

How to Double-Cleanse According to Your Skin Type

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BY Janeca Racho · July 16, 2018



There was once a time when we all believed washing our faces with soap and water was all the cleansing our skin needed before we hit the sack and call it a night. Then double cleansing came along, and our bedtime routines were never the same again. Turns out our usual soap-and-water combo (and face wipes) isn't going to cut it if we want all that gunk and grime off our face after a full day at work (and extended happy hour).

“Double cleansing is a method of cleansing your face twice: First, with an oil-based cleanser and again with a water-based cleanser. It can help remove stubborn, pore-clogging and acne-causing impurities that can remain on the skin even after washing your face once,” says board-

certified dermatologist [David Lortscher, M.D.](#)

“The benefit of double cleansing is that the first cleanser will break down any makeup, remove dirt and excess oils from the day and clean your skin. The second cleanser will address your particular skin type or concern and should have ingredients to hydrate, smooth or exfoliate and treat acne. Doing both steps will assure that any treatment and moisturizing is not done in vain,” adds New York–based dermatologist Craig Austin, founder of [Cane+Austin](#).

Why It’s Important to Double-Cleanse According to Your Skin Type

Double cleansing may be a two-step technique that only adds a few minutes to your usual regimen, but as with most things in skin care, it’s not a one-routine-fits-all. Considering every skin type and taking into account your specific skin concerns, choosing the right double-cleansing duo is key in making sure you get the most out of your routine.

Using the best double-cleansing products for your skin type also allows you to avoid over-washing and over-drying your skin. “If we strip too much of our natural oils, our body can respond by producing more oil that can lead to breakouts and irritation,” explains board-certified dermatologist [Deanne Robinson, M.D.](#)

[Tracy Evans, M.D.](#), a California-based, board-certified dermatologist, echoes this and suggests double cleansing only at night—when you actually have dirt and makeup to wash off—to make sure you’re not altering the natural balance of oils and microbes on your skin.

With all the products on store shelves and beauty aisles, picking out your double-cleansing dream team *can* be overwhelming—especially if you’re not sure what ingredients to look for or which cleanser is best for your skin type. So don’t just grab the first face wash and cleansing oil that you see. First, read the tips below to know which dynamic cleansing duo will give your skin that much-needed deep-cleaning glow!

How to Double-Cleanse If You Have . . .



Oily Skin

Cleanser 1: Try One Love Organics Vitamin B Enzyme Cleansing Oil + Makeup Remover or Vichy PURETÉ THERMALE 3-IN-1 ONE STEP Cleansing Micellar Solution

Lathering your face with more oil when you're already battling with slick and shine sounds like a recipe for (a greasy) disaster, but an oil-based cleanser can actually help rid your skin of impurities and sebum. "Oil attracts oil, so this will help to remove makeup, sweat and any other oil that has accumulated on your skin," explains Dr. Lortscher. If you're not a fan of oils, soak a cotton pad in micellar water instead and lightly dab and sweep over your eyes and across your face. Its tiny oil molecules called micelles can effectively draw out pore-clogging dirt and excess oil.

Cleanser 2: Try [Jan Marini Bioglycolic Oily Skin Cleansing Gel](#) or [Sunday Riley CERAMIC SLIP Clay Cleanser](#)

Follow it up with a gel or clay face cleanser, suggests Dr. Austin, with ingredients like aloe, rose, green tea, moringa seed and glycolic acid. These can help balance moisture, prevent inflammation and regulate sebum production. “The key is to remove dirt and oil while also helping to balance and hydrate skin,” adds Dr. Austin.



Dry Skin

Cleanser 1: Try [Sunday Riley BLUE MOON Tranquility Cleansing Balm](#) or [Dermalogica Pre-cleanse Balm](#)

You run a higher risk of over-washing when you have dry skin, so doubling up on your cleansing routine can sometimes do more harm than good if you’re using products that are not formulated for your skin type. For best results, Dr. Austin recommends quenching dry skin with emollients and cleansing balms—infused with shea butter and sunflower, coconut or jojoba oils—to boost hydration and help restore your skin’s lipid barrier.

Cleanser 2: Try [Eminence Organic Skincare Lemon Cleanser](#), [skyn ICELAND Glacial Face Wash With Biospheric Complex](#) or [Glytone Mild Cream Cleanser](#)

Parched skin also makes you more prone to developing premature signs of aging, so it helps to choose products with anti-aging ingredients like vitamin C, green tea and hyaluronic and glycolic acids. Post-rinse, apply your night moisturizer or go-to face oil on slightly damp skin to help seal in moisture.



Normal or Combination Skin

Cleanser 1: Try [TULA Skincare Kefir Replenishing Cleansing Oil](#) or [BY TERRY Cellularose Cleansing Oil](#)

Combination skin can be tricky to address—part of your face can feel like an oil well while the rest is as dry as a desert—so it's important to find products that can restore balance and improve texture and complexion. Your best bet, according to Dr. Evans, are nutrient-rich, oil-based cleansers with ceramides, as these can help plump and moisturize your skin. The same is also true if you have normal skin.

Cleanser 2: Try SkinCeuticals Purifying Cleanser or Embryolisse Crème Moussante Visage Sans Savon — Foaming Cream-Milk

To maintain your skin's balance, gently massage your face with cleansing oils that contain argan, jojoba or safflower. Follow with a thorough rinse using foam cleansers with almond and squalene oils and hyaluronic and glycolic acids. "You'll be washing your face while balancing your pH with ingredients that allow your skin to hold its own natural moisture and smooth and brighten your complexion," Dr. Austin says.



Sensitive or Acne-Prone Skin

Cleanser 1: Try Erno Laszlo Sensitive Cleansing Oil, DHC Deep Cleansing Oil or SkinCeuticals Gentle Cleanser

When you have sensitive skin, you know the importance of keeping your skin care regimen simple and fuss-free. At first glance, double cleansing may seem counterproductive and a chance to only up the chances of irritation. Not to mention, certain oils can be comedogenic and aggravate acne-prone skin. But as we all know, cleansing is the cornerstone of healthy skin, so for sensitive-skin types, reach for a gentle cleansing oil when removing your makeup. To keep your skin from breaking out and calm irritation, look for antioxidants and anti-inflammatory ingredients like vitamin E, aloe, green tea, glycolic acid and tea tree oil.

Cleanser 2: Try [SkinCeuticals Clarifying Exfoliating Cleanser](#) or [Yon-Ka Lait Nettoyant Cleansing Milk](#)

A face cleanser with exfoliating agents—like [SkinCeuticals Clarifying Exfoliating Cleanser](#)—also works best for troubled skin, says Dr. Robinson, because it contains glycolic and salicylic acid that “help brighten skin, clear blemishes and unclog pores.”

Esthetician Enrique Ramirez of [Face to Face NYC](#) also recommends milk cleansers like [Yon-Ka Lait Nettoyant Cleansing Milk](#) for its gentle formula and pore-perfecting benefits. “This will make your skin feel soft and supple as it uses plant extracts and lactic acid to unclog pores and prevent acne,” he shares.



Mature Skin

Cleanser 1: Try [Elemis Nourishing Omega-Rich Cleansing Oil](#), [Erno Laszlo Firmarine Cleansing Oil](#) or [Juice Beauty STEM CELLULAR Cleansing Oil](#)

The best double-cleansing products for mature skin are those that not only erase all traces of surface impurities but also help improve common concerns of aging skin—such as dryness, dullness and loss of firmness. A cleansing oil like [Elemis Nourishing Omega-Rich Cleansing Oil](#) ticks all the boxes—it cleanses your face thoroughly while hydrating and balancing your skin. Infused with vitamins, essential oils and antioxidants, it also nourishes, protects, restores elasticity and repairs your skin’s natural barrier.

Cleanser 2: Try Dermalogica AGE Smart Skin Resurfacing Cleanser or Supermood Gentle Foam Wash

When looking for a face wash, Dr. Evans says to steer clear of alcohol-based products that can strip your skin of natural oils. Instead, look for cleansers with vitamins A, C and E, ceramides and hyaluronic acid as these can deliver anti-aging benefits, boost moisture and hydration and offer much-needed defense from environmental stressors.

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Janeca Racho

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