

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a leopard print long-sleeved top and floral patterned shorts, stands in a bright, clean bathroom. She is leaning against a white pedestal sink with her right leg raised. She holds a small green bottle in her hands. The bathroom features a white sink with a gold faucet, a white towel hanging over the side, and a white towel rack on the wall. The background is a light-colored wall with a mirror.

The average woman is exposed to a whopping 126 chemicals in the beauty products she uses every day.  
***Minimize your toxic onslaught with these smart swaps.***

By **Sally Wadyka** Lifestyle Photography by **Victoria Pearson** Still Photography by **Pornchai Mittongtare**

*your act*

# clean up

**According to surveys by the Environmental Working Group (EWG),** most of us slather on an estimated 126 chemicals over the course of the day. "That's how many chemicals you're exposed to if you use about 12 products," says Leeann Brown, an EWG spokeswoman.

Of course, you don't have to do a total bathroom overhaul to clean up your beauty routine, says Brown. (That's no fun—not to mention, it's wasteful and means tossing some of your time-tested favorites.) Small changes *will* make a difference. "For starters, scale back the overall number of products you use—and use less of them to reduce your exposure to chemicals," says Brown.

Then, start reading labels. While seeing the word "natural" on a package won't really tell you much (the term is not regulated, so anyone can claim it), there are some clues that can help you buy a better product, says Jody Villecco, quality standards coordinator at Whole Foods Market. "In lotions, soaps and lip balms, look for plant-based oils and natural essential oils, which add fragrance safely," she suggests. "And in water-based products, such as shower gels and shampoos, look for preservative blends that are milder than parabens, such as potassium sorbate, ethylhexylglycerin and alcohol."

Another good rule of thumb: Don't worry so much about the stuff you wash away, such as face cleanser, shower gel, shampoo and conditioner. "Products that are in contact with the skin for the shortest duration are the least likely to cause toxicity," says Laura Skellchock, M.D., an integrative dermatologist in Boca Raton, Fla.

Use this guide to detox your day from the start.

# smart *shopping*

Before you toss your beauty faves that aren't *all* natural, listen up: Don't worry about what's in the stuff you wash away (it's in contact with your skin for such a short time!). But when it comes to products that stay on your body, read labels for the purest ingredients possible.



makeup: Wendy Osmundson. Hair: Brad Bowman. Prop styling: Amy Pallwoda. See Shopping Guide on pg. 107 for fashion and retail information.

## morning musts

### shampoo

**a.** L'Oréal Professionnel Pureté Naturelle Shampoo (\$23; [us.lorealparis.com](http://us.lorealparis.com)) is made with 99-percent natural ingredients, such as horsetail plant extract, to provide hair with antioxidant protection.

### conditioner

**b.** Organix Nutritional Acai Berry Avocado Conditioner (\$7; [cvs.com](http://cvs.com)) is gentle, sulfate-free and housed in a bottle made from recycled post-consumer resin.

### body wash

**c.** Avalon Organics Grapefruit & Geranium Bath & Shower Gel (\$11; [avalonorganics.com](http://avalonorganics.com)) is a gentle, preservative-free body wash that uses botanicals to moisturize dry skin.

### facial cleanser

**d.** Zia Skin Basics Fresh Cleansing Gel with Sea Algae (\$18; [zianatural.com](http://zianatural.com)) uses plant-derived sugars and marine extracts to gently cleanse skin without harsh soaps or detergents.

### hand soap

**e.** Caswell-Massey Fresh Cut Flowers Natural Hand Wash Gel (\$30; [caswellmassey.com/luxury/](http://caswellmassey.com/luxury/)) is free of gluten and phthalates and uses beet juice and evening primrose to gently wash and moisturize hands.

### shave cream

**f.** Aubrey Organics Crème de la Shave Toasted Almond (\$6; [aubrey-organics.com](http://aubrey-organics.com)) is infused with organic coconut milk and sweet almond oil to hydrate and condition skin.

### body cream

**g.** Weleda Skin Food (\$18; [usa.weleda.com](http://usa.weleda.com)) gives dry, rough areas, such as elbows and feet, a hydrating dose of vitamin E from organic sunflower seed oil.



## detox your beauty lineup

1» Opt for physical sun-blocking ingredients, such as titanium dioxide and zinc oxide. They sit on the surface of your skin rather than penetrate it, like chemical sunscreens do.

2» Steer clear of products that contain synthetic fragrance. "When the ingredient label just lists 'fragrance,' up to 3,163 ingredients could fall into that category," says Brown. Instead, look for natural fragrances (most essential oils meet the criteria).

3» Be careful when you see sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS) in the ingredients list. "SLS can increase the absorption of ingredients," says Skellchock. "It breaks down the normal barrier in the epidermis, increasing the penetration of the SLS itself as well as whatever else is in the product." So while that means more good stuff gets in, it also means more bad stuff is absorbed by your body.



## ▼ vanity darlings

### facial toner

**a.** Kiss My Face Balancing Toner (\$14; [kissmyface.com](http://kissmyface.com)) contains white tea, witch hazel and algae extracts to calm skin.

### facial moisturizer

**b.** Nature by Canus All Natural Daily Facial Cream (\$20; [canusgoatsmilk.com](http://canusgoatsmilk.com)) softens skin with organic cupuacu and muru-muru butters.

### sunscreen

**c.** Marie Veronique Organics Moisturizing Face Screen Plus (\$45; [mvorganics.com](http://mvorganics.com)) safely protects against UVA and UVB rays with nonmicronized zinc oxide and moisturizes with natural yangu and emu oils.

### foundation

**d.** Origins Youthtopia SPF 15 Skin Firming Foundation with Rhodiola (\$27; [origins.com](http://origins.com)) is a blend of natural pigments and minerals—like mica—that also firms skin with Rhodiola rosea root, wheat germ and barley.

### eyeliner

**e.** Pixi Endless Silky Eye Pen (\$14; [target.com](http://target.com)) is paraben-free and has vitamin E to help soothe sensitive eyelids.

### eyeshadow

**f.** Dr. Hauschka Eyeshadow Palette (\$45; [drhauschka.com](http://drhauschka.com)) makes eyes pop with mineral ingredients.

### mascara

**g.** Josie Maran Mascara (\$22; [sephora.com](http://sephora.com)) is paraben- and fragrance-free and conditions lashes with argan oil and beeswax.

### lip gloss

**h.** Alba TerraGloss (\$6; [albabotanica.com](http://albabotanica.com)) is a vanilla-flavored, highly pigmented gloss that leaves lips shiny without stickiness. ✕

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