



HOW TO FAKE

REAL
BEAUTY

tricks of the trade to
master your makeup

RAMY GAFNI

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Photography by Carlos Chiassone



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Designed by Susan Van Horn

Typography: Verlag, Berthold Akzidenz Grotesque, and Maxwell Slab

PHOTOGRAPHY: Carlos Chiossone, CONTRA Studios

MAKEUP AND EYEBROW SHAPING: Ramy Gafni for Ramy Cosmetics, www.RAMY.com

HAIR: Nunzio Saviano of Nunzio Saviano Salon for Chapter 6; Jae-Manuel Cardenas of Sally Hershberger Salon for all else

STYLIST: Polina Roytman, polinaroytman.com, fashionbeautyandfun.com

SKIN-CARE CONSULTANT: David E. Bank, M.D., Director of the Center for Dermatology, Cosmetic and Laser Surgery in Mount Kisco, New York, and Assistant Clinical Professor of Dermatology, Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center

DENTAL CONSULTANT: Jennifer Jablow, M.D., creator of IntelliWHiTE

TANNING CONSULTANT: Anna Stankiewicz

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*This book is dedicated to Samuel Shmuelof, who taught me to dream big
and Rachel Shmuelof, who taught me to work hard to make those dreams
come true.*

*To Michael Lynn Snyder and Michelle Frohman Roth, for being my
lifelong friends.*

*Also, to Dina and Eli Ron, for creating my beautiful nieces, Maya and
Ariella, who teach me about true love and beauty every day.*

*I also dedicate this book to all the lovers of beauty, who embrace the
unique qualities that make us stand out, and everyone who knows how to
fake it till you make it!*

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INTRODUCTION

How to Fake Real Beauty is the must-have guide for both beauty experts and women of all ages. Who hasn't wished she could improve one of her features and look better? "If only I had thicker hair . . . bigger eyes . . . smaller waist." The list goes on and on.

No one is born perfect, and as a celebrity beauty expert who has beautified Britney Spears, Taylor Swift, Julianna Margulies, and countless other celebrated international beauties, I will share the secrets to enhancing your natural beauty while faking what you don't have. Prepare for the red carpet—whether it's the one in your head or for an actual awards show. This guide will teach you how to get ready for your close-up and confidently take center stage in any situation.

Whenever I'm doing someone's makeup and talk about a tried-and-true makeup trick that I believe has been around for many years and that most people have heard about, I'm surprised to discover that she hadn't known about the trick and is delighted to learn it. I forget that most people are not ensconced in the beauty industry and maybe aren't exposed to beauty pros and information as much as someone in the industry.

The trademarked philosophy of Ramy Cosmetics is "Minimum Makeup, Maximum Impact!"

Whenever I'm introduced to someone as a makeup artist, eyebrow expert, or cosmetics executive, the introduction is immediately followed by a question, "How are my eyebrows?" "What do you think of this lipstick color?" Or a statement, "Someone should create a concealer that doesn't crease" (I have!), or "I never really learned how to do my makeup properly, so I just wing it." All of the above led me to write this book: to share the tips and tricks that I take for granted and to answer the beauty questions I'm most often approached about.

The trademarked philosophy of Ramy Cosmetics is "Minimum Makeup, Maximum Impact!" and it reflects the minimalist approach I've always taken toward beauty. I like a face to look clean, defined, fresh, and pretty. It's not always about a "No Makeup" look, though. You can achieve dramatic, runway, bold beauty looks using this philosophy as well. The idea is that you can achieve beauty with minimal product and effort.

When I see a makeup artist dragging a giant trunk as a makeup kit, I know he or she is a newbie. With experience, a seasoned makeup artist knows what is essential and important to keep in their makeup kit and what isn't. New makeup artists want to make certain they have every color in the rainbow and four hundred brushes they will never use—just in case they might need it! With experience, they learn they can create shades by blending some basic colors and that for all the myriad of colors they have in their kit, there are a few basic shades that they will use 90 percent of the time.



The key to “Minimum Makeup, Maximum Impact!” is that you can look your absolute best with minimum product and effort if you choose the most flattering shades and apply them correctly.

I was on a photo shoot in the Hamptons once, and after shooting all day in a magnificent mansion the photographer decided that we should change the location to the beach. Since we had already gotten the shots we needed, I assumed the beach shots wouldn't require any major makeup changes so I didn't take my makeup kit with me. Instead I took a handful of powder eye shadows. It turned out that the photographer decided that he wanted to completely change up the model's look once we were on the beach. I completely changed her eye, cheek, and lip color using only my fingers and the eye shadows, and the photographer was thrilled. The key to “Minimum Makeup, Maximum Impact!” is that you can look your absolute best with minimum product and effort if you choose the most flattering shades and apply them correctly.

The other important point I'd like to make is that your personal taste doesn't always play in

faking real beauty. Someone out there thinks that “Tan Mom” looks great. I can show you how to fake a natural, beautiful tan, but if your taste runs to Doritos-orange skin, you may not embrace the information I’m sharing. I’ve applied makeup on a certain Real Housewife of New Jersey who happens to be really beautiful. When I was done she looked like an A-list movie star, but she wanted me to “Jersey it up” and add more sparkle, garish colors, heavier application. In her case, she knew what her public image is, and I understood that so I (reluctantly) complied.



Earlier this year a young journalist named Esther Honig released the results of an experiment that checked the beauty standards of different cultures. She then released the photos that were Photoshopped in forty different countries, and the results are fascinating. No two photos were the

same. Some pared down her look, and some added heavy makeup or changed her features dramatically. It illustrates how the standard of beauty varies widely in different cultures. Some cultures value paler skin; some prefer darker skin; some like thinner eyebrows or larger eyes. My objective is always to create classic beauty where the makeup doesn't draw attention to itself. When I do someone's makeup, I want the result to yield comments like, "Wow! You have beautiful eyes!" or "Gorgeous skin!" not "What's that color you have on?"

It's key to keep an open mind. Follow the steps in this book and test-drive them among your friends and family. The positive feedback will reinforce that you look better than ever and don't need to overdo it in order to look great.

The Beauty Equation

I realized early on that it's the same equation for everyone: whether the face I'm working on is a supermodel or a stay-at-home mom, everyone has features I want to play up and features I want to play down. Everyone.

The enemy of beauty is complacency. Everyone has beauty potential and the ability to improve her appearance. It's the "Why bother?" attitude that is the undoing of many people.

The enemy of beauty is complacency. Everyone has beauty potential and the ability to improve her appearance. It's the "Why bother?" attitude that is the undoing of many people. It's that defeatist mindset and the decision not to bother making an effort that result in not reaching your beauty potential.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." We've all heard this classic quote (often followed by "but ugly is to the bone!"). Yes, beauty is a matter of taste and personal preferences, but there are some universal truths: large eyes are considered more beautiful than small eyes; full lips more sensual than thin lips; a nose that's in proportion to the rest of the face is more desirable than the alternative. Some people are thought to be born with these natural attributes, but many of these gifts are acquired—whether by enhancing your hair with highlights and deep conditioners, having a rhinoplasty to straighten your nose, or creating an illusion of beauty using makeup and a little moxie.

When I was seventeen I took a year off between high school and college. To save money for college I took a job as a waiter at the soup bar at the Lord & Taylor department store in Manhattan. One day two gentlemen came in for lunch, and one of them had a sensitive stomach and was very particular about his lunch order. After they ate, he left, and his friend said to me, "Do you know who that was? It was Bill Blass, the designer," and then he told me they were shooting his upcoming collection nearby and would I like to stop by after work? Of course, I leaped at the chance to see a real photo shoot in action. The guy who invited me turned out to be the stylist for the shoot. When I arrived, he took me around the set and introduced me to everyone. The model had already had her hair and makeup done and was dressed in one of Bill Blass's stunning gowns. Her back was to us, and

when she turned around to greet us, she took my breath away. She was a goddess—an absolute vision of perfect, glowing beauty. They had me hold up lighting equipment to assist the photographer while he shot the model. Then I followed her like a puppy dog into the makeup room where the makeup artist changed up her look for the next gown. I don't remember the makeup artist at all. I only remember his hands working on her face, making changes to the makeup and, impossibly, making her look even more beautiful. At the end of the shoot, I walked into the dressing room just as the model was drying her freshly scrubbed face. She lowered the towel and smiled at the shocked expression on my face. "Quite a difference, right?" she said as I just nodded dumbly. With her hair down and no makeup she looked like a fifteen-year-old ordinary girl. The transformation to her face that day was nothing compared to the transformation to my soul. I had discovered the magic of makeup.



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transformation to my soul. I had discovered the magic of makeup.

After nearly twenty years in the beauty industry, working with some of the greatest talent in hair, makeup, and dermatology and making up some of the most beautiful faces in the world, I've come to the realization that no one is born perfect. Yes, yes, we are all perfect the way God made us, but God also created cosmetics and good lighting! Even the most beautiful person has to draw attention away from one feature and play up another to look her best.

After nearly twenty years in the beauty industry, working with some of the greatest talent in hair, makeup, and dermatology and making up some of the most beautiful faces in the world, I've come to the realization that no one is born perfect.

In 1998 I was working as makeup director at a top Fifth Avenue salon in New York City, where the pressure to look good was intense. The salon staff was gorgeous. Like many who work in the beauty industry, we all enjoyed the perks of working in a top salon—getting haircuts, changing up hair color, and enjoying facials and manicures on a regular basis. My job at this salon really jump-started my career. I started working on celebrities, did makeup for runway shows and editorial photo shoots and became well known for eyebrow-shaping thanks to my first mention in a story about eyebrow obsession in *Vogue*. Then I was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin lymphoma. It was caught early and my prognosis was excellent, but I had to go through five months of chemotherapy and then one month of daily radiation to prevent a recurrence. Being young and driven, I opted to continue working and took just one sick day during chemo. Suddenly, the pressure to look good intensified. I was open about my situation so my clients and coworkers were aware and very kind and supportive. Suddenly, I looked like Uncle Fester from *The Addams Family*: bald, bloated, and with very dark circles around my eyes. I put my knowledge of makeup to good use. My objective was not to look like I had makeup on, but rather to just look like my precancer treatment self. A little concealer, bronzer, and brow filler, and everyone started asking me if I had finished treatment (I hadn't) instead of tilting their heads sympathetically and asking me how I was feeling. This made me realize not only that makeup has the power to make you look and feel better, but also that makeup has the power to truly transform a person and how we are perceived by others. After all, in a few simple steps I was able to fake looking healthy while living with cancer!

I started volunteering to give makeup lessons to people living with cancer. I never failed to be struck by how even someone undergoing chemotherapy—with no eyebrows or eyelashes and a sick complexion—could easily be transformed into a beautiful and glowing picture of good health. I published *Beauty Therapy: The Ultimate Guide to Looking and Feeling Great While Living with Cancer* (M.Evans/Rowman & Littlefield, 2005) to help share the knowledge with people who are living with cancer and aren't makeup artists. Suddenly, makeup wasn't just fun and sparkly. It was a powerful tool that could change someone's mindset during a life-threatening illness. The power of makeup: faking the appearance of good health. I realized then that everything can be faked: better hair, better skin, and ravishing beauty! It's all a matter of knowing how.

I have been a student of beauty my entire life. I remember admiring my mom's gorgeous eyebrows when I was four years old and having a general distaste at age seven for her overly made-up friend who also had bad hair. Why is one thing visually appealing and the other not? Why does one color make me feel happy and the other sad? How do these things affect everyone around me?

There was a great deal of beauty in nature, but as far as people were concerned, well, even Cinderella needed a makeover before she could go to the ball.

I'll never forget one of my first makeup clients at the salon. I didn't see her until after she had her hair colored and cut. The hair was fabulous, gorgeous blonde. Her makeup, on the other hand, looked like she was a retired Rockette from Radio City Music Hall. She had frosted blue eye shadow, heavy black eyeliner, and false eyelashes so big and thick that you literally could not see the color of her eyes. Top it off with hot pink blush and fluorescent-dayglo, nuclear-pink grandma lipstick, and all you could see was someone who needed my help. To my surprise, when I gently approached her to suggest a makeup lesson, she was all for it. She said she would come in the next day to see me. True to her word, she came in the next day. I told her to come in with no makeup on and she did—but she hid her face behind a giant hat and big sunglasses. I braced myself to see what was beneath the accessories. To my complete shock, when she removed the hat and glasses, she revealed a face that was stunningly beautiful. I couldn't believe it and asked her why she wore such heavy makeup that masked her natural beauty instead of enhancing it. I thought she might not have eyelashes, but she did, and they were long and lush and she didn't even need false lashes. She said she started wearing makeup at fifteen growing up in Texas and basically just stuck to the same routine all her life (beauty rut!). Her boyfriend and family always told her that the makeup was too heavy, but she never knew how to change it. It was all or nothing. I introduced her to warm neutrals and my minimalist approach to makeup.

The results were amazing. Suddenly you could see her big blue eyes and high cheekbones. You noticed her beautiful complexion, not her makeup. I knew that if I'd used a nude or lip-toned lipstick she would feel too bare-faced, so I applied a rich burgundy. She still felt naked because she was used to nuclear-hot pink lipstick. I encouraged her to wear the burgundy lips for the day to get used to it. The next day she returned to buy the burgundy lipstick because she received so many compliments on the color.

Having worked with many celebrities, actresses, models, and socialites, one thing has become crystal clear to me: even the most stunningly beautiful woman in the world is not perfect.

Having worked with many celebrities, actresses, models, and socialites, one thing has become crystal clear to me: even the most stunningly beautiful woman in the world is not perfect. Everyone has natural gifts, and everyone fakes the rest. Some fakes are obvious—overblown lips, extra-large breast implants, over-processed hair—but the smart ones know how to fake it so that it looks like the pure gift of natural beauty.

Early on in my career, I quickly learned that even the most sought-after beauties don't wake up looking flawless. Much of the end result we see requires the right makeup, skin care and hair tricks, strategic clothing, correct posing, and much more. The words "It takes a village" were never truer than as they apply to beauty, as any actress or model will attest. Since I routinely work on "real" people

well as celebrities, I realized that most people have the misconception that celebrities roll out of bed looking perfect and stunning while the rest of us mere mortals must simply make do. The truth is that these “perfect” celebrities work very hard to create that illusion. The real difference is that actors and models have access to the experts who know how to fake whatever is necessary to create that flawless image.

The philosophy behind this book is not about being artificial. It's about polishing your natural beauty by enhancing your assets and learning how to believably perfect your features.

Beauty Bullies

At one of my first jobs at a cosmetic counter there was a makeup artist who would sell a great deal of products, but also had the most returns. The reason? He would bully customers into buying products that were out of their comfort zone and that they knew they would never actually use. I would hear him asking a woman who clearly never wore any makeup beyond lipstick if she uses concealer. When she said no, he'd reply with “Oh honey! You can't live your life this way!” The customer looked beyond uncomfortable but would buy everything just to make good her escape. When I worked at a color salon, the lead colorist would say things like, “Well, if you want to look like you're from New Jersey . . .” or “Supercuts is up the block” as you'd see the client shrink visibly in their chair.

I find that in the beauty business there are beauty bullies that tear you down instead of building you up. Whether it's to make a sale or to thrust their opinion on you, it's a very negative approach. Beauty should build you up, make you feel more confident, and, most important, make you feel like your best self. If you find yourself in the hands of a beauty bully, run. Walk away from the counter, get out of the chair, and take your business elsewhere to someone who will lift you up and offer you a positive experience. The colorist at the salon might have known what would look best on his client, but he could have relayed the message without belittling her or making her feel ridiculous.

As someone on the inside with a love of all things beauty related, I have always paid attention while working on photo shoots, backstage at runway shows, and at TV studios. In *How to Fake Real Beauty*, I share the very real tried-and-true tricks of the trade.

BeYOUtiful

The philosophy behind this book is not about being artificial. It's about polishing your natural beauty by enhancing your assets and learning how to believably perfect your features.

HOW TO FAKE A PERFECT COMPLEXION

Meet Our Model >

IRENA is easy-going and completely without ego. She put herself in my hands and demonstrates how even a professional model can use the Beauty Equation to perfect her appearance.



One of the most frustrating beauty problems that exists regardless of age is acne-prone skin. Nothing makes you feel more helpless or undercuts one's confidence than a blemish or, worse, an outbreak of pimples. While there are topical solutions both over the counter and by prescription like Retin-A, as well as the more serious prescription medications, like Accutane—this book is about what to do when there is no time to wait for

the meds to kick in and you need to look flawless *now*.

First, though, we have to talk about what makes your skin break out in the first place. Of course there are many factors that affect your complexion: diet, stress, environment, and hormones are just a few factors that can cause you to break out. However, taking good care of your skin can help.

As I like to say, cleanliness is next to goddess-ness when it comes to good skin. Keeping your skin clean is the best way to minimize breakouts and help keep your complexion clear. Cleansing in the morning is important, and we all know the golden rule is to remove makeup and wash your face before bedtime, but during the day sometimes you may need to touch up as well. I like to keep anti-acne pads in my office for a midday pick me up. At night, no matter how tired I might be or how late I get home, I will never go to sleep without cleansing my face. If I don't have the energy to formally wash my face, I'll either use an astringent with a cotton round or a pre-moistened cleansing cloth.

Opt for products with skin-clearing ingredients, because even if your skin is clear, this ensures it will stay that way and act as a preventative measure. Choose cleansers with ingredients like salicylic acid, benzyl peroxide, alpha or beta hydroxy, or glycolic acid. Also use a moisturizer or tinted moisturizer with salicylic acid and skin-clearing ingredients. These types of active ingredients also have great anti-aging benefits by keeping skin exfoliated and diminishing fine lines.

Solutions to Achieve Blemish-Free Skin

DRY IT

You definitely want to dry the blemish, but just the blemish! The common mistake people make in their panic to clear away the unsightly spot is to dry out their entire face in the process. There are several options to use to dry a blemish and speed up its demise: the obvious, over-the-counter remedies, like Clearasil or Clean & Clear. Apply only to the blemish, not to your entire face.

If I'm applying makeup on someone with a zit, or if I have an event or on-camera appearance and a blemish pops up, my secret weapon is rubbing alcohol. Witch hazel works well, too, but nothing will dry a blemish faster than dabbing rubbing alcohol on it with a cotton swab. Repeat as necessary, but be aware that overdoing it might also redden your skin temporarily. That's not an issue if you have makeup to cover the redness, and the pimple's lifespan will shorten dramatically!

ZAP IT

There are many devices now available for at-home use that zap a blemish with a low electric current to dry the pimple and speed up the skin-clearing process. The heat from the device will kill bacteria and dry the blemish. These devices claim to clear skin within twenty-four to forty-eight hours and a

recommended for mild to moderate breakouts. I find they do speed up the healing time of very mild blemishes, but not significantly enough, and they are not recommended for subclinical acne (barely visible blackheads or whiteheads), comedonal acne (blackheads and whiteheads with slight inflammation), or severe nodular or cystic acne. If you have a stubborn pimple, the heat from the types of devices may help speed up the demise of the pimple, but not fast enough or dramatically enough to warrant the purchase price, which can range from \$99 to \$299. Topical solutions are far more effective.

Exfoliate It

Using a sonic brush with an exfoliating cleanser truly speeds up the healing process and helps skin turn over and heal much faster. I swear by my Clarasonic brush and use it almost daily. If I have a blemish, the brush helps clear it away much faster than it would normally. For sensitive skin, opt for a cream or gel cleanser with a brush. For tougher complexions, use a scrub with the brush for serious exfoliation. Ridding the skin of dead surface cells also makes your skin more receptive to acne treatments to further banish blemishes. When using a sonic brush for the first time, follow the instructions in the package. Use it with a very gentle cleanser and a gentle hand to ensure you don't irritate your skin or overdo it. Once you see how your skin responds, you can proceed to either use it daily or on alternate days. A sonic brush is very effective, but you can also exfoliate without one. Use a facial scrub instead of your cleanser once or twice per week or use a wet facial towel with your cleanser. The key is to add a product or tool with a scrubbing texture that will slough away the dead surface skin and reveal the layer beneath it.





PRO TIP: Dermatologist David Bank says, “Pockmarks are dented scars left behind by acne. To help reduce their appearance, exfoliate regularly, try microdermabrasion to generate new layers of skin, and use a retinol cream to boost cell regeneration. For a more effective way to get rid of pockmarks and other acne scars, ask your dermatologist about lasers like Fraxel.”

Source It

Don't assume a breakout is simply from stress, diet, or hormones. Think about anything you've changed recently that may be causing a reaction in your skin. Using a new hair product? A new conditioner, shampoo, or leave-in hair product can cause a reaction where the hair touches your face. Trying a new detergent or fabric softener? Your face on that pillow could be the source of the outbreak. Do you use your cell phone frequently? Think about the dirt, oil, and bacteria that your phone comes in contact with. Then you hold it against your face. It's good to disinfect your phone with rubbing alcohol every few days as a preventative measure.

I once had a client come in for a makeup lesson. She told me she'd tried every brand of cosmetic and skin care and everything made her break out. Part of the lesson was assessing her existing makeup. As she pulled products out of her makeup bag, she pulled out a blush brush that was so dirty it wouldn't clean my toilet bowl with it! I asked her how often she cleans her brushes. “Clean my brushes? Never,” she replied. She'd been using that brush for years, and it turned out to be the source of her acne.

Another client was using a very high-quality brand of foundation, concealer, and powder. When I looked at the powder compact, the powder was green. I asked her why she was using a green powder which is usually used to counteract redness, which she did not suffer from. She said, “It's not green, it's translucent and looks white in the compact.” I showed her the green powder. It turned out that she had spilled something in her purse, the powder had gotten wet, and mold had developed. She unwittingly kept using the powder and it caused her skin to react. Granted, this was a freak accident, but the point is to consider what your skin is coming in contact with. That awareness and a good cleansing regime can save you lots of heartache as well as money spent on products and dermatologists.

Attack It Internally

I have seen clients who had terrible acne all over their face and were trying everything under the sun to clear their complexion, to no avail. Then one day, they walk in with perfectly clear skin. In a few cases, there was no sign that they had ever had acne. I had to know what they did to have such a complete transformation in their complexion. In one case, she started drinking at least eight cups of green tea daily. In another case, he discovered he was allergic to a food he was eating on a regular basis, and when he eliminated it from his diet, his skin cleared up. I'm not saying green tea is a miracle solution for everyone. I'm saying look at your diet and maybe go in for an allergy test. Don't assume that your breakout is simply the result of stress or genetics.

Medicate It

In extreme cases, when you have truly severe acne, sometimes the best solution is prescription medication, like Accutane. I've seen astounding results from Accutane use when all else has failed. That said, it really should be used only when you've exhausted the other solutions and are under the supervision of a trusted dermatologist. While Accutane can be a miraculous solution, it can also cause excessive dryness, peeling, and redness. It is a serious drug that can only be prescribed twice in your lifetime because it can be rough on your liver. You need to be off of Accutane for a full year before trying to get pregnant, so clearly it is a strong medication that should not be taken without serious consideration.

PRO TIP: Cheryl Kramer Kaye, Executive Beauty Director of *Shape* magazine says, "Okay, my best tip that I share with almost no one because it's so freaking random: when I see or feel a zit coming on, I dab it with a drop of Purell about once an hour. The alcohol kills the surface bacteria and dries the spot, so the blemish never really blooms."

Addressing Poor Pores

Diminishing the size and visibility of pores has become an industry unto itself in the beauty world. I once received an e-mail from a woman asking for my advice on how to reduce her pores. She told me she went for weekly facials, used scrubs daily, and did everything one should do to diminish the appearance of pores, yet her pores remained huge. I told her to get rid of her magnifying mirror. She was clearly obsessing too much about her pores and looking at her skin too closely. She had lost perspective. She wrote back to thank me and wondered how I knew she was using a magnifying mirror? Once she took a step back, she realized her skin looked great.

Many skin-care brands offer products to shrink pores, deep-clean pores, or hide pores. Pores are the bane of complexion-obsessed people. If you are maintaining your complexion with regular exfoliating and anti-acne or anti-aging products like Retin-A, you are already diminishing the look of your pores. The fact is that you cannot actually shrink a pore. Pores do not contract and expand. A pore on an oily, unclean face may appear more visible if there is dirt in that pore, but it is not, in fact, any larger than when that pore is clean; it's just calling attention to itself when it's unclean. Regular

cleansing and exfoliating and a good toner, like Clinique Clarifying Lotion (Scruffing Lotion for Men) will keep your pores less visible.

I also advocate using pore strips once per week. While they make pore strips for areas of the face like the chin and forehead, the only area where pore strips will really make a difference is the nose area, where pores are larger and more visible than other areas of the face. It's always shocking and satisfying to see what comes out of your pores and onto the pore strip.

Many new products, including primers, BB and CC creams, and foundations today are formulated to diminish the appearance of your pores. Odds are that if you keep your complexion clean, remove your makeup at the end of the day and exfoliate, then your pores will not be an issue. Any procedure at your dermatologist's office that removes the surface layer of skin, like a chemical peel or microdermabrasion, will also help to significantly diminish the visibility of your pores. If you still have an issue with pores looking too visible when you have makeup on, use a primer under your makeup. It will help the makeup glide over your skin instead of settling into pores.

Steaming your complexion will help clear your pores and make them less visible. You can steam your skin at home by filling a pot a quarter of the way full with water and bringing the water to a boil. Turn the heat off completely. Hold a towel over your head and lean your face over the pot so that you feel the steam on your face for a few minutes. Follow up by splashing your face with cold water. If you have access to a steam room, a few minutes two or three times per week will make a wonderful difference in your complexion.

PRO TIP: *Health* magazine's Beauty Editor, Aviva Patz, says, "For great, hydrated, balanced skin, don't wash your face in the morning. Just splash with water and apply a mild (non-alcohol-based) toner. This trick, while it feels rebellious, has totally transformed my oily skin. By not using cleanser, my skin doesn't get over-dry, which means it doesn't crank up oil production to compensate. I also save a few minutes in the morning!"

Fake It with Makeup

The key to concealing a single blemish or pimple is to use a moisturizing, highly pigmented concealer in a warm (yellow-based) tone. Choose a shade that either matches your skin tone exactly or is one shade lighter. Test the shade by drawing it along your jaw line. The perfect shade will be undetectable and invisible. If you can see the color swatch on your jaw line, the shade is too light, too dark, or has the wrong undertones. A good trick is to apply acne medication directly onto blemishes before applying concealer. The medication creates a protective barrier while continuing to speed up drying of the blemishes under the makeup.

STEP 1: Apply the concealer directly onto the pimple.

STEP 2: Blend so that the blemish and surrounding area are covered. If you blend slightly and the concealer doesn't hide the blemish, then the concealer may be too sheer.

STEP 3: Blend well—not so well that the concealer is wiped off, but enough so that the concealer and pimple are undetectable.

STEP 4: Set the concealer with translucent powder so that the concealer stays put. Some people prefer using loose powder, but for concealing pimples, I prefer pressed powder because you get less powder on your skin and avoid the over-powdered, caked-on look that can draw attention to the blemish as opposed to concealing it.



If the pimple you're concealing is raised, a moisturizing or liquid concealer is best. If the blemish is not raised, you can opt for a heavier concealer or foundation stick, which will offer more coverage.

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