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Expert Advice for the Summer Acne Mistakes You're Probably Making



Howing off extra skin is a telltale sign that summer weather has officially settled in. However, the added heat and humidity of the season can make things a bit troublesome for your complexion. Regardless of where you get your [summer acne tips](#) from, one thing's for sure: it's much easier to break out once the temperatures begin to rise. And although a good foaming wash and a detoxifying facial mask can definitely keep those pimples and blackheads at bay, it's important to acknowledge that there may be some summer acne habits that can be secretly contributing to your zit.

To help bring those easily fixable mistakes to your radar, we consulted three seasoned pros to highlight all those daily blunders you could be making without even realizing it. From picking [your zits](#) to [not washing your sheets](#), here's foolproof, expert advice (plus some handy product recommendations!) to be aware of.

You're Picking Your Pimples

"Picking can worsen scarring and discoloration," says Dr. Melissa Kanchanapoomi Levin, NYC-based dermatologist and founder of [Entière](#)

[Dermatology](#). The best option is to see your dermatologist for a quick cortisone injection, which gets rid of [the pimple](#), she advises.

However, if you are in a bind, and unable to see a dermatologist, she also recommends investing in a specialized hydrocolloid acne patch called [ZitSticka](#) (\$29 for one kit), which is a 24 freeze-dried micro darts bandage (packed with acne-fighting ingredients!) that self-dissolves over two hours.

You Aren't Washing Your Sheets Regularly

"You might not realize it, but even your freshly-washed skin leaves bacteria on your pillow," says [Dr. Sheel Desai-Solomon](#), a board-certified Dermatologist in Raleigh-Durham.

Our skin collects bacteria and oil during the summer, she explains, so it's important to regularly change your sheets [and pillowcases](#) to avoid clogging your pores with debris, oil, and bacteria.

You Aren't Cleansing Properly

"Keep your pores clean by washing your face twice a day with a cleanser that contains between 0.5 and two percent [salicylic acid](#)," Dr. Desai-Solomon tells StyleCaster. To use your cleanser properly, she advises massaging it onto your face with your fingertips, and leaving your product on for a minute before rinsing. This allows the active ingredients to penetrate your skin, she explains. If you are looking for a good salicylic acid-infused cleanser that will keep your pores free from acne-causing bacteria, we recommend investing in the [Jordan Samuel Skin The Matinee Cleanser](#) (\$28), as it contains the perfect amount of salicylic acid (and other skin-soothing ingredients) to keep your skin fresh and hydrated all summer long.

4 of 10

You're Forgetting To Exfoliate

"[Gently exfoliating](#) once a week gets rid of the dead skin cells that clog pores," Dr. Desai-Solomon explains. Getting an electric cleansing brush, which sloughs off the top layer (without causing any irritation) of the skin can be more than helpful.

To promote some new cell-turnover without any harsh irritation, be sure to treat your skin to the [PMD Clean Pro RQ](#) (\$179), which utilizes SonicGlow technology to break down dirt and oil from within the pores.

5 of 10

You Aren't Wiping Away the Sweat

"Even if you're out running, be sure to cleanse your skin [with wipes](#) every three to five hours if you've been sweating a lot," says [Dr. Gretchen Frieling](#), a Boston

area board-certified Dermatopathologist. You don't want to overload your skin with acne fighting acids throughout the day, she explains, making it wise to use gentle, all-natural wipes that don't contain any harsh chemicals.

Looking for gentle cleansing wipes that are infused with soothing argan oil? Be sure to pack the [HanHoo Argan Oil Makeup Removing Wipes With Vitamin C](#) (\$4) in your makeup bag in order to keep your skin clean, hydrated, and radiant.

6 of 10

You're Overdoing The Moisturizer

"Use an [oil-free moisturizer](#) that's labeled non-comedogenic, and only apply it to dry areas," Dr. Frieling tells StyleCaster. However, if your skin is very oily, she recommends skipping the moisturizer altogether and applying an oil-free sunscreen with UVA/UVB protection.

To keep your skin protected without clogging your pores, Frieling advises using oil-free products like the [Coppertone Oil-Free Faces SPF 30](#) (\$15.99). This product can be applied directly onto your face and neck, without causing any breakouts, she says.

7 of 10

You Aren't Using Sunscreen At All

"[Applying sunscreen](#) is a must for anyone, including people with acne and oily skin," says board-certified dermatologist Dr. Yoram Harth, medical Director of [MDacne](#).

The UV light emitted from the sun causes the epidermis to be thicker, he explains, and increases the risk for clogged pores. UV rays, he adds, also cause post-acne dark spots to be darker, and of course, is the cause for premature skin aging.

To keep your skin shielded from the sun's harmful rays, be sure to slather on the [MDacne Oil-Free Sunscreen](#) (\$24.95), which is non-comedogenic, and is specifically formulated for those with acne-prone skin.

8 of 10

You're Using the Wrong Sunscreen

"Try to [avoid physical sunscreens](#) that are based on zinc oxide and titanium oxides," Dr. Harth tells StyleCaster. These sunscreens are thicker, he explains, which leaves a white cast on the skin. This can lead to clogged pores, he says. Dr. Harth notes that water-resistant sunscreen is more ideal for those with acne-prone skin, as it will not get diluted by sweat, and will stay longer on the skin. To incorporate water and sweat-resistant sunscreen (boasts up to 80 minutes of protection) into your daily routine, be sure to pack the [Badger Sport Sunscreen SPF 35](#) (\$15.99) in your purse or work bag for all day protection.

9 of 10

You're Over-Cleansing and Scrubbing Your Skin

"Give your skin the necessary care it deserves, but don't overdo it," Dr. Harth warns.

Exfoliators (or harsh skin scrubs) are not a great idea for people with [acne in the summer](#), he says, as they over-irritate the skin, damage the skin's protective layer, and make the skin more sensitive.

10 of 10

You Aren't Drinking Enough Water

"Proper hydration in summer is essential for our general health, and more specifically for our skin," Dr. Harth advises. When the skin is well hydrated, he suggests that it heals better and faster.

<https://stylecaster.com/beauty/summer-acne-tips/#slide-10>