

Protect Your Skin from Winter's Fury

Keep your skin healthy during the cold months by following 10 easy steps

By Bruce Schultz

Winter is here and the cold, windy weather outside combined with the hot, dry air inside is a recipe for disaster and discomfort when it comes to your skin.

The daily ritual of shaving leaves most men's skin irritable and sensitive even in the best weather conditions. Additionally, if you are like the majority of men, you have yet to adopt a regimen of moisturizing and protecting your skin.



Unavoidably, winter weather exacerbates your usual skin discomfort issues by leaving your face dry and itchy, your lips chapped, and the skin on your hands and knuckles cracked. With a few simple steps you can minimize the damaging effects of the harsh winter weather extremes, virtually eliminate the discomfort, and enjoy a winter where your skin looks good and feels great.

To keep it simple, I have assembled 10 recommendations to keep your skin moisturized, comfortable and looking good.

- 1. Cleanse** • Wash your face each morning and night with a quality cleanser, not a bar of soap, using lukewarm water. Avoid washing with cold or hot water, as both can cause broken capillaries. Your face needs to be clean before applying any moisturizer.
- 2. Shave right** • Start with a quality, glycerin-based shaving cream, frequently change your blade to keep it clean and sharp, and shave

with the grain. Glycerin is a natural substance that pulls moisture to the skin, thereby softening the skin to provide a close, comfortable shave that avoids razor burn and ingrown hairs while minimizing nicks and cuts. Avoid shaving creams/gels with alcohol, synthetic dyes and fragrances, as these ingredients dry the skin, cause irritation and are absorbed into the body (can be harmful as they are not biodegradable).

- 3. Moisturize** • Apply a thin layer of quality facial moisturizer on your face in the morning and at night. The moisturizer will soften and hydrate your skin, and help maintain its elasticity while minimizing dryness, blotchiness and wrinkles. Likewise, use a quality lotion formulated to your skin type all over your body in the morning and at night for the same reasons.

- 4. Use sunscreen** • Daily use of sunblock is the most important, and most overlooked, component of maintaining and protecting your skin. Sun damage is the leading cause of wrinkles, in addition to causing melanoma and broken capillaries. Sunblock should be applied every morning. For convenience, use a moisturizer with UV protection of at least 15 as your morning moisturizer.

- 5. Use lip balm** • Apply quality lip balm frequently throughout the day. Lip balm is an essential for year-round maintenance.

- 6. Don't lick your lips** • A boyhood habit that chaps the lips versus moisturizing; the quickest way to dry, cracked lips.

- 7. Use hand lotion** • The most neglected step in most men's maintenance routine. Incorporating this step will pay big dividends in comfort and appearance.

- 8. Avoid hot showers** • The steam opens your pores and releases the much-needed moisture.

- 9. Drink water** • Moisturize your body from the inside-out with plenty of cold water.

- 10. Use a humidifier** • Add moisture to the air in your bedroom, and improve your sleep while reducing the likelihood of waking up with dry, scratchy skin.

Although the winter season can be harsh on your skin, you don't have to look or feel like it's getting the best of you. These simple recommendations will keep you looking and feeling great.

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