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Beauty / Skin Care

30 best face sunscreens you'll want to apply every day, according to dermatologists

By [Sophie Shaw](#), CNN Underscored

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Sophie Shaw/CNN Underscored

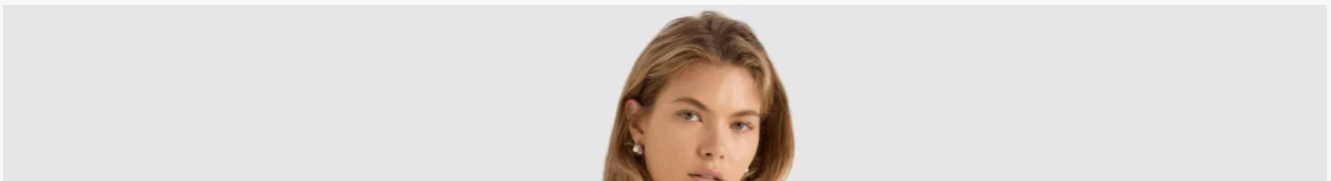
Quick picks

- **Mineral sunscreen:** [Andalou Naturals Daily Shade and Blue Light Defense Facial Lotion SPF 30](#)
- **For dry skin:** [Neutrogena Invisible Daily Defense Face Serum Sunscreen SPF 60](#)
- **For acne-prone skin:** [Dermalogica Clear Start Clearing Defense SPF 30](#)
- **Tinted sunscreen:** [Colorescience Total Protection Face Shield Flex SPF 50](#)
- **For mature skin:** [Ourself Intelligent Defense Mineral Sunscreen Broad-Spectrum SPF 50](#)
- **Water-resistant sunscreen:** [Supergoop! Play Everyday Lotion SPF 50](#)

While the [world of skin care](#) is highly personal, there's one step that dermatologists agree *everyone* should be doing: [applying sunscreen](#) to your face. [Practicing sun safety](#) is about finding the product that works for you, one that you'll actually apply (and reapply) daily and works with your lifestyle, whether that be a [tinted formula](#) that can double as makeup or a [water-resistant lotion](#) that will keep you protected on beach days or [during workouts](#).

Wearing sunscreen isn't just about your skin care routine; it's about your health too. Ultraviolet radiation, specifically UVB radiation, causes skin cancer, which largely can be prevented by staying out of the sun and wearing broad-spectrum sunscreen when you are exposed. It reduces the risk of skin cancer, and that's why sunscreen is considered a drug in the US, and you can [use your FSA dollars to buy it](#). According to the [Melanoma Research Foundation](#) (MRF), nine out of 10 cases of melanoma, the [deadliest form of skin cancer](#), are preventable. While [squamous cell carcinoma](#) and [basal cell carcinoma](#), the most common types of skin cancer, are less lethal, they may still require surgery and can be disfiguring. So, along with applying daily sunscreen, it's important to schedule an annual skin check with your dermatologist for early detection of skin cancer.

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Since your face is exposed to UV rays the most, finding a face sunscreen that works with your skin and lifestyle is ultra important. To help you find a new favorite formula, I asked dermatologists for their top picks. Here are the some they raved about, plus a few sunscreens I — a [beauty editor](#) who’s tested over 50 formulas — personally love.

Best mineral face sunscreen

[Andalou Naturals Daily Shade and Blue Light Defense Facial Lotion SPF 30](#)





Amazon

\$19 at Amazon

\$19 at Andalou Naturals

[Dr. Marisa Garshick](#), a board-certified dermatologist based in New York and New Jersey, loves this mineral sunscreen that is loaded with skin care ingredients and is recommended by the [Skin Cancer Foundation](#). “This mineral sunscreen contains zinc oxide and provides broad-spectrum UVA and UVB coverage while also protecting against blue light and pollution,” she said. “It also contains [hyaluronic acid](#) and bio-designed collagen to help boost moisture, helping to hydrate and plump the skin, and won’t leave a white cast behind.”

[Isdin Eryfotona Actinica Broad-Spectrum Mineral Sunscreen SPF 50+](#)



Amazon

\$17.50 From \$95.00

From \$19.00

\$79.00

\$79.00

~~\$47~~ From \$35 at
Amazon

From \$46 at
Sephora

\$73 at
Isdin

\$73 at
Dermstore

Los Angeles-based board-certified dermatologist [Dr. Asmi Berry](#) recommends this sunscreen fluid that repairs and protects in one step. Along with zinc oxide, it contains patented DNA Repairsomes, which help improve existing sun damage.

Editor Favorite

[Lightsaver Tinted Activated Mineral Sunscreen SPF 33](#)



Sephora

\$45 at Lightsaver

[Dr. David Kim](#), board-certified dermatologist and founder of [Lightsaver](#), said his formula is a zinc oxide-based mineral SPF that has a lightweight whipped texture. It happens to be one of my [personal favorite sunscreens](#) because of its pleasant texture and added skin benefits. "It's formulated with skin care ingredients such as photolyase to help repair UV damage, [niacinamide to help brighten](#) and squalane to hydrate," Kim said. It comes in a tinted version that works for a range of skin tones as well as a non-tinted option.



RELATED ARTICLE

Protect your skin with these 32 dermatologist-approved mineral sunscreens

[Dr. Rossi The Day Formula SPF 30](#)



Dr. Rossi

\$78 at Dr. Rossi

"Formulated with titanium dioxide and niacinamide, this SPF 30 daily sunscreen protects skin from the effects of sun damage, including the risk of skin cancer and premature aging," [Dr. Brendan Camp](#), a double board-certified dermatologist at MCDS Dermatology in New York, said.

[MDSolarSciences MD Mineral BB Crème SPF 50](#)





Amazon

~~\$43~~ **\$34 at Amazon**

\$43 at Nordstrom

\$43 at Ulta Beauty

\$43 at MDSolarSciences

Board-certified dermatologist [Dr. Debbie Palmer](#) said this tinted mineral sunscreen is a favorite among her patients because it replaces their foundation. According to Palmer, it provides light coverage and a natural matte finish while offering "more complete protection by blocking visible light and infrared rays" with zinc oxide and titanium dioxide, as well as antioxidants vitamin E and CoQ10.

[Tizo Ultra Zinc Mineral Sunscreen SPF 40](#)



Amazon

From \$17 at Tizo Skin

\$47 at Amazon

\$47 at Walmart

"This is nice when you want a sunscreen that can double as a makeup primer," Berry said. It's infused with vitamins C and E for antioxidant benefits and is safe for sensitive skin.

EлтаMD UV AOX Mist Mineral Sunscreen Spray SPF 40



Elta MD

From \$46 at Amazon

\$46 at EltaMD

\$46 at Dermstore

\$46 at FSA Store

"This mineral spray sunscreen leaves behind a sheer finish and also contains antioxidants to help protect against free radical damage," Garshick said. "It is lightweight and won't feel greasy while still leaving the skin feeling hydrated. It has a white-to-clear technology that makes it easy to see how much you're applying but then absorbs easily without a white cast."

WHITE CAST.

Best face sunscreen for dry skin

Isntree Hyaluronic Acid Watery Sun Gel SPF 50+



Amazon

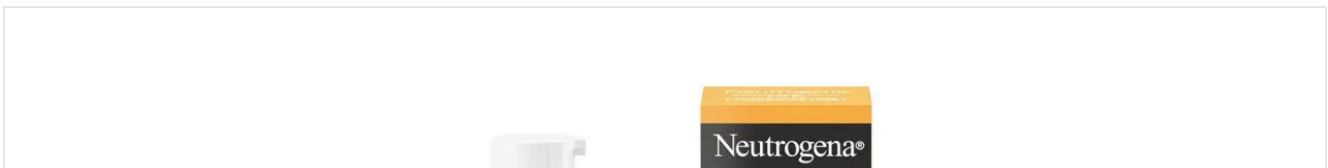
\$24 \$16 at YesStyle

\$24 \$18 at Olive Young

\$24 \$20 at Stylevana

"This product has eight types of hyaluronic acid and is loved for how smoothly and seamlessly it blends into skin," Berry said of this [Korean sunscreen](#). It has a gel-like consistency that adds a layer of light hydration while protecting the skin.

Neutrogena Invisible Daily Defense Face Serum Sunscreen SPF 60





Amazon

~~\$17~~ **\$10 at Amazon**

~~\$17~~ **\$16 at Walgreens**

\$20 at CVS

Garshick recommends this affordable option that “offers UV protection while also containing antioxidants to provide protection against environmental factors.” The oil-free serum is suitable for those who want a hydrating primer-like formula that doesn't feel like a heavy moisturizer.

[Alastin Skincare HydraTint Pro Mineral Sunscreen SPF 36](#)



[\\$84 \\$63 at DermStreet](#)[\\$84 at Amazon](#)[\\$84 at Alastin Skincare](#)

This SPF was specifically recommended for dry skin by two board-certified dermatologists I consulted. [Dr. Jacob Beer](#) pointed to its inclusion of hydroxymethoxyphenyl decanone, a hyaluronic acid booster that helps hydrate the skin,, while [Dr. Kseniya Kobets](#) said the tinted sunscreen gives skin a nice glow. The multitasking product also comes in a bigger tube — 3.2 ounces — than other face sunscreens we've tried, so it'll last you a while, which helps justify the high price tag just a little bit.

[Natú Botanicals Daily Natural Sunscreen SPF 35](#)



Natu Botanicals

[\\$24 at Natú Botanicals](#)

It can be hard to find natural sunscreens that actually feel nice to apply, but Palmer said this organic sunscreen is "elegant to wear and doesn't leave a white residue." It has broad-spectrum UVA/UVB protection with non-nano zinc oxide and no synthetic

chemicals, fragrances or preservatives. Palmer recommends it for all skin types, including sensitive and eczema-prone skin, adding that it hydrates and nourishes, leaving the skin feeling soft.

Best face sunscreen for acne-prone skin

[Innisfree Daily UV Defense Mineral Sunscreen SPF 45](#)



Sephora

[\\$22 at Amazon](#)[\\$22 at Sephora](#)

Board-certified dermatologist [Dr. Ellen Marmur](#) recommended this zinc oxide SPF for our guide to the [best Korean sunscreens](#). It's made for sensitive and acne-prone skin, and even has a hint of a green tint to combat redness.

[Dermalogica Clear Start Clearing Defense SPF 30](#)



Dermalogica

[\\$30 at Amazon](#)

[\\$30 at Dermalogica](#)

[\\$30 at Ulta Beauty](#)

"To reduce shine on oily and acne-prone skin, this SPF 30 daily SPF contains natural tapioca starch, as well as willow bark extract, green tea extract and vitamin C for antioxidant protection," Camp said.

[La Roche-Posay Anthelios Clear Skin Sunscreen Dry Touch SPF 60](#)





Amazon

\$21 From \$16 at Amazon

From \$21 at Walgreens

From \$21 at Ulta Beauty

From \$26 at Target

Berry recommends this sunscreen to her patients that have acne-prone and oily skin. "This sunscreen is oil-free, [is] noncomedogenic and stays matte even in heat and humidity," she said.



RELATED ARTICLE

The best sunscreens for acne-prone skin, according to dermatologists

Supergoop! Unseen Sunscreen SPF 50



Amazon

From \$19 at Amazon

From \$19 at Sephora

\$38 at Dermstore

From \$38 at FSA Store



Supergoop! Unseen Sunscreen has long been an [editor favorite](#), and it's also dermatologist approved. It's especially good for oily skin, "as it absorbs easily, leaving a clear, natural finish," Garshick said. "It not only offers protection against UVA/UVB rays but also contains red algae that may offer protection against blue light."

[MDSolarSciences Mineral Tinted Crème Sunscreen SPF 30](#)



Amazon



Palmer recommends this tinted SPF for sensitive and acne-prone skin. "My patients like it because it is lightweight, blends easily and evens skin tone," she said. The dermatologist also noted that the sunscreen is packed with antioxidants including vitamin C, green tea and pomegranate extract to protect against free radical damage.

[Colorescience Sunforaettable Total Protection Brush-On Shield SPF](#)

50



Amazon

\$69 at Amazon

\$69 at Colorescience

This travel-friendly mineral sunscreen powder is great for makeup wearers, offering an easy way to nix shine throughout the day while also refreshing their SPF protection. It's a favorite of [Dr. Nazanin Saedi](#), double board-certified dermatologist and clinical associate professor at Thomas Jefferson University. "It's great for your face, hair line and, astonishingly, it's also water-resistant," she said. "After my morning sunscreen, I keep this on hand to help me reapply SPF throughout the day, especially when I'm spending the day outside."

Best tinted face sunscreen

Best Tested

[Supergoop! Protec\(tint\) Daily Skin Tint SPF 50](#)





Sephora

\$44 at Amazon

\$44 at Nordstrom

\$44 at Sephora

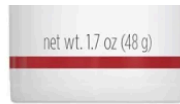
\$44 at Supergoop!

After testing a variety of tinted sunscreens, our editors enjoyed applying this Supergoop! formula the most. It's made with a mix of chemical and physical UV filters, which gives it a lightweight, natural finish. It also stood out for its shade range that takes into account different skin undertones.

[Read our review](#)

[ElaMD UV AOX Elements Broad-Spectrum Tinted SPF 50](#)





Amazon

\$46 at Amazon

\$46 at Dermstore

\$46 at EltaMD

\$46 at FSA Store

EltaMD is consistently one of the top-recommended sunscreen brands among the dermatologists I've spoken to over the years. Berry loves this tinted mineral formula that evens the complexion, adds a bit of hydration with hyaluronic acid and provides antioxidant protection with vitamins C and E, on top of its mineral UV filters. The UV AOX Elements formula is specifically made to defend the skin against environmental factors like the ozone and harsh UV rays, according to the brand.

[EltaMD UV Restore Broad-Spectrum Tinted SPF 40](#)



Amazon.com

~~\$49~~ **\$38 at Amazon**

\$48 at FSA Store

\$48 at EltaMD

\$49 at Dermstore

Another EltaMD pick, the UV Restore tinted SPF focuses on improving sun-damaged skin while protecting it from further UV harm. The mineral formula is one of Beer's favorites. "The antioxidants as well as squalane help hydrate the skin, decrease damage from free radicals and protect from UV [light]," he said.

Editor Favorite

Colorescience Total Protection Face Shield Flex SPF 50



Dermstore

**\$58 at
Amazon**

**\$58 at
Nordstrom**

**\$58 at
Dermstore**

**\$58 at
Colorescience**

Berry and Beer recommend this color-shifting tinted SPF, and after [our team tested it](#), I'm a fan too. The unique formula comes out of the bottle white but then adapts to your skin tone as you blend it in. It's more than just a gimmick: You get broad-spectrum protection and a medium-coverage tint that enhances the complexion.

[Read our review](#)

CeraVe Hydrating Sheer Tint Mineral Sunscreen SPF 30



Amazon

\$16 From \$13 at Amazon

From \$13 at Walmart

\$14 at Target

\$17 at Ulta Beauty

Kobets said this drugstore pick “has the perfect touch of hydration, tint and mineral SPF protection for everyday use.” The sheer color works on a wide range of skin tones and helps combat any chalky white cast.

Isdin Eryfotona Ageless Tinted Mineral Sunscreen SPF 50





Amazon

\$5± From \$38 at Amazon

From \$50 at Sephora

From \$50 at Dermstore

\$78 \$62 at Isdin

Camp is a fan of this tinted sunscreen from Isdin, which is made with a blend of peptides, antioxidants and those aforementioned DNA Repairsomes. According to the dermatologist, it has an "ultralight" feel and can help reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.



RELATED ARTICLE

We tested 12 tinted sunscreens. These 2 provided the most natural, skin-enhancing finish

Best sunscreen for mature skin

[Ourself Intelligent Defense Mineral Sunscreen Broad-Spectrum SPF 50](#)





Ourself

\$55 at Ourself

Infused with [collagen-boosting peptides](#) and skin-smoothing niacinamide, this mineral SPF serum protects the skin while treating signs of aging, according to Beer. [For mature skin](#), it can help with skin texture, fine lines and brightening.

[Sonäge Roux Tinted Day Creme With SPF 30](#)



Sonäge

~~\$64~~ **\$51 at Amazon**

\$60 at Sonäge

An SPF and moisturizer in one, this formula was recommended by Saedi when we asked her about the [best skin care routine for the over-40 crowd](#). The tint helps even out the skin tone while the ceramides, peptides and niacinamide provide anti-aging benefits.

Mad Hippie Daily Protective Serum SPF 30



Amazon

\$22 From \$15 at Amazon

\$23 at Nordstrom

Finding a hydrating formula is important for mature skin, which tends to be drier. Palmer likes this serum because it's lightweight yet feels moisturizing, thanks to hyaluronic acid and buriti oil. She also noted its antioxidant protection benefits from resveratrol, quercetin, sea buckthorn and vitamins C and E.

Doctor Babor Protect RX Mineral Sunscreen SPF 30





Macy's

\$53 From \$47 at Amazon

\$55 at Macy's

“This is a mineral-based sunscreen that feels light, is not at all greasy and won’t leave a white sheen,” Saedi said. “It contains moisturizing ingredients that will leave your skin feeling well hydrated.” These include soothing bisabol and antioxidant beta-carotene.



RELATED ARTICLE

5 tips for maintaining youthful skin, from dermatologists and estheticians over 40

Best water-resistant face sunscreen

[Supergoop! Play Everyday Lotion SPF 50](#)





Nordstrom

From \$12 at Supergoop!

From \$18 at Amazon

From \$18 at Sephora

From \$18 at Nordstrom

Camp and Berry recommend this face and body sunscreen that's great for outdoor activities and workouts. The sweat- and water-resistant formula is noncomedogenic and doesn't feel sticky.

Sun Bum Daily Face SPF 50



Amazon

\$20 at Amazon

\$20 at Sun Bum

\$20 at Ulta Beauty

“If I’m spending a day at the pool, chances are I have Sun Bum sunscreen in my bag,” Saedi said. “This one is made for the face and is water-resistant for 80 minutes. It’s fragrance-free, water-based, very lightweight and good for both sensitive and acne-prone skin types.”

La Roche-Posay Anthelios Mineral Sunscreen SPF 50



Amazon

From \$26 at Amazon

From \$26 at Walmart

From \$26 at Dermstore

Kobets said this mineral sunscreen initially goes on white but then absorbs clear. It can be used on the face and body, offers up to 80 minutes of water resistance and is safe for sensitive skin.



RELATED ARTICLE

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How to choose the best SPF for your face

Find your preferred format

You have a choice between SPF lotions, serums, sprays, powders or [sunscreens sticks](#). Lotions

and serums are the most common formulas for face sunscreens since they are easy to incorporate into a skin care routine. You can simply slather them on like a moisturizer. However, some SPF sprays may double as [makeup setting sprays](#), and these, along with powders and sticks, might be easier formats to reapply your sunscreen on the go or over makeup.

Chemical vs. physical UV filters

Among the different sunscreen formats, you also have a choice between chemical (aka organic) formulas or physical (aka mineral) formulas. These terms refer to the types of UV filters used to protect the skin. Common chemical filters include octisalate, homosalate, octocrylene and avobenzone. These work by absorbing UV rays and converting them to heat. Oxybenzone and octinoxate were also popular chemical filters but have been banned by Hawaii, Thailand and other locations for their harmful effects on coral reefs. None of the sunscreens we recommend on CNN Underscored contain these ingredients.

Mineral sunscreen filters include titanium dioxide and zinc oxide. These work by physically blocking the UV rays from your skin.



RELATED ARTICLE

UV radiation vs. chemicals in sunscreen: Which is a bigger threat?

You may have heard about the [potential health risks](#) (to yourself and the environment) associated with chemical sunscreens, but at the end of the day, the dermatologists we consulted agreed that the best sunscreen is the one that you will use, regardless of whether it's mineral or chemical.

To this point, Garshick said, "Although some studies have shown that chemical sunscreens can be absorbed into the bloodstream, it does not necessarily mean the ingredients are unsafe or that the amount that is absorbed is enough to cause problems or concerns, so further research is needed. For this reason, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends either type of sunscreen in conjunction with [other sun-protective measures](#)."

If you are concerned about using sunscreen because of the potential risks, Palmer advises sticking to mineral formulas. According to the dermatologist, these are safe and recommended for children and those with allergies, sensitive skin, rosacea and acne. She also recommends them for patients in post-procedure care following cosmetic procedures. Non-nano zinc mineral sunscreens are also "best for those wanting environmental-friendly or reef-safe options," Palmer added.

Consider your skin type

The type of formula you choose can be tailored to your skin type too. Camp said to go with a hydrating sunscreen with hyaluronic acid or ceramides if you have dry skin. For more oily skin, he suggests a lightweight, oil-free sunscreen.

FAQs

[Expand all](#)

What is the difference between chemical and physical sunscreen? 

Is a high number SPF better than a low number one? 

When do you need to wear SPF? 

Is zinc oxide or titanium dioxide face sunscreen better? 

What is the best face sunscreen for mature skin? 

Meet our experts

For this article, we consulted the following experts to gain their professional insights:

- [Dr. Asmi Berry](#), board-certified dermatologist and beauty biohacker in Los Angeles, California
- [Dr. Brendan Camp](#), double board-certified dermatologist at MDCS Dermatology in New York
- [Dr. Jacob Beer](#), board-certified dermatologist at [Beer Dermatology](#) in West Palm Beach, Florida
- [Dr. Marisa Garshick](#), board-certified dermatologist at MDCS Dermatology in New York

and New Jersey

- [Dr. David Kim](#), board-certified dermatologist and founder of [Lightsaver](#)
- [Dr. Kseniya Kobets](#), board-certified dermatologist at Montefiore Einstein Advanced Care in New York
- [Dr. Ellen Marmur](#), board-certified dermatologist, dermatologic surgeon, founder of [Marmur Medical](#) and clinical professor at The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
- [Dr. Debbie Palmer](#), board-certified dermatologist, co-founder of [Dermatology Associates of New York](#) and author
- [Dr. Nazanin Saedi](#), double board-certified dermatologist and clinical associate professor at Thomas Jefferson University

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For this article, CNN Underscored fashion and beauty editor [Sophie Shaw](#) asked dermatologists about their tips for sun safety, what to look for in a face sunscreen and the best face sunscreens to shop.



Sophie Shaw

Editor, Fashion & Beauty



[Sophie Shaw](#) is Underscored's beauty and fashion editor. The Brooklyn-based journalist loves getting nerdy about skin care and, on the fashion side, delving into what viral trends are actually worth trying. (Ballet flats are a yes for her, but low-rise pants are a never.)

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Skin1004 Madagascar Centella Ampoule

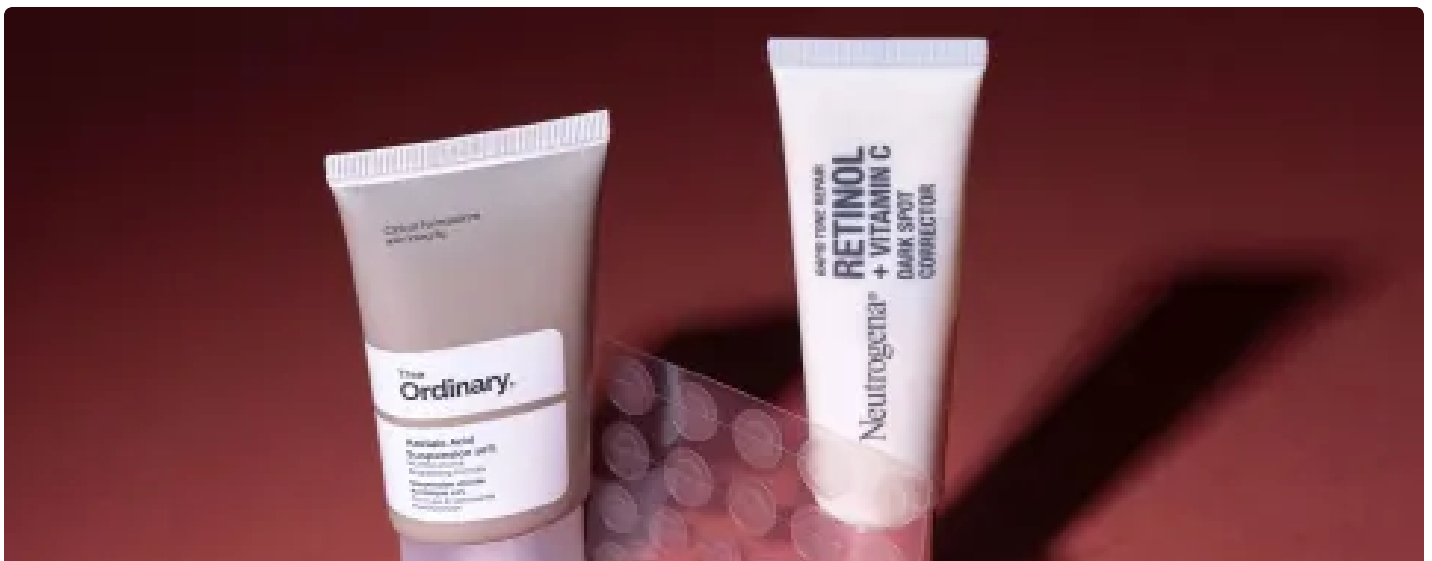
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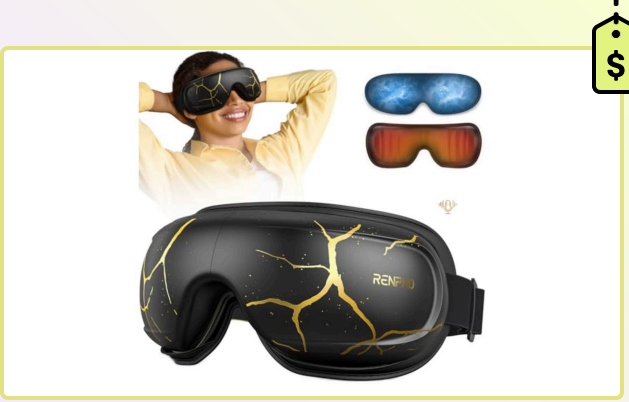
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