

Frequently asked questions

Who is Shade™ suitable for?

Suitable for all skin types, of all ages. We get feedback from people with sensitive skin who normally react badly to chemical sun creams that they can use Shade™ without any reaction and it soothes their skin. People with oily skin have found it to be fine for them also - zinc oxide is naturally astringent and so will help to dry out any excess oils. People who like to use the Shade™ daily to prevent sun and wind damage in winter for example have found it useful to apply a little moisturiser before applying Shade™ to counteract the drying effect of zinc oxide. This isn't so necessary if you're just using it on holiday for a short period of time.

How should I apply it?

If it's cold and quite firm or shows signs of the zinc oxide molecules 'clumping' together (bobbly surface), rub it vigorously with warm fingertips to make it softer, then apply generously at least 15min before exposure to the sun, and then reapply regularly at least every 2 - 3 hours, after exposure to water or after sweating.

How should I apply it?

'Applying generously' means you need approximately a teaspoon for an adult face, and a shot glass full for an adult body. Be aware that putting an inadequate amount of sunscreen on effectively square-roots the SPF! So, an SPF50 is rendered an SPF7, SPF25 is rendered an SPF5!!

How does SPF actually work?

SPF25 means that the protection is 96% - that also means that 4% of rays are still reaching the skin. The '25' means that you are approximately protected or 25 times the length of time it would normally take you to burn, under the same environmental conditions, without any protection whatsoever. So, say it takes 10 min for you to start burning in 38 degrees in the Sahara Desert at midday, it will take you 250min to burn with a factor 25 on.

Unlike many chemical sunscreens, Shade™ does not contain burn inhibitors which switch off the burning sensation. If you feel you are beginning burn, it's your body's warning to you that you have been exposed for too long, and the sensible approach is to cover up by wearing clothing or move out of the sun altogether. Applying more sunscreen only ensures you are still covered for the original 25x timeframe - it does not extend the amount of time you can stay in the sun - those 4% of rays are still doing their damage. It's important that you listen to your body and its signals - the danger of sunscreens that contain burn inhibitors is that the damage is still being done, but you just can't feel it - a bit like taking painkillers that mask the pain - ignoring the body's messages that there is a problem does not resolve the problem.

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Does Shade protect against UVA as well as UVB?

Shade™ offers broad spectrum protection, the SPF25 covers the UVB and the UVA emblem on the bottom label refers to the UVA protection.

The UVA Star rating system can no longer be used by sunscreen manufacturers such as ourselves other than the higher priced ones Boots itself sells and Boots own brands, as it is trademarked by Boots the Chemists, so we have been unable to use this test specifically to give it stars based on this testing system.

However, the UVAPF Mean in the SO24443:2012 test conducted on Shade All-Natural Sunscreen (Unscented) came in at 24.77, giving it a PA++++ UVA grading, and if we were to be able to use the star system it would come out at 4/5 stars.

Does Shade™ leave a white cast on the skin?

Shade™ can leave a white cast on the skin, this is the mineral non-nano zinc oxide sitting on the skin rather than being absorbed into the skin, and it's the active ingredient that protects you from the UVA & UVB rays. When you see a white cast on your skin don't dismay, be pleased! You can see that not only are you physically helping to protect yourself for the dangerous rays, you can rest assured we are only using non-nano particles of zinc oxide, which is why they sit on the skin as a physical barrier and don't absorb into the skin and the bloodstream - the very safest form of active ingredient for sunscreens. When it comes to doing something recognised as dangerous, such as exposing yourself to strong sun, we believe it's important to put safety above vanity...

Why do you only make an SPF25?

We only make an SPF25 because the recommended ideal SPF is between 15 and 30. As SPF25 protects you from 96% of the sun's harmful UVB rays which cause burning, we believe that users will not be as complacent as they would be about using a high SPF, and if you need it to be a really super sunblock lay it on thick. Also, very high SPF is only achievable with chemical active ingredients, something we're trying to avoid.

We are inclined to agree with the Environmental Working Group about the pitfalls of high SPF products. You can read them here.

How can I trust that it's a really effective sunscreen?

Test results confirm that not only is Shade™ an effective broad-spectrum sunscreen which helps protect against UVA radiation which can penetrate deep into the skin and cause ageing, it is also an effective SPF25, which blocks up to 96% of the UVB rays which cause burning. We believe it's better to use an SPF in the range of 15 - 30, because your burning mechanism is your early warning system which really is best not switched off! SPF25 covers 96%, SPF50 covers only 2% more at 98% and SPF100 covers only 99%...by offering only SPF25, we hope people will use Shade™ responsibly, and not be complacent about the dangers of sun exposure. Higher SPFs we believe can lead us into a

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false sense of security. Please read our blog post 'A Word of Warning about Natural Sunscreens', and this Excellent Article, 'Can Sunscreen Ingredients Increase Your Risk of Cancer?' which highlights all the issues with using sunscreen to prevent skin cancer.

A Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 25 does not mean it is half the strength of an SPF 50 – it means you can remain exposed to sun with it adequately applied for up to 25 times the length of time it would normally take you to burn in the same environmental conditions you would if you did not apply any sunscreen protection.

When many of the chemical ingredients found in mainstream high-street sunscreens have been found to be carcinogenic, it makes sense to choose a sunscreen which only uses the most basic, nourishing skin-protecting natural ingredients. This eliminates the risk of adverse reactions, chemical absorption through the skin into the bloodstream, and the highly undesirable 'switching off' of your early warning signals. Of all the radiation dispersing and adsorbing ingredients available to sunscreen manufacturers, we have opted for the most naturally-occurring one which happens to be the only one which proves offer the broadest protection available – the mineral Zinc Oxide.

The non-nano zinc oxide we have chosen for Shade™ is able to protect against both UVA and UVB ultraviolet light and is a physical UV blocker being capable of scattering solar radiation and is excellent for those who are sensitive to the sun.

What tests has it undergone?

Stability testing, microbiology testing, broad spectrum sunscreen testing of effectiveness against UVA & UVB rays, and SPF validation tests. All tests conducted to EU standards by Alba Science of Edinburgh.

- ISO24443 In vitro Broad Spectrum Protection.
- ISO 24444 In vivo with 13 live subjects. A Cosmetic Study to Determine the In-Vivo Sun Protection Factor of a Sunscreen Formulation.
- Cosmetic Product Safety Data Analysis, conducted by Luciano Molinaro BSc Forensic Science & Investigative Analysis (Hons) (Kingston University), Forensic Chemistry and Trace Analysis, Analytical Methods in Forensic Science (Kingston University).
- Accelerated Stability Test

Shade™ is listed on the Cosmetic Products Notification Portal (CPNP).

Is Shade™ tested on animals?

No way! We're proud to display this icon on our labels.

Does Shade™ dry to a powdery finish or is it greasy?

It doesn't dry to a powdery finish, and most people don't find it greasy. It has a high oil content for sure, but most people find it rubs in well without leaving a greasy feel. If in doubt, there is a small 15ml tin which is perfect as a tester.

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Is the tin made of aluminium?

Yes, the tin is made of aluminium, which is recyclable. Stability tests have demonstrated that there is no leaching from the tin into the product.

Will you ever make a tinted or vegan version of Shade™?

You have been reading my mind...we're going through testing as we speak...subscribe to our newsletter on www.not-the-norm.com or watch this space for news...!

Can't I just use coconut oil on its own? I've heard it stops burning.

Many people have read that coconut oil can enable sun-seekers to get a 'healthy' tan, avoiding the burn, and that it's a safe, natural way to boost vitamin D synthesis. However, if the sun tans you, essentially you have already flirted with danger. Without any significant SPF to speak of, coconut oil alone is truly no reliable choice for protection from UV sun damage.

Coconut oil is a phenomenally versatile healthy oil, of that there is no doubt, and it is seeing a revival of popularity now that the understanding of its beneficial properties is really coming to the fore, however studies have shown that it is only capable of blocking 20% of the sun's UV rays - well below the AAD-recommendation to protect ourselves with a broad-spectrum (UVA & UVB) SPF30 product like Shade™. In fact, chicken oil scored significantly higher on the UV protection chart in comparison, but somehow I don't think smelling like a greasy Sunday roast would be so appealing when you're slamming that volleyball into the sand...

So what's really so bad about commercial, chemical-based, sunscreens?

Where do I start? How about digging around in the back of your bathroom cabinet, and pulling out last year's 1/3 full tube with the crusty, gunky lid that won't close anymore, and taking a look at the ingredients?

The first question you need to ask yourself is ...how do even pronounce that? Exactly. These manmade chemicals are not something we as humans have evolved with, like 'nut' or 'oil'. They are incredibly new to us on the evolutionary scale, and if you take the time to type some of those ingredients into your search bar on Google and add with them 'health risks' then you will discover for yourself why many people are beginning to question why they're relying on this stuff to try and prevent skin cancer.

Also, many chemical sunscreens have ingredients which switch off the burning mechanism. That's all well and good, but we burn for a reason - it's our skin's early warning system telling us we've had too much time in the sun and we need to do something about it! It's easy to avoid burning if you reapply your sunscreen regularly, and at the height of the sun's strength, wear suitable clothing to cover up.

And all that's without mentioning the plastic packaging, which is choking our beautiful oceans and killing our marine life...

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What is Shade's shelf life?

Once opened use within 12 months, otherwise it has a 3-year shelf life.

Why is it packed in a tin and not a bottle or a tube like other sunscreens?

Firstly, it's not plastic, and we hate plastic. So much plastic waste is found discarded on our shorelines it's shameful. Secondly, it can be reused for anything you want it to be reused for, thirdly, you can use up every last bit of its contents because you can easily get at it - even if it's not sunny, if the expiration date is looming, and there's no sun in sight, just use up the cream for its wonderful moisturising properties. It's great if you have itchy skin or patches, insect bites or stings etc. and even as a fantastic lip salve in winter. Lastly, if you can't find any reuse for the tin you can recycle it...and don't worry, unless you let it get to over 64 degrees, it won't melt, it'll just soften, so it won't leak from the tin!

Oh...and it looks cool. :o)

How many applications approximately are in a 100ml tin?

This is very hard to say, similar to the "How long is a piece of string?" - there are many variables - is it for one person, several people, just the face and arms or whole body? We think this size is suitable for a couple for a long weekend, but how long is spent in the sun and how many people are sharing it, whether it's all-over or just small surface areas are factors that need consideration. The cream does go a long way but will need reapplication several times per person and especially if being used when in and out of water or sweating.