



# Face Moisturizer

Is moisturizer necessary? How can we make our own at home? Are there good zero waste brand options to choose from?

BY PERMACRAFTERS





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## Face Moisturizer

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### Do we need moisturizers?

Keeping your skin hydrated is critical for youthful looking skin. There's no doubt about that. The real question is, do you need cosmetic products to keep your skin hydrated, or is the human body generally designed well enough to hydrate the skin adequately on its own?



The cosmetics industry is a giant business, and it's in their interests to convince us from an early age that we need their products as part of our beauty routine. I typically tend to consider that if my ancestors didn't do something (like use moisturizer) there's no need for me to do it. And I go from there as to whether I would want to do it. Like wearing deodorant, for example, is not necessary but it's something I want to do. This logic doesn't always work.

Sometimes I need to be reminded that we don't live in the same world that our ancestors lived in. For example, our ancestors didn't brush their teeth (well, some of them used the miswak) but they weren't eating the same sugary processed foods that we are today. We can ask ourselves the same question when it comes to our skin. Our ancestors didn't need moisturizers, but do we? Our skin is now exposed to air pollution, especially in cities, and since our life expectancy is much longer, our skin dries out more easily as we age. Perhaps that's reason enough to try moisturizers. Perhaps it's not.

I personally never use moisturizers. In the rare occasion that I go skiing and my skin is very dry and cracked, I will apply moisturizer if it feels uncomfortable for me to smile because of how dry my skin is. Other than needing it for medical reasons like eczema or my face legitimately hurting, moisturizers are not part of my life.

According to Board certified dermatologist Dr. Obagi, moisturizers should not be part of our daily skin care, they should only be used to treat very dry skin. This is because we risk getting addicted to moisturizers and our skin not being able to do what it's naturally designed to do, which is moisturize itself without assistance.

Dr. Obagi says:

*“The habitual daily use of facial moisturizers can create a number of problems, like moisturizer addiction, increased skin sensitivity, and possibly accelerated aging. Initially, moisturizers give skin a smooth, silky feeling and reduce appearance of fine lines by increasing hydration in the stratum corneum. After a few months, however, the skin becomes dependent on the moisturizers to combat false sensations of dryness and constant use is required. In a sense, an addiction develops, with a need for more frequently applied and more potent moisturizers and other ‘hydrating’ products”*

He continues to write that:

*“clinically, an overly moisturized epidermis (following 2 to 3 years of steady moisturizer use) is dull, dry, and sensitive.”*

He says our skin is then more readily irritated by wind & cold, by products containing alcohol, and other factors that reduce skin moisture.

So the question this brings up is an important one: can moisturizers actually lower our resistance to external aggressions, decrease collagen production, and obstruct normal skin regeneration?

**Dr. Obagis's opinion is this: use moisturizers only when you actually need them, not out of habit.**

This is the logic that I have been following: if it aint broke, don't fix it.

However, I recognize that many of you are looking for a daily moisturizer, and that many dermatologists do recommend regular application of moisturizers. Cristina also uses moisturizer not every day, but about 3 times a week or so, so let's look at what zero waste moisturizers you can make.



## Moisturizing for a Youthful Look

The first time I questioned whether I needed moisturizer was at a dinner party. I was 27 at the time, but I knew I looked closer to 22 years old so I thought I'd try to be smart. I had everyone in the room guess my age, and everyone guessed around 22, but the dermatologist was like nope, you're 27. I didn't feel so smart anymore. He said my skin was the giveaway – that if I moisturized it, I would look younger.



My first instinct was 'oh man, I need to start actually using cosmetic products on my skin'. But after the shock wore off of being found out for being 27, I thought 'what's so bad with my skin looking my age?' I can't think of anything more natural. But if you are intrigued by how moisturizers can help you look youthful, then here's how they work.



## Why moisturize?

A moisturizer is a product that hydrates the skin, softens it, makes it smooth, and in some cases, it delivers ingredients to the surface of your skin (43).

I've mentioned that I don't cleanse my skin with any products. I only use water. This is one of the reasons it's easy for me to skip moisturizers. If you do use cleansers on your face, it can be a good idea to moisturize your skin afterwards, because the cleansing process can remove both sebum and intercellular lipids (43). These lipids are important to our skin's health, so a moisturizer serves to put the lipids back onto the skin (43). Another reason to use moisturizers is because we tend to bathe and wash much more than our bodies are designed to, and in hot water, too, which strips our skin from its oils. A moisturizer can be helpful to restore hydration in our skin. And moisturizing your skin is a beneficial practice for both dry and oily skin. Even oily skin types can benefit from using a lotion, cream or oil moisturizer.

Moisturizers provide a short-term effect only. The way they make our skin smooth is by depositing themselves between the shedding skin cells. This makes it so that our skin feels smooth and not bumpy. If we want to maintain that effect, we have to reapply the moisturizer (43). By hydrating the skin, moisturizers decrease the fine lines on our skin caused by dehydration. This wrinkle reduction is only temporary, though, until the moisturizer is washed off.

Certain moisturizers are also meant to give your skin a radiant shine by smoothening your skin, which gives it that shiny glow. As you age, your skin isn't as smooth, and moisturizers smoothen it out, which makes more light reflect off of your skin making you look bright and glowing.

The most effective moisturizers also slow water loss from the skin surface. If the skin barrier is damaged, transepidermal water loss might be much higher than normal. Repairing the skin barrier is then the only way to ensure water loss levels will return to normal.

Occlusive moisturizers place a waterproof barrier over the skin, which creates the right environment for the skin barrier to repair itself. That's partly why occlusive moisturizers are the most effective moisturizers. Substances that can be used at home in occlusive moisturizers include: mineral oil, lanolin, shea butter, grape seed oil, avocado oil, hemp oil, jojoba oil, sesame seed oil, nut oil (in general), lecithin, beeswax, and carnauba or candelilla wax.

Another type of moisturizer is the humectant moisturizer. Humectants attract water, which holds water to your skin. Your skin already contains natural humectants, but if your skin is very dry, it could benefit from other humectants like honey, which can draw water from the air. Glycerin is the most effective humectant. It pulls water from the deeper epidermis layers, which makes the skin swell and fills any holes in the skin, thus smoothing it out. A moisturizer shouldn't only contain humectants, however. A mix of humectants and occlusive is best.





## What type of moisturizer do you need?

There are various moisturizers out there, from creams and lotions, to ointments and oil-based moisturizers. An ointment, made of wax, fats, and plant oils, is probably not a moisturizer you want to use on your face regularly because it's so sticky and can stain your clothes. Creams, lotions, and oil-based moisturizers, however, can be great options.

**Creams or lotions** are emulsions that contain hydrophilic and hydrophobic ingredients. A cream is thicker and more viscous while a lotion is thinner. For both creams and lotions, they are made by emulsifying oil into water, or water into oil. They must be blended together because they aren't soluble or miscible – so a cream or lotion has a fine dispersion of minute droplets of one liquid (i.e. oil) into another (i.e. water).

An **oil-based moisturizer** is another type of moisturizer, but it doesn't actually have all that many moisturizing advantages. It's a thin oil-based product that can be applied to the face after cleansing. The ingredients are meant to optimize the availability of the active agent in the oils, like a vitamin or plant extract, for example. The oil-based moisturizer can help you target concerns, like acne or wrinkles, prior to applying the lotion moisturizer. If you wanted to, you could simply use jojoba oil on your face. Of course, do a patch test first.

Oil-based moisturizer Brand: Meow Meow tweet's  
oil moisturizer smells divine!





## DIY LOTION MOISTURIZER

Ingredients & materials:

- 5.5 tbsp. of jojoba oil
- 1 tbsp. of beeswax
- ¼ tsp. of lecithin
- 3 tbsp. of glycerin
- 5.5 tbsp. of hot water
- Stick blender
- Two pans for double boiler
- Glass jar

Where to find the ingredients zero waste:

Beeswax can be found locally from a beekeeper you know and trust. Jojoba oil can be purchased in glass bottles on Amazon (or if you're lucky, you can get unpackaged jojoba oil at your zero waste store). Vegetable glycerin can be bought palm-oil free from Aromatics International in a glass bottle. The lecithin, you can get from Natural Nutra because it's sunflower-based and non-GMO as opposed to soy based. Lecithin is a great ingredient to use because it doesn't damage the intercellular lipids in the moisturizer.



### Steps:

- In a water bath, you'll melt the jojoba oil, beeswax and lecithin
- Separately, while it's melting, mix the glycerin and hot water
- Take the jojoba beeswax lecithin mix off the stovetop once everything is melted.
- The moment you see the beeswax start to harden on the edges of your bowl, grab your stick blender and begin blending.
- Slowly add the glycerin water mix and keep blending it in little by little. The longer you mix, the fluffier it will get and it will eventually form a cream. All the water will be taken up into the cream if you blend it long enough.
- Transfer it to a glass jar and let it sit 20-30 min with the lid off.
- If at this point you see any excess water that didn't incorporate properly, simply pour it out.
- Once it's cool, you can apply it to your face.

I like this moisturizer for nighttime especially because it can leave your skin looking a little shiny, but it's amazingly luxurious! When massaging moisturizer into your skin, you are stimulating blood flow. It doesn't really matter what method you use, but Cristina likes to use her index and middle finger and apply the moisturizer in circular motions and include her neck as well.