

Dehydrated skin



Dry Patches



# THE ULTIMATE SKIN TYPE GUIDE



Fine Lines



Skin Type Template

Shiny T-Zone



Oily skin



# SKIN TYPE 101

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# WHY IT MATTERS TO KNOW YOUR SKIN TYPE

Have you ever tried a skincare routine that worked wonders for someone else—only to feel like your skin didn't get the memo? One of the biggest reasons this happens is confusion between your skin type and your skin modifiers. These two factors work together to shape how your skin behaves day to day—and understanding both is key to building a routine that actually works for you.

Your skin type is your baseline—its natural tendency. It's usually categorized as oily, dry, combination, or normal. This doesn't change much over time and is mostly influenced by genetics and physiology.

Your skin modifiers, on the other hand, are the conditions that overlay your type. They can make skin more reactive, breakout-prone, dehydrated, or aging-focused. Unlike type, modifiers shift with age, environment, stress, climate, or lifestyle.

Think of it this way: your skin type is the foundation of your house, while your modifiers are the weather conditions it faces. Knowing both lets you choose skincare that not only suits your natural skin but also adapts to the unique challenges it experiences.



# THE FOUR SKIN TYPES



Skin is generally grouped into four main types: normal, dry, oily, and combination. Each type reflects how much oil your skin produces and how it holds onto moisture. Knowing yours is the first step to choosing the right routine. There are four skin types: dry, normal, combination and oily.

## Dry

Lacks enough natural oil

Can feel tight, rough or flaky

Pores appear barely visible

Fine lines may be more noticeable

## Normal

Balanced in oil and hydration

Feels comfortable, not dry or oily

Few visible pores & even texture

Rarely feels tight or greasy

## Combination

A mix of both oily and dry areas

T-zone is oily while cheeks are normal or dry

Pores more noticeable in oily areas

## Oily

Produces excess sebum

Can look shiny, especially in T-zone

Pores are larger and more visible

Prone to blackheads, whiteheads, and breakouts



# SKIN TYPE QUIZ

How does your skin feel a few hours after cleansing (no products used)?

- A. Tight, rough, or flaky
- B. Balanced and comfortable
- C. Shiny in the T-zone only
- D. Shiny all over

How often do you get breakouts or clogged pores?

- A. Rarely
- B. Balanced and comfortable
- C. Sometimes in the T-zone
- D. Often – blackheads or pimples,

How does your skin react to moisturizer?

- A. Soaks it up instantly
- B. Feels fine, not greasy or dry
- C. Feels good in some areas, greasy in others
- D. Gets greasy quickly

How visible are your pores?

- A. Very small or not visible
- B. Visible but not large
- C. Enlarged in the T-zone
- D. Enlarged all over



# ADVICE PER SKIN TYPE

## Mostly A: Dry Skin

### AM Routine

Cream or milk cleanser  
Hydrating toner or essence  
Rich moisturizer  
Sunscreen

### PM Routine

Creamy cleanser or cleansing balm  
Hydrating serum  
Thick night cream or facial oil

### Product Tips

Use rich, emollient textures.  
Apply products while skin is slightly damp to lock in hydration

### Hero Ingredients

Hyaluronic acid, glycerin, urea (deep hydration)  
Ceramides (repair skin barrier)  
Squalane or natural oils (seal in moisture)

### Things to Avoid

Foaming cleansers with sulfates  
Overuse of clay masks  
Hot water and alcohol-based toners

## Mostly B: Normal Skin

### AM Routine

Gentle cleanser  
Lightweight moisturizer  
Broad-spectrum sunscreen

### PM Routine

Gentle cleanser  
Hydrating serum  
Light moisturizer or night cream

### Product Tips

Stick with basics; avoid overcomplicating your routine.  
Choose products labeled "for all skin types"

### Hero Ingredients

Hyaluronic acid (hydration)  
Vitamin C (brightening, prevention)  
Peptides (skin support)

### Things to Avoid

Harsh exfoliants used too often  
Over-layering active ingredients your skin doesn't need

You  
Got  
This!

# ADVICE PER SKIN TYPE



## Mostly C: Combination Skin

### AM Routine

Gentle gel or cream cleanser  
Lightweight moisturizer all over  
Spot apply richer cream on dry areas  
Sunscreen

### PM Routine

Gentle cleanser  
Balancing serum  
Lightweight moisturizer + richer cream on dry patches

### Product Tips

Multi-mask: clay masks on oily zones, hydrating masks on dry zones.  
Layer products strategically (don't treat your whole face the same).

### Hero Ingredients

Niacinamide (balances oil + soothes)  
Hyaluronic acid  
Green tea extract (calming)

### Things to Avoid

Using only drying, oil-control products (will dehydrate cheeks).  
Over-moisturizing oily areas.  
Ignoring zone-specific needs.

## Mostly D: Oily Skin

### AM Routine

Foaming or gel cleanser  
Oil-free moisturizer  
Sunscreen (gel or fluid)

### PM Routine

Gel cleanser (double cleanse optional)  
Exfoliating toner/serum  
Lightweight gel moisturizer

### Product Tips

Choose oil-free, non-comedogenic products.  
Blotting papers can help during the day.

### Hero Ingredients

Salicylic acid (clears pores, reduces oil)  
Niacinamide (balances oil production, calms redness)  
Clay (masks to absorb excess oil)

### Things to Avoid

Skipping moisturizer (leads to rebound oiliness)  
Heavy creams and occlusive oils  
Over-cleansing, which can trigger more oil production

# SKIN CLARITY IN 3 STEPS

Not sure where your skin fits in? This quick 3-step guide makes it simple. By cleansing your face, waiting, and observing how your skin feels, you can easily identify your skin type. Use this flow to match your skin's behavior with the type that fits you best—it's the foundation for building a routine that actually works.

## Step 1

Cleanse your face  
(no products, wait 1-2 hours)



## Step 2

Check how your skin feels  
and looks



## Step 3

Match signs to your skin type

Takeaway: In just three steps, you'll know whether your skin is dry, normal, oily, or combination—so you can choose products that truly fit your needs.

# SKIN TYPE OUTCOME MAP

So what do your results mean? Once you've cleansed, waited, and observed, it's time to connect the dots. This outcome map shows how your skin's behavior translates into its type—dry, normal, combination, or oily. Use it as a quick reference to see where you fit and start tailoring your routine with confidence.



Your skin just dropped the clues—this map tells you exactly what they mean!





# SKIN MODIFIERS

On top of your skin type, you may also have skin modifiers—traits that describe how your skin behaves or what it's prone to. Unlike skin type, modifiers can change with age, lifestyle, or environment, and they help explain your skin's unique challenges. Commonly occurring skin modifiers are sensitivity, acne-prone, dehydration and aging

## Sensitivity

**What it means:** Skin easily reacts with redness, stinging, or irritation.

**Hero ingredients:** Aloe vera, centella asiatica, oat extract, ceramides.

**Tips:** Stick to fragrance-free, minimal-ingredient products. Patch test before use.

**Avoid:** Harsh exfoliants, strong fragrances, high alcohol content.

## Acne-Prone

**What it means:** Skin is prone to clogged pores, blackheads, and breakouts.

**Hero ingredients:** Salicylic acid, benzoyl peroxide, niacinamide, retinoids.

**Tips:** Use lightweight, non-comedogenic products. Introduce actives slowly.

**Avoid:** Heavy oils, pore-clogging ingredients, aggressive scrubbing.



# SKIN MODIFIERS

## Dehydration

**What it means:** Skin lacks water (not oil), leading to tightness, dullness, and fine lines.

**Hero ingredients:** Hyaluronic acid, glycerin, panthenol, aloe.

**Tips:** hydrating serums under moisturizer, and drink enough water.

**Avoid:** Overuse of mattifying products, hot water, and high-alcohol toners.

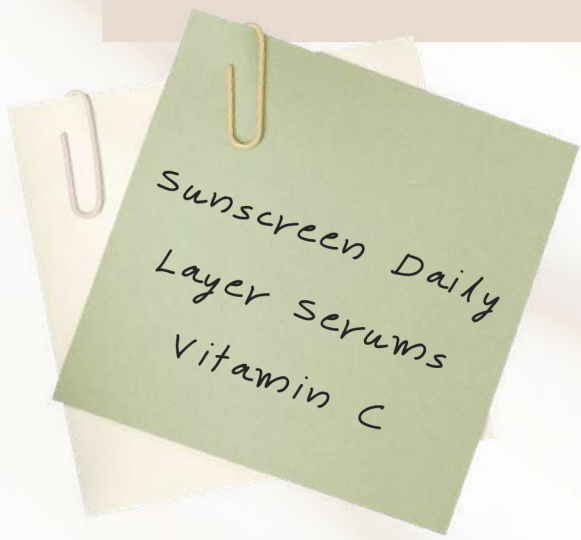
## Aging

**What it means:** Skin shows fine lines, wrinkles, loss of elasticity, and uneven tone.

**Hero ingredients:** Retinol, peptides, vitamin C, hyaluronic acid, SPF.

**Tips:** Focus on prevention (sunscreen daily) and repair (retinoids at night).

**Avoid:** Skipping sunscreen, smoking, and excessive sun exposure.



Sunscreen Daily  
Layer Serums  
Vitamin C





# SKIN MODIFIER QUIZ



## Sensitivity Checklist – Do you...

Answer “Yes” to 2+ = Sensitive Skin

Get red, itchy, or stinging reactions from skincare?

React to temperature, sun, or wind easily?

Flush or turn red from stress, spicy food, or alcohol?

Find fragrance, dyes, or alcohol-based products irritating?

*Result: Sensitive Skin*

## Acne-Prone Checklist – Do you...

Answer “Yes” to 2+ = Acne-Prone Skin

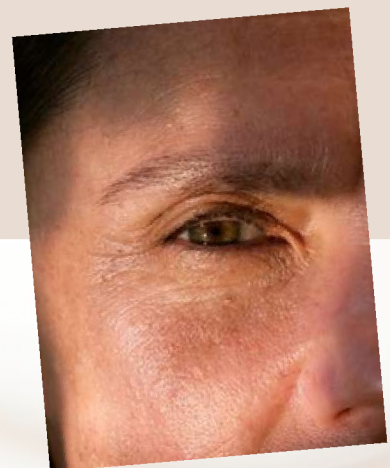
Get frequent clogged pores, blackheads, or breakouts?

Notice pimples worsen during stress or hormonal changes?

Scar or darken easily after breakouts?

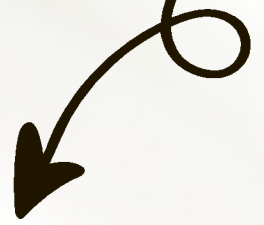
Break out after using heavy creams or oils?

*Result: Acne-Prone Skin*





# SKIN MODIFIER QUIZ



## Dehydration Checklist – Do you...

Answer “Yes” to 2+ = Dehydrated Skin

Feel tightness and oiliness at the same time?

Notice fine lines or rough patches despite oily areas?

See makeup separating, flaking, or looking patchy?

Feel immediate relief when using hydrating products?

*Result: Dehydrated Skin*

## Aging Checklist – Do you...

Answer “Yes” to 2+ = Aging Skin

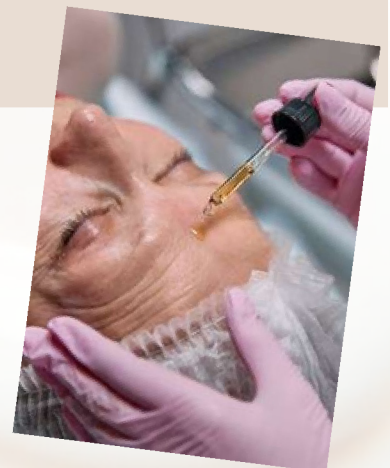
Notice fine lines or wrinkles becoming visible?

See sagging, loss of firmness, or thinning skin?

Experience uneven tone, dullness, or age spots?

Find your skin takes longer to recover after stress or damage?

*Result: Aging Skin*



# ADVICE PER MODIFIER



## Sensitivity

### AM Routine

Gentle, non-foaming cleanser  
Lightweight moisturizer  
Mineral sunscreen

### PM Routine

Gentle cleanser  
Calming serum  
Nourishing cream

**Product Tips** Keep routine simple and fragrance-free. Always patch test before using new products.

### Hero Ingredients

Aloe vera (soothes irritation)  
Centella asiatica (calms redness) Oat extract (strengthens barrier)  
Ceramides (repair barrier)

### Things to Avoid

Harsh scrubs and exfoliants  
Fragrance and dyes  
High alcohol formulas  
Strong acids in high concentration

## Acne-Prone

### AM Routine

Gel or foaming cleanser  
Oil-free moisturizer  
Lightweight sunscreen

### PM Routine

Gel or foaming cleanser  
Targeted treatment (salicylic acid, benzoyl peroxide, or retinoid)  
Lightweight, non-comedogenic moisturizer

### Product Tips

Stick to oil-free, non-comedogenic formulas. Introduce actives slowly and avoid layering too many treatments.

### Hero Ingredients

Salicylic acid (clears pores)  
Benzoyl peroxide (fights bacteria)  
Niacinamide (balances oil)  
Retinoids (prevent clogged pores)

### Things to Avoid

Heavy oils and butters  
Pore-clogging ingredients  
Over-scrubbing or harsh cleansers  
Skipping moisturizer



# ADVICE PER MODIFIER



## Dehydration

### AM Routine

Hydrating cleanser

Hydrating serum

Moisturizer

Sunscreen

### PM Routine

Gentle cleanser

Hydrating toner or essence

Moisture-locking serum

Richer cream or sleeping mask

**Product Tips** Apply skincare to damp skin to lock in water. Layer lightweight hydrators before moisturizer.

### Hero Ingredients

Hyaluronic acid (draws in water)

Glycerin (hydrates deeply)

Panthenol (calms + repairs)

Aloe vera (hydrates + soothes)

### Things to Avoid

Hot showers or water

Mattifying/clay-heavy products

Alcohol-heavy toners

Foaming cleansers that strip oils

## Aging

### AM Routine

Gentle cleanser

Antioxidant serum (vitamin C)

Moisturizer

Broad-spectrum sunscreen

### PM Routine

Cleanser

Retinol or retinoid

Peptide or hydrating serum

Nourishing night cream

### Product Tips

Focus on daily sun protection and consistent use of anti-aging actives. Be patient – results take time.

### Hero Ingredients

Retinol (boosts cell turnover)

Peptides (support firmness)

Vitamin C (brightens + protects)

SPF (prevents photoaging)

### Things to Avoid

Skipping sunscreen

Over-exfoliating

Smoking or high sun exposure

Harsh, stripping cleansers

# HERO INGREDIENT CHEAT SHEET

Not sure what to look for on product labels? This cheatsheet highlights the powerhouse ingredients your skin will love—grouped by benefit. Whether you need hydration, oil control, anti-aging support, or soothing care, these are the go-to actives to guide your choices.

## Hydration

Hyaluronic Acid  
Glycerin  
Panthenol



## Oil Control

Niacinamide  
Salicylic Acid  
Green Tea

## Anti-Aging

Retinol  
Peptides  
Vitamin C

## Soothing

Aloe Vera  
Centella Asiatica  
Oat Extract



You  
Got  
This!

## NO-GO LIST CHEAT SHEET

Even the best routine can backfire if the wrong products sneak in. This cheat sheet highlights common ingredients and habits to avoid for each skin concern—so you can protect your skin barrier and keep your routine working for you, not against you.

### **Dry Skin**

Sulfates  
Alcohol-based  
toners  
Overuse of clay  
masks

### **Oily/Acne-prone Skin**

Skipping moisturizer  
Heavy creams  
Over-cleansing

### **Sensitive Skin**

Fragrance & dyes  
Harsh scrubs  
High-alcohol  
formulas

### **Aging/Dehydrated Skin**

Skipping sunscreen  
Hot water  
Over-exfoliating

# PERSONALIZED SKIN TYPE TEMPLATE

My Skin Type:

My Skin Modifier(s):

Based on my type and modifiers, I should focus on:

My go-to ingredients:

My "no-go" list:



# SKINCARE ROUTINE BUILDER AM



Step	Product Type	My Product	Notes/Why I Use It
<b>1</b>	Water-Based Cleanser		
<b>2</b>	Toner / Essence		
<b>3</b>	Serum		
<b>4</b>	Eye Cream (optional)		
<b>5</b>	Moisturizer		
<b>6</b>	SPF		



# SKINCARE ROUTINE BUILDER PM

Step	Product Type	My Product	Notes/Why I Use It
1	Oil-Based Cleanser		
2	Water-Based Cleanser		
3	Exfoliator (1-3x/week)		
4	Toner/Hydrating Mist		
5	Treatment / Active Serum		
6	Hydrating or Repair Serum		
7	Eye Cream (optional)		
8	Moisturizer / Night Cream		
9	Occlusive / Sleeping Mask		

# SKIN GOALS TRACKER

Setting clear skin goals helps you stay focused and measure progress. Use this tracker to outline your priorities, track the products you're using, and note how your skin responds over time.

Skin Goal	Why It's Important to Me	Products I'm Using	Progress	Notes & Adjustments
<b>Acne Control</b>				
<b>Even Skin Tone / Brightening</b>				
<b>Minimize Pores</b>				
<b>Anti-Aging / Firmness</b>				
<b>Repair Barrier</b>				
<b>Reduce Redness / Sensitivity</b>				
<b>Hydration / Dewy Glow</b>				

# SKIN GOALS TRACKER

**Why It's Important to Me:** Write a quick note on why this goal matters—this helps stay motivated!

**Products I'm Using:** List the key products targeting this goal.

**Progress:** Track your results regularly—weekly or monthly check-ins help you notice improvements or setbacks.

**Notes & Adjustments:** Jot down what's working, what's not, or any changes you want to try.



Acne is Normal!



# WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Visit **The Skin Routine Blog** for expert skincare tips, ingredient guides, and routine-building advice.



Best serums

