

Get a Flawless Foundation

Applying foundation before putting on the rest of your makeup is like an artist prepping the canvas. And unless you have perfect skin, some sort of foundation is a must.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT FOUNDATION

Shop at a department store counter so you can get advice and try before you buy. “First consider your skin type, if it’s oily, dry, or combination,” says Dallas-based makeup artist Penny Sadler. Consider oil free for oily skin or moisturizing formulas for dry skin. If your skin is somewhere between the two, buy a normal formulation or lean toward the one that best suits your needs. If your skin is mature, a creamy hydrating foundation will plump up fine lines, whereas powders will settle into wrinkles and draw attention to them.

Next, says Sadler, determine how much coverage you need. If you only want to even out your skin tone, a tinted moisturizer may be adequate. Water-based sheer and light formulas are for “good” skin that needs color but little coverage. This type of problem-free skin can handle foundations with pretty, reflective properties. But enlarged pores, blemishes, and age spots require more coverage. A creamy, medium foundation or a heavier formulation provides the most opaque finish for less-than-perfect skin.

Spray-on foundations that come in a pump or in canister-type containers can help you mimic the look achieved by an airbrush. They offer versatility, letting you apply the amount of coverage you need, from sheer to heavy.

Clean an area on the lower half of your face and then try at least three shades of foundation. “Get the right color by testing beneath your jaw line,” advises Sadler. “The right color should



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disappear, blending right into the color of your skin. If you can, take a minute to walk outside and take a look at the color in natural light. Sometimes the overhead lighting in department stores leads you to a color that is two shades darker than you’d want to wear.”

APPLYING FORMULATION

Prepare for foundation by cleansing your skin and using a moisturizer with an SPF of 15 or greater. Allow the moisturizer to sink in for a few minutes.

Sadler doesn’t approve of using fingertips to apply foundation, except for tinted moisturizers or lotions. “Sponges aren’t good because they tend

to take off as much as they put on. I prefer foundation brushes because they give you more control and offer better blending,” she says. Many cosmetic companies sell brushes. An inexpensive one, like Sonia Kashuk’s foundation brush (available at Target), will do a nice job.

To use a brush, put a little foundation on the back of your hand or on a palette. Lightly dip both sides of the brush into the foundation and stroke over the face. “You’ll find that the brush can even get into the corners by your nose,” Sadler says. “Work in the direction that hairs tend to grow—horizontally across the forehead and then more vertically along the planes of the face.” Stipple the brush where you need more coverage.

“Powder is a great finishing touch for setting the makeup so that it stays in place,” says Sadler, who recommends finishing with a translucent powder.



—MD