Hair Care and Skin Care Routines

**Hair Care**

The first thing to avoid for a good hair care routine is washing your hair using very strong shampoo too much. An ideal routine would be using body-temperature water to cold water to wash your hair every time without any shampoo. If you feel the water is warm and comfortable, then it’s already too hot for your head skin and it will lead to shedding. It might be counter-intuitive not to use any shampoo, but based on my personal experience, this new norm in my hair care routine helped me a lot. I don’t shed as much hair anymore and my hair doesn’t get oily as fast. I can even see more of the healthy glow on my hair nowadays. I know this routine might not be possible for everyone, so an alternative to this would be washing your hair with shampoo every three days. If you need to wash your hair again during the interval, just use pure water instead. You will see the positive change pretty soon and begin to dislike using shampoo on your hair.

If you can’t avoid using shampoo, it’s ok, here’s a nice product that’s gentle on your hair and head skin. <https://www.costco.com/shea-moisture-daily-hydration-shampoo-100-virgin-coconut-oil-34-oz.product.100509893.html>

Another thing that people usually ignore the importance of is the drying process of the hair and it’s a conflict situation. If you leave your hair air dry, it tends to be drier and more fragile, although it’s good for your head skin. If you blow-dry your hair, your hair might be able to hold on to more moisture, but the high temperature from the blow dryer wind is bad for your head skin. So, it really depends on what you think is more important to yourself. A hair-drying wrap/towel might help you stay away from this dilemma, but I have never used it. What I always do is use the blow dryer in low-temperature mode and sometimes use a little bit of oil before blow-drying.

**Skin Care**

**Morning**

If there are only two takeaways on skin care from this document, one of them would be the COLD WATER. Only use COLD WATER when washing your face. The second one is sunscreen of course.

In the morning after your wake up, turn your tap water to cold, get some of it into the palm of your hands, and then gently press/push them onto your face. Don’t rub. No rub. This process is to get the water to go through the stratum corneum naturally. Keep doing this process for at least 2 minutes. Don’t rush it, don’t rub your face, this process takes time, be patient. If you ever rub your face during this process, your dermis will not get moisturized nicely and the pores of your skin will get worse. A sign of your dermis getting enough water from this process is that you can see clearly that the tone of your skin is brightened or more white-ish.

Then get some cleanser in your hands if you want to use it in the morning. Sometimes I find it better not to use any cleanser when washing my face in the morning, but it really differs from person to person. For those with oily skin, please don’t too easily and recklessly skip your cleanser. If you have oily skin prone to have pimples, I suggest using this: <https://www.amazon.com/Neutrogena-Oil-Free-Fighting-Salicylic-Treatment/dp/B001E96OU6/ref=sr_1_2?keywords=neutrogena+face+wash&qid=1654223472&sprefix=Neutrogena+%2Caps%2C85&sr=8-2>, which my friend finds drying but I think fine. On a side note, if you have an option to have the fragrance-free skin care product, choose the fragrance-free one, because the fragrance would only make your skin more sensitive to environmental factors. If you have normal to dry skin, consider using this: <https://www.amazon.com/CeraVe-Hydrating-Facial-Cleanser-Fragrance/dp/B01MSSDEPK/ref=sr_1_5?keywords=cerave&qid=1654223698&sprefix=c%2Caps%2C110&sr=8-5>, which my friend finds less drying. Normally, the most well-rounded cleanser is amino-acid-based, but it can be a little pricier. Consider using this [EltaMD Foaming Facial Cleanser](https://www.amazon.com/EltaMD-Foaming-Facial-Cleanser-7-0/dp/B004HLSZYQ/ref=sr_1_5?crid=2SUDFH3W0NCL1&keywords=amino%2Bacid%2Bcleanser&qid=1654289294&sprefix=%2Caps%2C84&sr=8-5&th=1). Rub the cleanser in your hands until it’s got the foam in it (some products never get foam and it’s fine), then apply it gently to your face. Rub it outwards and upwards on your face very gently (it can lift up your skin and tighten it), carefully going through the areas the oiliest. Don’t rub the areas around your eyes too much as your eye skin is the most vulnerable part and it’s usually dry instead of oily. You don’t need to do this for too long, usually within 30 seconds. Then use the same way to rinse the product off your face (splashing the water onto your face and avoiding rubbing).

At this moment, I feel obligated to say something about skin type. Most people don’t have one skin type. What’s most common is that we have areas on our face that are oily (forehead, nose, cheeks) as well as areas that are dry and sensitive (eye area and lip area), and this dynamic also changes with the season. What we should do is respond to the environment actively, applying different products to different areas, cleaning, and massaging them in different ways. For instance, you may not want to use heavy cream on your nose, but it’s a must for your eye skin to prevent early wrinkles. I will come back to this later. Another example is that you should only use your ring finger when massaging your skin care products around your eyes because that part of the skin is the thinnest and most sensitive, only your ring finger is gentle (weak) enough not to irritate it.

After washing off the cleanser, don’t dry your face. At this second, you should have all of your serum open, handy, and right to be applied. What you should be doing right now is getting the serum into your hands fast, applying them onto your face, and rubbing them in the same way you rub your cleanser around. Only this time, don’t forget your eye area and you should look at the mirror to make sure you don’t omit any parts. Before your skin gets dry, apply lotion or cream to your skin to keep the moisture in as the serums solely are usually too lightweight to be able to lock up the water. Then you can use sunscreen if needed. And of course, it’s always necessary.

Why not dry your skin with a towel before using anything on your skin? This is because you want to keep the water on your face as the moisturizing barrier and that can keep your skin cells under a more proper anti-aging condition. This is actually why some people use toner as their first skin care step. However, this only works when you apply lotion or cream before the water dries out because the water itself always vapors fast and cannot stay long, it’s the products that can keep them constrained above and underneath your skin. It’s very important to know that if you leave your skin air dry slowly without using any moisturizer, your skin will be at its driest level and age very fast.

Now it’s time to talk about the products you can use for your morning routine, including the serums and lotions/cream. They’re ranked according to the recommended order of use based on their texture and effects. Products belonging to the same category should be combined and used together to save time.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Product** | **Effects** | **Note** |
| Serum | Hyaluronic Acid  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/hyaluronic-acid-2-b5-serum-100425.html>) | Moisturizing  Getting water from the environment into your skin | Use it whenever possible, it’s very gentle and essential to skin care, though sometimes a bit drying when used alone |
| Serum | Plant-based Squalane  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/100-plant-derived-squalane-face-oil-100398.html>) | Moisturizing  Getting water from the environment into your skin | Use it whenever possible, it has a compound moisturizing effect when used with hyaluronic acid, though a bit oily |
| Serum | Niacinamide  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/niacinamide-10-zinc-1-serum-100436.html>) | Vitalizing  Balancing the oil and water in your skin  Making the tone of your skin more consistent across different spots | Use it whenever possible, it’s flawless |
| Lotion (works as serum) | Azelaic Acid  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/azelaic-acid-suspension-10-exfoliator-100407.html>) | Revitalizing  Anti-acne  Whitening the dark spots | It’s very effective, but also very irritating or even burning, leaving your skin very sensitive to sunlight. If you ever plan to use it in the morning, you must wear sunscreen no matter whether you’re going out or not. You can use it either all over the face or as a spot treatment. I tend to use it before sleep only on my pimples and they usually get better overnight. |
| Lotion | [CeraVe Lotion](https://www.amazon.com/CeraVe-Moisturizing-Lotion-Hyaluronic-Fragrance/dp/B07RK4HST7/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1JUF1XPVW8EX4&keywords=cerave&qid=1654227125&rdc=1&sprefix=CeraVe%2Caps%2C197&sr=8-2) | Moisturizing | It’s lightweight, fits oily skin better |
| Cream | [CeraVe Cream](https://www.amazon.com/CeraVe-Moisturizing-Cream-Daily-Moisturizer/dp/B00TTD9BRC/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1X7LFLS5V2T9O&keywords=cerave+cream&qid=1654227193&sprefix=cerave+crea%2Caps%2C210&sr=8-2) | Moisturizing  A little bit calming | It’s heavy, best for winter use and dry skin |
| Sunscreen | [Australian Gold Tinted Face BB Cream](https://www.amazon.com/Australian-Gold-Botanical-Medium-Tan-Antioxidant/dp/B07YZRT2S8/ref=sr_1_6?keywords=australian%2Bgold%2Bsunscreen&qid=1654227579&rdc=1&sr=8-6&th=1) | Sunscreen for face  Has a range of colors that fit different skin tones  Matt finish  Has BB cream effects that can cover up flaws of the skin | It’s my absolute favorite, lifesaver, the best among all the sunscreen in the market. However, it might be a bit drying |
| Sunscreen | [Australian Gold Botanical Sunscreen Mineral Lotion](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01M6UMXLZ?ref=nb_sb_ss_w_as-reorder-t1_ypp_rep_k0_1_25&amp=undefined&crid=1FWW85D6YISJ5&sprefix=australian%2Bgold%2Bsunscreen&th=1) | 100% mineral  Matt finish | For body sunscreen mostly because it’s a bit too white, a bit too drying, and a bit hard to rub evenly. But it’s not oily at all and sticks to skin very firmly, making it very protective |

**Night**

The night skin care routine is not entirely different from the morning, actually, there’re many overlaps between them. What are different may include: removing the sunscreen, using a heavier moisturizer when possible, and addressing some special needs of your skin with products that you don’t have the opportunity to use during the day. The new products reserved for nights are highlighted.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Product** | **Effects** | **Note** |
| Sunscreen Remover (face) | [BANILA CO Balm Makeup Remover](https://www.amazon.com/BANILA-CO-Clean-Cleansing-Original/dp/B07BSVJ4H8/ref=sr_1_5?crid=3C7EHULL6ZOZC&keywords=zero%2Bmake&qid=1654228657&sprefix=zero%2Bmake%2Caps%2C148&sr=8-5&th=1) |  | Very gentle and effective and easy to use |
| Sunscreen Remover (face & body) | [Neutrogena Body Oil](https://www.amazon.com/Neutrogena-Fragrance-Free-Lightweight-Moisturizer-Formula/dp/B001B0ZZFS/ref=sr_1_2?keywords=neutrogena+body+oil+unscented&qid=1654228753&sprefix=neutrogena+body+oil+un%2Caps%2C131&sr=8-2) |  | Cheap and gentle  You should use a cleanser or body wash after using it as it is a bit oily on skin |
| Body Wash | [Aveeno Body Wash](https://www.amazon.com/Aveeno-Fragrance-Free-Soap-Free-Dye-Free-Sensitive/dp/B075X2KL5C/ref=sr_1_2?crid=132B82F6U1VR6&keywords=aveeno+body+wash&qid=1654230067&sprefix=aveeno+body+wash%2Caps%2C239&sr=8-2) |  | Avoid using body wash when possible |
| Body Lotion | [Eucerin Skin Calming Lotion](https://www.amazon.com/Eucerin-Skin-Calming-Lotion-Enriched/dp/B0107QOYIK/ref=sr_1_2?crid=3C2I76I5CL1IM&keywords=eucerin%2Blotion%2Bcalming&qid=1654228915&rdc=1&sprefix=eucerin%2Blotion%2Bcalming%2Caps%2C117&sr=8-2&th=1) | Moisturizing (a bit heavy)  Calming | Eucerin lotion never goes wrong on body |
| Serum | Hyaluronic Acid  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/hyaluronic-acid-2-b5-serum-100425.html>) | Moisturizing  Getting water from the environment into your skin | Use it whenever possible, it’s very gentle and essential to skin care, though sometimes a bit drying when used alone |
| Serum | Plant-based Squalane  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/100-plant-derived-squalane-face-oil-100398.html>) | Moisturizing  Getting water from the environment into your skin | Use it whenever possible, it has a compound moisturizing effect when used with hyaluronic acid, though a bit oily |
| Serum | Niacinamide  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/niacinamide-10-zinc-1-serum-100436.html>) | Vitalizing  Balancing the oil and water in your skin  Making the tone of your skin more consistent across different spots | Use it whenever possible, it’s flawless |
| Anti-aging serum/gel | [Neutrogena Rapid Retinol Cream](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0725JP4TN?ref=nb_sb_ss_w_as-reorder-t1_ypp_rep_k0_1_11&amp&crid=1RH41ZUL45JDM&amp&sprefix=retinol+neu) (stronger)  [Retinol in Squalane](https://theordinary.com/en-us/retinol-1-in-squalane-serum-100441.html) (different concentration to choose) | Anti-aging gold  Dealing with all sorts of skin problems  Unbeatable king in skin care | It’s feels burning, please start using it from lower concentration. Use it every other day to avoid serious peeling. MUST wear sunscreen the next day to avoid irritation from sunlight. CAUTIOUS when used alongside Azelaic Acid or Salicylic Acid-based cleanser as they may have compound irritating effects on skin. |
| Calming Gel | [Aveeno Oat Gel](https://www.amazon.com/Aveeno-Moisturizer-Lightweight-Hypoallergenic-Paraben-Free/dp/B08D9MSGVQ/ref=sr_1_2?crid=LM2J6YKTER1Y&keywords=aveeno+gel&qid=1654229713&sprefix=aveeno+gel%2Caps%2C97&sr=8-2) | Calming after sunlight exposure or other stressors  Revitalizing | You can also use it in the morning. Use it with lotion as itself may not be able to hold on to much moisture. |
| Lotion (works as serum) | Azelaic Acid  (<https://theordinary.com/en-us/azelaic-acid-suspension-10-exfoliator-100407.html>) | Revitalizing  Anti-acne  Whitening the dark spots | It’s very effective, but also very irritating or even burning, leaving your skin very sensitive to sunlight. If you ever plan to use it in the morning, you must wear sunscreen no matter whether you’re going out or not. You can use it either all over the face or as a spot treatment. I tend to use it before sleep only on my pimples and they usually get better overnight. |
| Lotion | [CeraVe Lotion](https://www.amazon.com/CeraVe-Moisturizing-Lotion-Hyaluronic-Fragrance/dp/B07RK4HST7/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1JUF1XPVW8EX4&keywords=cerave&qid=1654227125&rdc=1&sprefix=CeraVe%2Caps%2C197&sr=8-2) | Moisturizing | It’s lightweight, fits oily skin better |
| Cream | [CeraVe Cream](https://www.amazon.com/CeraVe-Moisturizing-Cream-Daily-Moisturizer/dp/B00TTD9BRC/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1X7LFLS5V2T9O&keywords=cerave+cream&qid=1654227193&sprefix=cerave+crea%2Caps%2C210&sr=8-2) | Moisturizing  A little bit calming | It’s heavy, best for winter use and dry skin |

**Disclaimer**

To wrap up, everything above is based on my own experience and a little bit of research, which can be subject to misinformation and mistakes. You can start off trying some of them at the beginning and be very attentive to what happens to your skin and how you feel. At the end of the day, it’s the result you get that matters the most.