

WORDS BY JESS TIBBITS

STRIKING

OIL

The new generation of oils could be just the skin and haircare heroes you've always dreamt of...

If there's one question I'm asked over and over again as a beauty writer, it's "What do you actually *do* with oils?" For years, they have been tentatively dabbed on stretchmarks or occasionally used in the bath, but now oils are finally joining the beauty big guns. From the cleverest new hair colorant to the genius second-skin foundation, a new gen of smart, weightless oils is about to work its way into your skincare, haircare and make-up bags. But why now?

For one thing, the experts have finally got their formulations right. "Producing oils that are nourishing and hydrating, but feel light on the skin has taken years of research," says Shakila Bik, L'Oréal's senior scientific adviser. The key is combining two different types of oil – one that glides on to the skin and then evaporates (which the men in lab coats call "volatile") and one that is absorbed into the skin (aka "non-volatile") to soften and hydrate. These new oil textures are so light, you're even going to start seeing them in your foundation.

And oils are being added into haircare too. "We've spent a year and a half perfecting the formula of our >