

# Store-cupboard *spa*

You don't have to spend a fortune on store-bought beauty products. *Rachel Read* shares some of the best – and easiest – DIY beauty recipes on the block.

Using ingredients commonly found in your fridge or pantry, you can create plenty of easy DIY beauty recipes that are often just as effective as the ones we shell out hundreds of dollars for in department stores.

## Body Scrub

Many shop-bought scrubs use sugar or salt as the exfoliating ingredient in their products, so it's no wonder the DIY versions can prove equally effective.

### Ingredients

- Sea salt or coarse sugar (Note: brown sugar smells the most delicious!)
- Extra-virgin olive oil or raw coconut oil
- Essential oil of your choice (optional)

### Method

- Fill a small bowl with the sugar or salt.
- Slowly pour the olive oil/coconut oil over the top, until you can see it has completely coated the salt/sugar granules.
- Stir the salt/sugar with the oil until it is well mixed. You should be aiming for a mixture that is damp but not runny – roughly a 2:1 ratio of exfoliant to oil.
- Add a few drops of essential oil for fragrance and extra aromatherapy benefits if you prefer. Lavender is a perennial favourite for its relaxing properties, whilst peppermint works a treat for pepping up tired feet.
- Gently scrub your skin, and rinse.

### A couple of alternatives

- To tackle dry, chapped lips, make a

**Note:** If your skin is sensitive, try substituting oatmeal for the sugar or salt. Also remember these scrubs can be a little oily, so watch out for slippery post-bath and shower floors, and remember to rinse them down well after use.

scrub with two teaspoons of sugar, one of oil and one of honey.

- Since the skin on your face tends to be more sensitive, think about using a less coarse grain of sugar or salt. You can also add different types of fruit to enhance your complexion – for instance, kiwi to protect and clarify, or cucumber to soothe. Chop up your fruit of choice as finely as possible and mix in at the final stage; remember, by adding this fresh ingredient, your scrub will then need to be stored in the fridge and should be used within a week.

## Rose Water Toner

One of the oldest and most traditional beauty products, rose water is renowned for its natural anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties. Make-up artist Natasha Sajjani swears by the stuff, saying it helps "soothe sensitive and irritated skin, cleanse oily skin, soften mature skin and add a glow to all skin types – I always carry a spray in my make-up kit, as it's perfect when you're on the go and need a boost of freshness!"

### Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh rose petals, washed (ensure

the flowers are free from dyes or chemicals)

- 1 litre of distilled, boiling water

### You'll also need

- A pan with a lid
- Strainer/cheesecloth
- Sterilised glass container

### Method

- Place rose petals in a pan. Pour two cups of boiling water over the petals and place a lid over the pan. Let sit for around 3 to 4 hours.
- Using the cheesecloth or strainer, pour the rose water into the glass container.
- Since your rose water is all-natural and contains no preservatives, remember to store this in the fridge and use up within a week.
- Apply the rose water as a toner, after cleansing and before moisturising. Consider decanting some into a small spray bottle, then spritz your face for a fresh and cooling sensation during hot and humid days!







## Yogurt & Honey Moisturising Face Mask

There are lots of DIY mask recipes around, but sometimes it's best to keep it simple – and yogurt and honey are the most important, core ingredients you need to make an effective and easy face mask.

Yogurt is high in lactic acid, which is a gentle, natural exfoliant, and can aid collagen production, whilst its creamy texture is ideal as a base for masks.

Meanwhile, honey is great at hydrating and moisturising, plus has a wealth of other natural antibacterial, antifungal and antiseptic properties.

### Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp natural yogurt (the thicker the better – Greek is ideal)
- 1 Tbsp honey

### Method

- Mix the yogurt and honey together until it forms a smooth paste. Spread onto face.

- Leave on for 10 to 15 minutes, then rinse off. It's as easy as that!

Natasha's expert tip for getting the most out of your mask is to open up your pores pre-application. After cleansing, apply a damp hot towel to your face and leave on for just under a minute; ensure that the towel is moist rather than soaking wet, and that it is not burning hot either (test the heat on a patch near your ears). This will open up clogged pores nicely, thereby allowing the removal of as much dirt as possible during your mask session – it's basically the DIY version of the high-tech steaming machines used in salon facials.

### An alternative

- You can add various ingredients to this core recipe for additional skin benefits. For instance, strawberries are rich in vitamin C and salicylic acid (great for skin brightening and cleansing), whilst avocado is rich in vitamin E and healthy fats that are good for moisturising.

### Quick fixes

Looking for something even simpler than the previous recipes? Try these super-fast solutions.

- Sonalie Figueiras, co-founder of Green Queen – an online guide to green living in Hong Kong – recommends using raw apple cider vinegar, which can be bought at larger supermarkets or health food stores in Hong Kong, as a toner.
- Use coconut oil for... well, everything! You can use this miracle oil in place of nearly every product in your beauty cabinet, including as a deep hair conditioner, make-up remover (it tackles even the most stubborn mascaras), face moisturiser, shaving cream, lip balm, to combat frizzy hair... the list is endless! Sonalie also recommends smearing it on as a natural deodorant.

- Got a spot threatening to erupt before a big night out? Simply crush up two aspirin tablets, add a few drops of water to create a thick paste, and dab a very small amount on to the offending area. Rinse off after about five minutes and you should find that your blemishes are much less noticeable, as the salicylic acid in aspirin reduces inflammations. (Note: do not try this if you have an aspirin allergy.)

- We've all heard about using slices of cucumber on the eyes, but how about teabags? Start stashing your used teabags in the fridge so they're cool, squeeze out any excess water and leave on your eyes for 15 to 30 minutes to relieve puffy eye-bags and dark circles. The caffeine helps shrink the blood vessels around your eyes, whilst the antioxidants and tannins present in tea also stimulate blood circulation and soothe skin – so herbal or caffeine-free teas won't do the trick here.

- Model and style blogger Sabrina Sikora swears by slices of tomatoes to keep her complexion looking fresh and revitalised. Simply rub the slices over your face, concentrating on areas with any blackheads, and your skin should instantly feel softer and more radiant. Tomatoes are rich in vitamin C, which is great for healing, plus its natural acids remove dead layers of skin and unclog pores.

- Run out of your trusty dry shampoo? A dash of talc or baby powder massaged into your roots is pretty much the next best thing, absorbing dirt and excess oils.

**Note:** Remember to try all these natural beauty recipes on a small patch of skin on your arm first to ensure you have no adverse reactions.