

The all-in-one SUPERCREAMS

Forget shelves stacked with oodles of skincare products – women are changing the way they shop and now it's all about the single multipurpose mega-moisturiser

By Jess Tibbits. Still life by Dennis Pedersen

I was packing one weekend when I noticed something new and entirely unexpected in my luggage – extra space. How could this be? I'm the girl on first-name terms with the excess baggage people at the easyJet check-in desk.

Then I realised it was because my beauty kit had shrunk. It used to be that wherever I went, my entire ten-product skincare collection went too. But this time, I packed just one: an über-moisturiser, a total hero, which I've come to rely on to multitask – to hydrate my skin, give me a brightness boost and plump out fine lines. Call it penny-pinching, smart time management, or just being a princess, but I'm suddenly expecting my moisturiser to be all things.

And, apparently, I'm not alone. The multitasking moisturiser trend is popping up everywhere – with cosmetics companies pushing it on beauty counters and at launches. The focus has shifted from vast ranges of skin enhancers to condensed collections, typically centring on a single multitasking moisturiser that will tackle all your skin woes in one pot. Why?

"The economic downturn is changing the face of the beauty industry," says Lancôme's scientific director Julie McManus. "We're finding women in their twenties, thirties and forties are looking to simplify their skincare routines, cutting out unnecessary steps and looking for one product that will treat multiple skin concerns effectively."

In other words, the recession is making women demand more from their skincare. We want visible results, but we don't want to fork out on tons of products to get them – we want multiple skincare benefits in ▶

1 RENERGIE MULTI-LIFT LIFTING FIRMING ANTI-WRINKLE CREAM SPF15, £60, LANCOME (AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE)

How it works Its hi-tech active ingredients, including hyaluronic acid and linseed, stimulate proteins found in all five layers of the skin. This aids communication between cells, resulting in skin that's firmer, tighter and smoother.
Why we love it Like an energy drink for thirsty skin, this instantly hydrates and visibly brightens.

2 REVITALIZING SUPREME GLOBAL ANTI-AGING CREME, £56, ESTÉE LAUDER (0870 034 2566)

How it works A combination of potent antioxidants and anti-irritants, including vitamin E and caffeine, help to protect the skin, while extracts of sunflower and barley help to build and strengthen the moisture barrier.
Why we love it As well as hydrating and plumping, it acts like a shield for the skin, protecting it from the elements.

3 IDEAL RESOURCE SMOOTHING RETEXTURIZING RADIANCE CREAM, £50, DARPIN (0870 034 2566)

How it works Effective plant extracts, including knotweed, centella asiatica and white hibiscus flower, help stimulate collagen production, while micro-exfoliating floral acids polish for brighter skin with a more even tone.

Why we love it One for fans of natural products, it smells divine and leaves skin glowing.

4 BEAUTIFUL SKIN DAY CREAM SPF15, £21.50, NO7 (08450 70 80 90)

How it works A blend of hard-working actives and natural ingredients, including rosehip oil, help to smooth dry patches and lock in moisture, instantly rehydrating parched skin. Plus it's got in-built SPF15 protection.

Why we love it The light texture and bargain price tag.

5 EXTRA-FIRMING DAY WRINKLE LIFTING CREAM, £46, CLARINS (0800 036 3558)

How it works Recently reformulated to include new organic plant extracts, this cult classic (two million are sold each year) is better than ever. Added green banana and lemon thyme extracts help boost elastin fibres, firming the skin, plumping wrinkles and boosting radiance.

Why we love it This combats slack skin and gives a gorgeous dewy finish.

6 THE YOUTH AS WE KNOW IT ANTI-AGING NIGHT CREAM, £65, BLISS (0808 100 4151)

How it works Boasting a whopping ten benefits for battling ageing, its cocktail of active ingredients includes vitamin A and soybean seed to support collagen production, improving the skin's strength and suppleness.

Why we love it The luxe texture is rich but not sticky.

