

# Harper's BAZAAR

## The 12 Best Serums for Oily Skin

Say goodbye to shine (and then some).

If you have oily skin, you've probably already tweaked your skincare routine to try to minimize oil, whether that means an oil-free moisturizer or a non-comedogenic sunscreen. But serums can be a little less straightforward. Serums are more targeted treatments, so while they can address oil itself, they can also tackle things like skin tone, acne, and fine lines—it just depends on what you and your skin are looking for.

### The Best Serums for Oily Skin

To compile our list of the best face serums for oily skin—for every skin concern—we consulted board-certified dermatologists Nazanin Saedi, founder of Sobel Skin, Howard Sobel, and Kseniya Kobets, director of cosmetic dermatology at Montefiore Advanced Care, for their expert picks, and included some highly reviewed best-sellers as well. Read on to find the best face serum for your routine, and more tips from the trio of derms.



EXPERT PICK

Sobel Skin Rx 15%  
Niacinamide Gel  
Serum

[Read more](#)

\$78 AT  
[DRSOBELSKINRX.COM](https://DRSOBELSKINRX.COM)

Sobel recommends "Minimalist formulas that are non-comedogenic and contain, clean natural active ingredients. This gel serum from his own skincare line fits the brief.

#### Customer Review:

"I really really like this serum. It feels so nice on my face right before I go to bed. It's very liquidity and not greasy, which I enjoyed. I feel it contributed to reducing some lines on my forehead, as well as between my eyebrows. It is a little on the pricey side, but I'm only one month in and feel like the bottle is still full! I appreciate that it is fragrance-free as some products that have fragrances in them irritates my skin" —HalieParker

## How Can Serums Help Oily Skin?

---

First off, Kobets clarifies that serums can encompass many different products. "The word serum has been thrown around and applied to various types of skincare formulations from very liquidy and water-based serums, to more cream-like serums, as well as to more oily and more emollient serums," the dermatologist says.

As for what they can actually do, it varies. "A serum will help oily skin by balancing and controlling oil production, reduce the appearance of pores and pore size, deliver antioxidant protection, and strengthen skin's barrier," adds Sobel.

"Serum can be beneficial for oily skin by helping minimize oil production and hydrating the skin," Saedi says. "The right ones can balance the skin pH and help with hydration."

## What Ingredients Are Beneficial in a Serum for Oily Skin?

---

Luckily, it's a long list. "Retinol, vitamin C, hyaluronic acid, niacinamide and probiotics can all benefit oily skin that still needs to be protected against fine line and wrinkle formation, environmental pollutants, and moisture loss," says Sobel, adding that niacinamide also "helps minimize large pores that are usually more visible on oily skin types."

## Which ingredients should be avoided for those with oily skin?

---

"For oily skin I would avoid anything that has a mixture of oils, petroleum or petrolatum, or dimethicone that is listed as an ingredient at the top of the list of ingredients," says Kobets. Sobel also says to skip beeswax, coconut oil, and mineral oil, as well as silicones (such as dimethicone) and parabens, "that can irritate the skin or cause additional oil production in the skin."

# Meet the Experts

---

- Howard Sobel is a board-certified dermatologist, and founder of Sobel Skin.
- Nazanin Saedi is a board-certified dermatologist based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Kseniya Kobets is the director of cosmetic dermatology at Montefiore Advanced Care in Westchester, New York.

[Harper's Bazaar](#)

UVM: 19,594,514