

## DECODE THE LINGO

### UV = ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT

This invisible radiation produced by the sun is made up of three wavelengths: UVA, UVB and UVC.

### UVA = ULTRAVIOLET A RADIATION

UVA rays have a longer wavelength and penetrate deeper into the skin than UVB rays. They are responsible for premature ageing of the skin.

### UVB = ULTRAVIOLET B RADIATION

These medium wavelength rays are responsible for sunburn. They damage DNA and are considered to be the main cause of melanoma.

### UVC = ULTRAVIOLET C RADIATION

These short wavelength rays are absorbed by the earth's ozone layer, so we don't need any protection from them.

### LOOK OUT FOR THE LOGO

According to the EU recommendations, the UVA protection for sunscreen should be at least a third of the labelled SPF. A product that achieves this will be labelled with a UVA logo.

### THE STAR RATING

The star rating system describes the ratio of UVA to UVB protection, with one star indicating the lowest and five stars indicating the highest ratio of protection available.

### BROAD-SPECTRUM SUNSCREEN

Sunscreen that protects against UVA and UVB rays. Look for broad-spectrum sunscreens with both a high SPF and the UVA logo.

sunscreen is 120ml, and you should be applying it at least three times a day.”

## 6.

**MYTH: The sun damages your hair just as much as it does your skin.**

**FACT:** “Sun dries hair out, making it brittle, but ultimately we replace our hair with new growth, so it doesn't have quite the same damaging effect as it does on our skin,” says Bunting. To limit the sun's drying effect on hair, apply a mask through the ends and pull into a bun before hitting the beach. “Remember to apply sunscreen all around your nails and cuticles every two hours, too,” advises Bunting.

## 7.

**MYTH: Wearing sunscreen stops my body producing vitamin D.**

**FACT:** It's true that sunlight aids skin in producing vitamin D – a nutrient that helps keep bones healthy – and wearing sunscreen will block this, but “you have to consider the simple facts: vitamin D is important for health, but UV is a known carcinogen,” says Bunting. “Relying on the sun for vitamin D (which skin produces in response to UVB exposure) is crazy. It's far safer to get vitamin D from supplements or reliable dietary sources, such as oily fish, eggs and milk, and keep skin protected all year round with a broad-spectrum sunscreen.”

## 8.

**MYTH: Sunscreen is as effective at protecting skin from sun damage as clothing is.**

**FACT:** Sunscreen should actually be your last defence against the sun. “The hierarchy for protection is this: first, avoid the sun between the peak hours of 11am and 3pm (particularly important for children). Second, wear densely woven clothing and a wide-brimmed hat. Third, wear sunscreen,” says Bunting.

## 9.

**MYTH: “Apply once” and waterproof sunscreens don't need to be reapplied during the day.**

**FACT:** These sunscreens need to be reapplied just as frequently as regular sunscreens – every 90 minutes to two hours. “The formulas may be able to survive swimming and sweating better, but towelling the skin rubs sunscreen off, whatever type it is,” advises Bunting.

## 10.

**MYTH: I can use sunscreen designed for my body on my face.**

**FACT:** You can, but the formulas tend to be heavier, so you may suffer breakouts if you wear it every day, as you should. “If you're prone to clogging, it's best to seek out sunscreen with a non-comedogenic formulation – one that's designed not to plug the pores of your skin,” says Bunting. “If you don't, you may be tempted to skimp on application to prevent a breakout, which will mean you're not properly protected.” □

## TOP TIPS TO STAY SAFE IN THE SUN

- Set a two-hourly alarm on your phone to remind you to reapply sunscreen.
- “Try and take Lycopene supplements in the run-up to a holiday, as it raises the skin's threshold for sunburn,” says Bunting. Lycopene, £11.55 for 50 capsules (hollandandbarrett.com)
- Don't trust clouds. UV rays penetrate your skin even if the sun's not out.
- Ensure your skin is dry before applying sunscreen or it will dilute and rub off.
- Dark-coloured clothes absorb heat, so wear light hues and natural fibres.

## WHAT THE PROS USE



Anthelios XL Extreme Fluid SPF 50+, £16.50, La Roche-Posay (boots.com). Bunting says: “This offers superb UVA protection thanks to its patented Mexoryl technology.”



Mattifying Face Fluid Dry Touch SPF 30, £16, Vichy (0800 169 6193). Bunting says: “It has a non-greasy finish and the formula is kind to acne-prone skin.”



Nu-Derm Sun Shield SPF 50, £60, Obagi (uvaubsunscreens.co.uk). Bunting says: “This is my favourite sunscreen. It's non-clogging and a pleasure to wear.”

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