

GO FOR THE BRONZE

Thanks to fluctuating hormones and the sun's UV rays, our complexion becomes increasingly mottled as we age. The easiest way to even out discoloration? Use a big fluffy brush to swipe powder bronzer over your whole face (layer blush on top). "The tannish tint camouflages dark spots on any complexion, giving you a uniform, younger look," says Eugenia Weston, a makeup artist in Los Angeles. For the most natural effect, pick a bronzer no more than one shade deeper than your skin color. Try Terre d'Ete by T. LeClerc (\$55; 888-222-7639 for Barneys stores).

NEVER STEP OUT SANS PROTECTION

"Regardless of how much damage you've accrued, using a high-SPF sunscreen every day, year-round, is key to preventing wrinkles from forming. Keep it in the bathroom next to your toothbrush so it becomes a habit," says dermatologist Jody Levine, M.D., of Plastic Surgery & Dermatology of NYC, who also suggests choosing a formula with free radical-fighting antioxidants like green tea or vitamins C and E, which have been proven to enhance the efficacy of your sunscreen. Aim for an SPF of 20 to 70; most people under-apply, so the higher you go, the better chance you have at getting adequate protection. Editors' pick: Neutrogena Anti-Oxidant Age Reverse Day Lotion with SPF 20 (\$20; at drugstores).

TAKE A MAKEUP LESSON

"Trends change quickly these days, and technology is evolving so rapidly that it's wise to have a professional show you how to make the newest colors and textures work for you—once a year if possible—so you never end up with a dated look," says Weston. In general, department store makeup artists are more than happy to demonstrate ways you can update your look—for

free. Most beauty companies introduce new collections for the spring and fall, so drop by their counters in February or August.

BOOK A BROW APPOINTMENT WITH A PROFESSIONAL

"With time, our natural brow line begins to droop, particularly at the outer corners," says Sue Ellen Gifford, an aesthetician at the Pierre Michel Salon in New York City. "A well-groomed brow opens up the eye area and can give your whole face a lift without needles or surgery." Visit a pro for shaping every six to eight weeks; like the hair on your head, brows grow and require maintenance. Expect to pay anywhere from \$20 to \$60 for the service.

USE LESS FOUNDATION

"When applied in excess, foundation can actually emphasize fine lines and wrinkles," says Weston. To determine the amount you need, follow this guide: For liquids, a dime-size dollop will cover your face and neck; for powders and creams, a thin layer or two is sufficient. Weston recommends always using a primer underneath your base to help the makeup you put on top spread more evenly (i.e., not settle into creases) and adhere to skin all day long. Best bet: Lorac AquaPrime (\$30; sephora.com), an oil-free formula that won't clog pores.

HYDRATE, HYDRATE, AND HYDRATE SOME MORE

Perpetual lack of moisture makes your face more likely to develop lines. That's why consistent moisturizer use is a must, whether your complexion is dry or oily. If you have normal skin, apply an antiaging formula like Estee Lauder Re-Nutriv Ultimate Youth Creme (\$250; esteelauder.com) — which is packed with resveratrol, a powerful antioxidant—morning and night. If your face tends to be greasy, use an oil-free moisturizer in the morning only, advises

Levine. And if you're really dry, "rub Vaseline Petroleum Jelly over your night cream," she says. "This traps in hydration without clogging pores. By the time you wake up, your skin is super-smooth."

DON'T CLIP YOUR CUTICLES

"They're essentially the only living part of your nail; trimming can traumatize them and trigger defects and ridges as your nails grow," says Loretta Ciraldo, M.D., a dermatologist in Miami. To keep cuticles neat and discourage future growth, Kristi Marie Jones, a celebrity manicurist in Los Angeles, recommends soaking them in a bowl of warm water with a squirt of Blue Cross Cuticle Remover (\$5; sallybeauty.com), then using a fairly rough nail file to rub the dead skin off the nail bed. Finish by conditioning and nourishing the area with a thick hand cream or pure shea butter like Narayan Shea Butter in Joyful Spirit (\$23; narayanbeautym.com), which contains mood-boosting essential oils.

STOCK UP ON SPONGES

Blending is the cornerstone of a flawless makeup look devoid of noticeable lines, and nothing gets the job done like a makeup sponge. "It's the ideal tool for spreading liquid foundation, but you can also dampen it, squeeze it out, and press it gently onto your face to smooth and freshen hours-old makeup," says Sandy Linter, a makeup artist at the Rita Hazan salon in New York City. Her favorites: Alcone sponges (\$3 for eight;alconeco.com). Dip into any formula and swipe onto skin in long strokes.

