



Autumn skincare tips

As your wardrobe shifts to layering, so too should your skincare. Here’s how to adapt your routine for autumn. *Words: Anna Paul*

Cosy season may be in full swing, but your skin might not find it quite as comforting. Autumn brings crisp temperatures, stronger winds, a dip in humidity and the increased use of central heating — all of which can sap moisture from the skin.

“Autumn skincare is all about gentle cleansing, deep hydration, barrier support and consistent SPF. Think of it as cocooning your skin for the colder months ahead,” explains Kimberley Medd, clinic lead at retailer Face the Future.

A full overhaul isn’t necessary, but a few subtle switches will keep skin nourished, protected and glowing.

SWITCH TO A CREAM-BASED CLEANSER

“If you’ve been using a foaming or gel-based cleanser in summer, consider moving to a cream, milk or oil cleanser to avoid stripping your skin,” advises Kimberley. “If you wear sunscreen and makeup, continue double cleansing in the evenings, but avoid over-cleansing in the morning.”

The first step is to reassess your cleanser, agrees Heather Wish, senior education manager at Paula’s Choice. “If it leaves your skin feeling tight or dry, it may be too harsh — something to avoid year-round, but particularly in the colder months.” She suggests Paula’s Choice Calm Ultra-Gentle Cleanser, £26, which removes impurities without disrupting the skin barrier.

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STAY HYDRATED

Hydration is crucial year-round, but particularly when colder temperatures and low humidity can exacerbate issues such as dryness and sensitivity.

“The combination of the climate outdoors and central heating indoors can worsen transepidermal water loss, leading to dryness, flakiness and irritation,” says Heather. “If your skin feels drier in winter, opt for a richer moisturiser — swap lightweight gels for creams or lotions.”

Try Vichy Minéral 89 72 Hr Hyaluronic Acid & Squalane Moisture Boosting Cream, £24 — a daily hydrator with a rich texture. At night, consider layering on a barrier cream, such as Dr Althea 147 Barrier Cream, £21.99, to help strengthen and protect the skin.

DON’T SKIP SPF

Sunscreen should remain a skincare staple, even as the days get shorter. “UV rays remain strong in autumn, even on cloudy days. UVA (‘ageing rays’) can penetrate windows and clouds,” explains Kimberley. “Look for formulas with added hydrating ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, glycerin or niacinamide.”

Kimberley recommends the highly rated Mesoesthetic Mesoprotech Water Veil SPF 50, £47.95, while the Heliocare 360 Gel Oil-Free SPF 50, £31, is another favourite.

RETHINK YOUR EXFOLIATION

Over-exfoliation is a common skincare mistake in colder weather, when skin is already prone to dryness and sensitivity. “You may need to reduce exfoliation to once or twice a week,” advises Kimberley. “Swap strong acids, like high-strength glycolic, for milder options such as lactic acid or low-percentage salicylic acid.”

SOUPED-UP SERUMS

Moisturiser isn’t the only place to boost hydration. Serums can deliver an extra layer of nourishment, helping to counter the effects of harsher weather.

“A hydrating serum with ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, glycerin or panthenol, applied beneath your moisturiser, can help to prevent tightness and flakiness,” explains Kimberley.

For a lightweight but effective option, try Paula’s Choice 7% Ectoin + Hyaluronic Acid Milky Hydrating Serum, £43, or La Roche-Posay Cicaplast B5 Face Serum, £40 — both of which are widely recommended by dermatologists.



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