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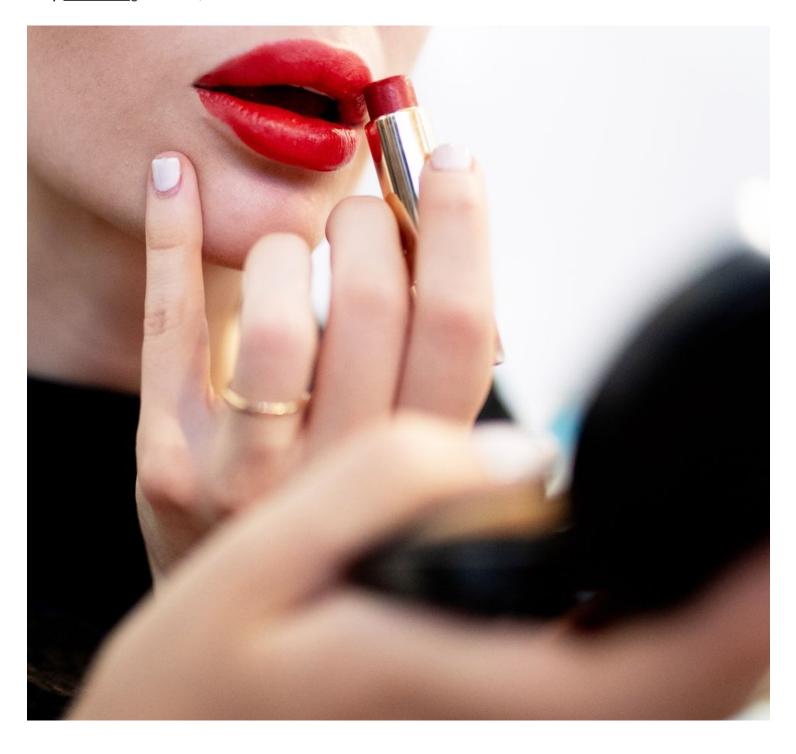
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The Signs Your Makeup Has Expired

Like food, expired makeup can become a breeding ground for bacteria.

By Hana Hong Feb 20, 2020



SERGEI BOBYLEV / GETTY IMAGES

At your own risk, take a gander into someone's makeup bag—you may discover a cringeworthy hoard of years-old makeup. Whether you bought something because you were too easily swayed by a salesperson at a beauty counter or you just have a makeup hoarding problem (like me), chances are you've been building a beauty graveyard of several foundation bottles or primer potions that you've only pumped once. Not to mention the eyeshadow palette that you've only used two shades out of, leaving the rest of the loner shades untouched. But why should you let it go? Well, beyond the blatant signs of expiration, like dried mascara and crumbling eyeshadow, it can be tough to tell when makeup has met its end.

In a perfect world, our favorite makeup products would last forever and save us so many trips to Sephora. But the truth is, regardless of whether they're brand new or on their last leg, beauty products *do* go bad. Even worse, they can cause skin and health problems if not disposed of at the proper time.

"Like food, makeup has an expiration date, and over time cosmetics can harbor harmful bacteria that can lead to infections," states Dr. David Schlessinger, a board-certified oculoplastic surgeon and ophthalmologist, and medical director of Schlessinger Eye & Face. "The risks are multiplied when these products are shared among friends." Here's exactly how to purge or preserve those products that've been collecting dust.

How to Know if Your Makeup Is Expired

Surprisingly, U.S. labeling regulations don't mandate an expiration date on most cosmetics, making it that much trickier to determine its lifespan. However, there are a few telltale signs that your makeup's gone bad. In general, the easiest way to tell if a product has properly served its time is by observing visual and olfactory changes. If a product separates, changes color or texture, or smells off, odds are it's well past its expiration date.

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Beginning from the time you first open your products, this is the general rule of thumb you should be following:

• Powders and shadows: 2 years

Cream shadows: 12-18 months

• Foundation: 1 year

• Lipstick & lipliner: 1 year

Mascara & eyeliners: 3 months

How to Prolong Your Makeup's Shelf Life

1. Make sure that products are closed tight and away from sunlight.

This is the most elementary tip to preserving long-lasting products. Direct sunlight can accelerate the aging of a product, breaking down the active ingredients in your skincare.

2. Store products in cool temperatures.

Your fridge doesn't have to only store kombucha and midnight snacks. It can also house your favorite makeup and skincare products! Cooler temperatures are known to extend shelf life, while hotter temperatures accelerate the degradation and lifespan of skincare products, especially those with any vitamin C or retinol. Any serums, moisturizers, or oils can all be kept in the fridge. Even nail polish can be placed in cooler temps to avoid clumps and make for smoother application.

Shop the best skincare fridges

Skincare Beauty Fridge

Teami Blends

ulta.com

\$119.99

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Mini Fridge Electric Cooler and Warmer

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3. Avoid the bathroom vanity.

Even though your bathroom may have the best lighting for your morning makeup routine, the trapped steam and humidity from the shower can generate mold. Anything with the lack of a strong seal such as compacts, eyeshadows, and sponge applicators, are strongly recommended to be moved somewhere drier in order to prevent bacteria buildup and mold growth.

4. Clean your tools regularly.

Clean your makeup brushes weekly using a mild detergent. Ideally, makeup sponges should be replaced weekly (yes weekly!), or when the sponge becomes stained.

Shop the best cleansing tools

Solid Clean: Solid Brush Cleaner Mini

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