING**

Lancer UltraRich Barrier Cream

 Lancer UltraRich Barrier Cream

Credit: Lancer

**\$110 at Nordstrom**

**\$89 at QVC**

**\$110 at Dermstore**

**Why We Love It:** Since Lancer labels this moisturizer as a [barrier cream](#), I automatically assumed it would be too thick and heavy to wear beyond [winter](#). However, the delightfully silky formula proved me wrong. A pea-sized amount provides me with a generous amount of coverage, and I love to slather. What I'm most impressed with is how my skin transformed within one week of using it. My [fine lines](#) were less noticeable, I had far fewer breakouts, and there was an overall radiance to my complexion that wasn't there before. Now, I use it whenever I need a skin revamp or have a big event coming up, like a wedding or work trip.

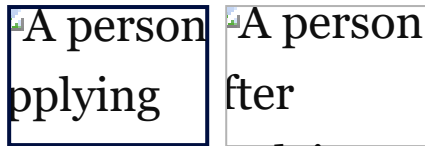
**Who It's For:** We hear a lot of chatter about improving your skin barrier, and if you're overwhelmed by products claiming to bring new life to your skin, I recommend starting with this moisturizer. It's a great way to heal damaged skin and achieve professional-looking results that go beyond hydration.

**Worth Noting:** Although I use this moisturizer throughout every season, including the summer, I reserve it for my [nighttime routine](#) because it's fairly thick. Anyone with [oily skin](#) may need a more lightweight option.

**Key Ingredients:** Ceramides, jojoba seed oil, tocopherol | **Size:** 1.7 oz



A person applying Lancer UltraRich Barrier Cream to their cheek



**Irene Richardson, associate editor with oily combination skin:**


“My skin looks so glowy and radiant while using it that I don't even need to wear makeup. I've seen a drastic change in my skin since I started incorporating it into my routine—my complexion is more even (read: fewer dark spots and less redness) and much brighter. It's a great moisturizer to use after I've applied [self-tanner](#) to my face, which usually dries out my skin, because this baby plumps moisture right back into it.”

**INSTYLE TIP**

Any moisturizer labeled noncomedogenic theoretically shouldn't clog pores, but it's important to read the ingredient label carefully. [Heidi B. Prather](#), M.D., a board-certified dermatologist, says common pore-clogging offenders include cocoa butter, lanolin, beeswax, and coconut oil.

**BEST FOR OILY SKIN**

Peach & Lily Matcha Pudding Antioxidant Cream

 [Ulta Peach & Lily Matcha Pudding Antioxidant Cream](#)





Credit: Ulta

[View on Ulta](#)

[\\$43 at Target](#)

[View on Peachandlily.com](#)

**Why We Love It:** The best moisturizer for oily skin doesn't have to be a no-frills, simple white cream. The green-tinted Peach & Lily antioxidant cream soothes redness and irritated skin with a cooling effect, similar to that of an [ice globe](#). Your skin will thrive under its pudding-like texture as it becomes stronger thanks to good-for-your-skin ingredients like matcha, [niacinamide](#), and panthenol. It also adds a matte finish to shiny skin, preventing a slick-looking forehead.

**Who It's For:** You know those times when your skin feels so raw and sensitive, it's hard to imagine applying anything to it? This moisturizer is for those moments. It talks reactive skin off a ledge by soothing, hydrating, and helping it heal with each application.

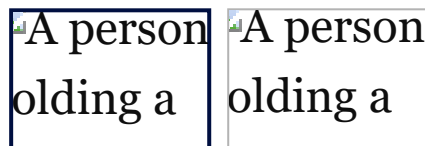
**Worth Noting:** Everyone has their preference, and if a matte finish isn't your thing, you may prefer a moisturizer with a slightly dewier appearance.

**Key Ingredients:** Matcha, adenosine, niacinamide, panthenol | **Size:** 3.4 oz



A person holding a tub of Peach & Lily Matcha Pudding Antioxidant Cream


Credit: InStyle



**Emily Kelleher**, evergreen and special projects editor with **sensitive, combination skin**: “This is truly the Goldilocks of moisturizers. It's hydrating but not greasy, and always soothing. It's the rare moisturizer that has served me well through all seasons. It's such a soothing salve and has never once irritated my famously sensitive skin.”

## **BEST FOR DRY SKIN**

Point of View Whip It Hydrating Whipped Cream



Whip It Hydrating Whipped Cream



Credit: Point of View

[View on Povbeauty.com](#)

**Why We Love It:** Similar to the look and feel of CeraVe's moisturizer, this thicker cream soothes dry skin upon application. The unique container has a twist-off cap that includes a spatula for easy spreading (a heaven-sent innovation for those with acrylic nails who otherwise struggle to take off twist tops).

**Who It's For:** Anybody with sensitive, combination, or dry skin will love this moisturizer that's made with Korean-inspired ingredients that go through a two-step fermentation process for maximum moisture retention. The whipped, fluffy texture is perfect for skin prep before makeup.

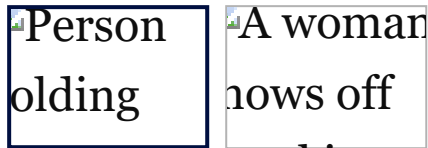
**Worth Noting:** This is on the thicker side of moisturizers. If you prefer serum-like consistencies, you'll likely prefer another option.

**Key Ingredients:** Beta glucan, shea butter, ectoin, sunflower seed oil, glycerin, resveratrol | **Size:** 1.69 oz



Person holding POV Whip It in one hand

Credit: InStyle



**Summer Cartwright**, senior wellness editor with combination skin: “When I even think about switching anything in my skin care routine, my skin freaks out. This is honestly the first product I’ve tried recently that didn’t make me break out. I noticed my skin looked fresher, bouncier, and younger after only a week of consistent use. I apply it mornings and nights and only use this moisturizer now.”

## **BEST FOR ROSACEA**

**Medik8 Total Moisture Daily Face Cream**



Dermstore Medik8 Total  
Moisture Daily Face Cream

Credit: Dermstore

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~~\$49~~  
**\$45 at Amazon**

**View on Dermstore**

**View on Medik8.com**

**Why We Love It:** The other day, a prominent New York City chef told me that he considers a restaurant great if it consistently delivers great service, food, and ambiance every single time. That's how I think of the Medik8 Moisturizer—no matter what time of year it is or what state my skin is in, I can count on this science-backed formula. Whether it's 90 or 19 degrees out, it thoroughly hydrates without feeling heavy. Plus, it soothes redness and blurs pores. As a bonus, the frosted glass packaging is refillable, reducing my carbon footprint by a few ounces.

**Who It's For:** I recommend this noncomedogenic moisturizer for people with rosacea since it alleviates my [redness](#) better than anything else I've got stocked up in my beauty cabinet.

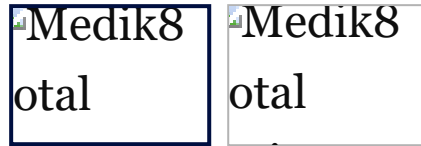
**Worth Noting:** The moisturizer has a slightly tacky feel, which I prefer because it allows me to skip [primer](#) when applying makeup; however, if you prefer a silkier texture, consider the Kiehl's option listed below.

**Key Ingredients:** Prebiotic peptides, hyaluronic acid | **Size:** 1.6 oz



Medik8 Total Moisture Facial Cream Being Applied To A Persons Face  
On White Backdrop With Green Leaf

Credit: InStyle



**Irene, associate editor with oily combination skin:** “I’ve used this moisturizer for over a year now, and I imagine my life without it. It consistently delivers amazing results for my skin, soothing dryness and mitigating redness in one creamy layer. I like how the formula works year-round, providing a matte finish when I’m oily in the summer and having a rich enough texture to battle dry winter months.”

#### INSTYLE TIP

These two common ingredients are essential for ensuring skin looks and feels healthy.

“[Ceramides](#) strengthen the skin barrier, which is crucial for maintaining moisture retention and resilience,” explains Smith. Meanwhile, “Hyaluronic acid is a humectant that draws water into the skin, making it great for plumping and hydration.”

#### **BEST FOR ECZEMA**

Tatcha Indigo Calming Cream





## Tatcha Indigo Calming Cream

Credit: Tatcha

**\$92 at QVC**

**[View on Tatcha.com](#)**

**Why We Love It:** The Tatcha Indigo Calming Cream looks like a magical blue orb decoration, but there's real, result-producing product inside the pretty packaging. Endorsed by the National Eczema Association, the formula is ideal for individuals experiencing itchy, sensitive, or irritated skin. Beyond this, its thin texture glides over skin, blurring pores and allowing makeup to layer seamlessly over it. The seashell-blue hue allows you to see exactly where you've applied it before, instantly blending into the skin.

**Who It's For:** Our [acne-prone](#) friends will appreciate a formula that actually helps calm and prevent breakouts, rather than aggravating them further. Thanks to tried-and-true ingredients like colloidal oatmeal and indigo extract, individuals with eczema and rosacea can finally find relief.

**Worth Noting:** Here's the thing, we think the results are totally worth the price, but the price is...pricey. However, you can subscribe and save, and since it works so well, we think you'll be using this over and over.

**Key Ingredients:** Colloidal oatmeal, Japanese indigo extract | **Size:** 1.7

**Lindsey Metrus, vice president of shopping content with sensitive skin:** “I have never used a moisturizer that delivered as amazing results as this product. My skin would get these tiny, pesky little breakouts that lasted ages, and no matter what I tried, they wouldn't go away. Within days of using this moisturizer, those bumps were gone. It's absolutely magic. If I ever stop using it for some time and my skin inevitably starts looking dull or breaking out, the moment I switch back, my skin looks a million times better.”

## **BEST K-BEAUTY**

### Innisfree Green Tea Hyaluronic Acid Moisturizer



Innisfree Green Tea Hyaluronic  
Acid Hydrating Moisturizer

Credit: Amazon

~~\$30~~  
**\$29 at Amazon**

~~\$30~~  
**\$18 at Sephora**



**Why We Love It:** This [South Korean beauty brand](#) is all about making your skin as soft as silk sheets with one little swipe. With only a dime-sized amount of formula, the moisturizer with ceramides strengthens the skin barrier, while green tea calms redness and inflammation. Meanwhile, five types of hyaluronic acid drench dry patches in long-lasting moisture.

**Who It's For:** This noncomedogenic moisturizer is essential for dry and combination skin, providing just enough hydration to soothe away flaky areas without contributing to shine.

**Worth Noting:** If the brand offered the product in a bigger size (hint, hint!), we'd consider this a perfect moisturizer. Unfortunately, it's easy to run through a jar in no time, especially since its plush texture makes the moisturizer a treat to apply.

**Key Ingredients:** Green tea, hyaluronic acid | **Size:** 1.7 oz



A person holding a tub of Innisfree Green Tea Seed Hyaluronic Acid Hydrating Cream

Credit: InStyle

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**Essence Wiley, writer with dry, combination skin:** “It thoroughly preps my skin for makeup or [sunscreen](#), and I never worry about dryness, clogged pores, or an irritated skin barrier. I’ve used it throughout the year, and I think the perfectly lightweight feel is ideal for summer when the sun is beaming and you want as little product on as possible.”

## BEST MOISTURIZER WITH SPF

Aveeno Positively Radiant Daily Moisturizer

 Aveeno Positively Radiant Daily  
Moisturizer

Credit: Amazon

~~\$25~~  
**\$17 at Amazon**

~~\$27~~  
**\$19 at Walmart**

**\$19 at Target**

**Why We Love It:** Other than a pair of ratty gym shorts I'll never let go of, I can't think of anything I still use from when I was 13. Still, Assistant Editor [Christina Perrier](#) says she's stuck with the Aveeno Positively Radiant Daily Moisturizer since she was a young teen. The mostly plant-based formula uses gentle ingredients, notably soy, to soothe, hydrate, and even out skin tone. Its thinner texture and nonirritating ingredients make it safe to layer up during particularly dry seasons.

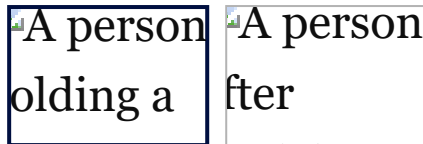
**Who It's For:** The best part about the moisturizer with SPF is that it's very customizable. Apply a lightweight layer to oilier, shinier skin for extra hydration or use three to four pumps on dry, cracked complexions. Its versatility makes the moisturizers perfect for travel, where you're unsure how your skin may react to a new climate, and transitioning between seasons.

**Worth Noting:** Dermatologists recommend [sunscreens](#) with a SPF 30 or higher, so we wouldn't skip your face sunscreen when using this product. Still, we're all for the added protection that SPF 15 coverage provides.

**Key Ingredients:** Soy | **Size:** 4 oz



A person holding a bottle of Aveeno Positively Radiant Daily Moisturizer



**Christina Perrier, assistant editor with combination skin:** “I have been using this moisturizer since I was 13 years old, so when I say tried-and-true, I mean it. I've tried other moisturizers (even those made by Aveeno) over the years, but none have moisturized my face as well as this one. My skin drinks this stuff up, and it never feels greasy or oily—even when I double or triple up on pumps when my skin is really feeling parched during the winter.”

## **BEST FOR COMBINATION SKIN**

### Kiehl's Ultra Facial Cream



Credit: Amazon

\$26  
**\$25 at Amazon**

\$70

**\$26 at Sephora**

**[View on Kiehls.com](#)**

**Why We Love It:** At best, a good moisturizer for combination skin smooths away dry patches and prevents excess oil production. Kiehl's is even better than that. It delivers its formula in an ultralightweight, fragrance-free formula that sensitive-skin users will rejoice in using. However, don't think this makes for a wimpy formula. The brand incorporated 4.5 percent squalane into the formula for long-lasting hydration. What's more, the moisturizer also earned the National Eczema Association's Seal of Acceptance.

**Who It's For:** The versatile Kiehl's Ultra Facial Cream will help balance wish-washy skin—i.e., Dry one day, oily the next, and occasionally prone to breakouts. It's hydrating enough to moisturize during the winter, while still feeling light and comfortable during the summer.

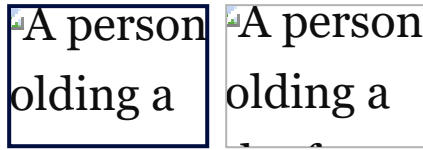
**Worth Noting:** While it may not be an issue for some, we'd prefer it came in a pump or squeeze-bottle for a more hygienic application and to avoid winding up with product under our long nails (gross). On the bright side, Kiehl's recently reformulated the packaging to use less plastic—a win for eco-conscious customers.

**Key Ingredients:** Squalane, ceramides | **Size:** 4 oz



A person holding a tub of Kiehl's Ultra Facial Cream

Credit: InStyle



**Jordan Julian, editor with combination skin:** “This is my favorite year-round moisturizer because it strikes the perfect balance between lightweight and rich for my combination skin. I'm prone to dry, flaky patches on my chin and forehead, and this moisturizer delivers deep, lasting hydration without ever feeling too heavy or greasy, or triggering breakouts.”

## **BEST FOR ACNE-PRONE SKIN**

Mantle The Barrier Cream



Credit: Liberty



**Why We Love It:** Scandinavian skin care brand Mantle takes after the country's minimalist, and very enviable, fashion style with this unsuspecting barrier cream. Inside the modest packaging is a science-backed, patented formula that uses a unique combination of ceramides, cholesterol, hyaluronic acid, inulin, and squalene to heal and protect damaged skin. Despite having a yellow tint and appearing slightly thick, our tester confirms that it has an airy feel, making it her go-to summer moisturizer.

**Who It's For:** When you're ready to get serious about improving your skin barrier, effectively preventing damage that leads to acne, splurge on this moisturizer with ceramides. Its powerhouse formula has the potential to replace other products by restoring skin. Hence, it's stronger and better able to fight off environmental aggressors, like pollution and UV rays, that lead to breakouts.

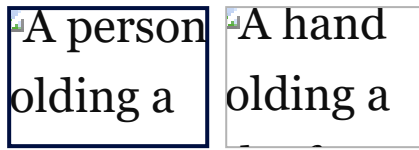
**Worth Noting:** Treat this moisturizer as an investment, using it regularly and consistently to see fewer breakouts. We promise that extra effort will pay off in the form of brighter, clearer, more supple skin.

**Key Ingredients:** Hyaluronic acid, ceramides, squalene | **Size:** 1.7 oz



A person holding a tub of Mantle The Barrier Cream


Credit: InStyle



**Erika Reals**, senior beauty editor with acne-prone combination skin: “It's designed to help improve your skin's barrier thanks to ceramides and the brand's proprietary mBarrier Complex, which helps restore and strengthen the skin. I like it as a warm-weather moisturizer since it feels more lightweight compared to some I prefer to use in the wintertime when my skin gets especially dry.”

## **BEST FOR SENSITIVE SKIN**

Vanicream Daily Facial Moisturizer



Vanicream Daily Facial  
Moisturizer

Credit: Amazon

**\$14 at Amazon**



View on Ulta

\$14 at Target

**Why We Love It:** When you want a dermatologist-recommended moisturizer that you can use morning and night, the Vanicream Daily Facial Moisturizer has your back. It strips away pomp and circumstance with a no-nonsense formula that gives dull, dehydrated skin a new, rejuvenated life. The thinner texture is easy to layer under makeup and with other products, such as [tinted sunscreen](#), allowing you to incorporate it seamlessly into your routine.

**Who It's For:** Our senior editor recommends this affordable moisturizer for those looking for a pregnancy-safe option. It replaces potentially irritating fillers, such as essential oils, with hyaluronic acid and ceramides for a sensitive-skin-friendly formula.

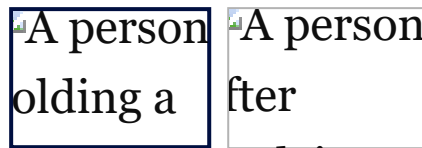
**Worth Noting:** Keep in mind that this may not be hydrating enough for those with extremely dry skin. If this sounds like you, but you're tempted by its affordable price point, we recommend layering two or three layers—don't worry, your skin will soak it right up.

**Key Ingredients:** Squalane, glycerin | **Size:** 3 oz



A person holding a bottle of Vanicream Daily Facial Moisturizer

Credit: InStyle



**[Hayley Prokos](#), senior fashion editor with normal skin (not shown):** “It's a no-frills moisturizer that gets the job done well. Makeup and skin care can be so costly that the under \$15 price point is super refreshing.”

## Our Testing Process

With thousands of promising pitches flooding our inboxes every day, we asked our editors to go back to basics: What’s the best moisturizer they’ve ever used? Our range of responses varied, including reliable brands we’ve used since middle school and buzzy new up-and-comers worthy of our attention. Each editor explained why the moisturizers worked so well for their specific skin type, including oily, sensitive, mature, and acne-prone skin. They also informed us about other noticeable changes they observed from using the moisturizer, such as fewer breakouts, reduced redness, or a brighter complexion. After analyzing their responses and comparing them with our experts’ insights, we identified the best moisturizers for all skin types.

## What to Keep in Mind

- **Ingredients:** Ceramides and hyaluronic acid are lightweight ingredients that thoroughly hydrate the skin, making them suitable for all skin types. [Vitamin C](#), on the other hand, provides brightening and anti-inflammatory effects. However, it may not be the best choice for everyone. “Vitamin C is more commonly used in serums, but can be helpful when included in low, stable concentrations,” says Smith. The ingredients you choose also depend on *when* you’re using your face

moisturizer. For instance, “In the morning, a moisturizer with SPF is a smart two-in-one, especially for simplicity,” says Smith. Additionally, [Ellen Marmur](#), M.D., recommends tara tree seed extract, which contains vitamins B and C that help preserve your hydration levels.

- **Formula:** While the right ingredients are crucial, a moisturizer’s texture can make or break its performance, too. “Gel-creams work better for oily or acne-prone skin, while balms or creams are better for dry, barrier-compromised skin,” says Smith. At night, since you’re not in the sun or wearing makeup, you can use a richer face moisturizer with ingredients such as peptides or a gentle [retinoid](#).
- **Skin Type:** The best moisturizers for dry skin typically use ingredients such as hyaluronic acid and glycerin. Another excellent recommendation from Dr. Marmur is chia seed oil, which hydrates the skin while reducing inflammation. Meanwhile, pro-vitamin B5 combats dry and itchy red skin. The best moisturizer for sensitive skin avoids harsh chemicals and fragrances, opting instead for gentle ingredients like aloe vera, says Dr. Marmur. Additionally, Dr. Prather recommends that individuals with [acne-prone skin](#) also avoid tocopherol, a.k.a. vitamin E, as it can often exacerbate acne. The best [anti-aging moisturizer](#) for mature skin has peptides, antioxidants, and, as a bonus, SPF. “Choose an SPF of 50 or higher. Using SPF daily can help prevent premature aging,” explains Dr. Marmur.

## Your Questions, Answered

### How often should you apply moisturizer?

Depending on its ingredients, you can typically apply moisturizer twice a day or as needed. However, if your moisturizer contains active ingredients like acids, retinoids, or vitamin C, Smith recommends using a hydrating mist between applications when your skin starts to feel dry and tight. “It keeps the skin comfortable and hydrated without layering too much product,” she explains, adding that reapplying moisturizer with active ingredients too often can cause irritation.

## Can I use body cream on my face?

We recommend leaving [body lotion](#) on your limbs, especially for those prone to breakouts or those with sensitive skin. “Most body creams are formulated with occlusive or heavier emollients that can clog facial pores or cause sensitivity,” says Smith. She explains that our face needs “targeted ingredients in lower concentrations, especially if you're using actives like retinoids or [exfoliants](#).”

## Are fragrance-free moisturizers better for sensitive skin?

Since fragrance is a common trigger for skin irritation and allergic reactions, our experts agree that those with sensitive skin should always choose a fragrance-free moisturizer. “That being said, some essential oils or natural fragrances can still cause issues, so it's not just about avoiding synthetic fragrance, but about knowing what your skin tolerates,” says Smith. We always recommend performing a patch test before applying any new product or consulting with your dermatologist.

## What is the best moisturizer to use after a retinol treatment?

One side effect of [retinol](#) usage is the drying effect it can have on certain skin types. Take precautions before you cover your face in your favorite moisturizer. “Using a moisturizer before or after your retinol may decrease the potency and efficacy of your retinol treatment,” says Dr. Prather. Always wait two to five minutes after applying retinol before applying moisturizer. “If you have particularly sensitive skin, mixing your retinol with a drop of moisturizer can help dilute the strength of your retinol to minimize irritation while onboarding retinol,” she adds.

## What is the best moisturizer for aging skin?

While hydrating ingredients are critical for any moisturizer, the best moisturizer for [aging skin](#) would also include peptides, antioxidants, and brightening agents, says Dr. Prather. If you want to get technical, Dr. Marmur recommends Acetyl-Hexapeptide-8 and Palmitoyl tripeptide 5. “Both have powerful wrinkle-smoothing effects to help reduce the look of stubborn wrinkles,” she explains. Palmitoyl tripeptide also helps boost collagen, which is “the key to protecting against skin degradation to slow down the [effects of aging](#),” says Dr. Marmur.

Additionally, [Lucia Miranda](#), a New York City-based aesthetician, says texture plays a key role. “I recommend thicker products, as mature skin is thinner and needs more oils to retain the moisture,” she explains.

## Why Shop With Us

[Irene Richardson](#) is an associate editor at *InStyle*. For this story, she tested several face moisturizers and consulted with the larger team for their recommendations. Irene also interviewed the following experts for this story:

- Kristyn Smith is an aesthetician and founder of Practise NYC, a skin care clinic specializing in treatments that renew and restore the skin. As a celebrity aesthetician, she’s prepped clients, including Bella and Gigi Hadid, Jacquelyn Jablonski, and Paige Reifler.
- Dr. Ellen Marmur is a board-certified dermatologist with over two decades of experience and is the founder of [MMSkincare](#).
- Dr. Heidi B. Prather, M.D., FAAD, is a board-certified dermatologist at [Westlake Dermatology](#).
- Lucia Miranda is a licensed aesthetician at [Shafer Clinic](#).

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