



FOR YOUR FACE ONLY: Try a custom makeup service to create a unique look.

personal touch

USING LESS MAKEUP works only if your cosmetics do exactly what you need them to do. Here are three companies that offer customized service.

With SCO skin-care products, you start with great cleansers and creams, then add individual ingredients. For instance, if your skin is oily and you're worried about aging, you can blend an oil-free face lotion with acetyl hexapeptide 3 and soy to boost cellular turnover. Visit scocare.com to create your own blend.

If you have a favorite discontinued shade, 3 Custom Color can match it; they also blend hues for your particular skin type. The Ultimate Custom Makeover gives you a chance to completely redo your look. Log on to threecustom.com for more information.

An aesthetician and chemist, Kimberly Sayer has designed her own organic skin-care line using 100 percent pure essential oils. After filling out a questionnaire at kimberlysayer.com, you will receive product recommendations and custom formulas to address your specific concerns.

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

Some of the most common skincare products are also the most discretionary. If you love it, keep it. If you're short on time, skip it.

SCRUBS: Prepping skin with scrubs may help other products penetrate, but overuse can cause broken capillaries. "People don't realize how much microexfoliation they're actually doing," says Joanna Czech, owner of Sava Spa in New York. "Even using a towel on a daily basis will slough off dead skin."

TONERS: "I'm not a big fan of toner," says Elizabeth Goldberg, M.D., clinical instructor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York. "It's an extra step that isn't all that useful in many cases." What's worse, many toners are made with drying alcohols and other irritants. Try removing the step and see what happens—your skin may actually improve.

CONCEALERS: "So many women use concealer where they don't need it," observes New York- and Los Angeles-based makeup artist Sue Devitt. "Your foundation should give you ample coverage; concealer is only for under-eye circles or imperfections that need extra disguising."

EYE CREAMS: As long as you've chosen a relatively simple face cream without strong ingredients or fragrances, you can apply it under your eyes. "People like eye creams because they're comforting or have cooling properties, but if you're only using them for hydrating, they're no different from face creams," says Czech.