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More: [SKINCARE](#) [MASKS](#) [EXFOLIATE](#)

HOME // THE TECHNIQUE / MAXIMUM SELF-CARE: THE 10-HOUR FACIAL

Maximum Self-Care: The 10-Hour Facial



We've hardly made a dent in 2017 yet, and already, "self-care" is the compound noun of the year. Modern society has civilized to a critical point: We finally, after decades of trying, have established a concise and legitimate excuse for canceling plans! This is an exciting development for me, a delicate baby poinsettia who thrives on being alone and cherishing his self. Just last weekend, a friend asked me what I was doing on Saturday night, imploring me to go out because I am an enjoyable presence, and I told him: "No." Why? "Self-care." Say it with me, internally.

In reality, Saturday was spent doing research for a story I had pitched seven months earlier and procrastinated writing until finally it could not be procrastinated anymore: a 10 hour facial, administered by me, to myself. Masking—or prolonged bouts of skincare in general—seem to be a popular way to practice self-care because they force you to do nothing for a short period of time, and then reward you for your inactivity. If a 30-minute mask allows one to get in touch with their inner self, then a 10-hour multiphase DIY facial is a fun way to reach Nirvana in the comfort of your own home. Finally, something to do with all of those tiny and impractical product samples you've accumulated. Let's deplete them together:

Act 1: The Cleanse

Duration: 1 hour

It begins, as all great stories do, with steaming your face over a pot of boiling water. I put in some Vitruvi Tea Tree Oil to make it smell nice and do more, but to me, tea tree steam tastes, smells, and feels just like regular old pasta steam. I did this for 10 minutes.

Once my skin was al dente, I hopped into the shower. This is my second favorite place to wash my face, and the closest elementally to my first. (Under a waterfall.) Today I'm taking a very decadent 20 minutes because my roommates aren't home, also self-care, OK?, and I'm cleansing with Pixi + Caroline Hirons' Double Cleanse. It's a bisected jar with two different formulas—one balm-to-oil for taking off makeup, and a cream to cleanse the skin. The whole double-cleanse is Caroline's thing, and a lot of brands and websites have run away with it, but her Pixi collaboration is a no-frills, deeply effective cleansing experience. I use it every night, bathing under a waterfall.

No toner. I rinse my face with Avene Eau Thermale and a cotton pad, and then I put on the Neutrogena LED Mask, which is so annoying and cumbersome that you are forced to sit still and do nothing for the 10 minutes it's on. It's red light, which is the clarifying kind. Not as powerful LED you'd get at a *real* facial, but it takes away my redness, and at \$35 for 30 uses, it allows you some affordable and consistent LED. Also, is my facial not a "real facial?" That was kind of rude of you. Please be respectful.

Act 2: The Purge (!)

Duration: 1.5 hours

After the big cleanse, I tone with a tingly little AHA toner called COSRX Whitehead Power Liquid only because I had a sample of it. Omorovicza's Refining Facial Polisher is next—it's a physical exfoliant with LAVA POWDER!!!!!!!!!!!! and some other things that are good and fine. Think of it as more of a pre-exfoliating treatment. It makes skin look *lovely*, but if you really want to shed a layer of skin, you'll need something chemical.

That's where Olga Lorencin's Red Carpet Facial enters stage left. This is my centerpiece exfoliating treatment, and so far, it's the only thing I've used for this experiment that I've never actually tried before. The velveteen box unpacks a small Peel, Neutralizer, Mask, plus a tiny brush and bowl. The whole thing is supposed to take 20 minutes, but because I share the dexterity of my baby niece, who cannot yet open a jar, it takes me 45.

The peel goes on for three minutes and tingles a little bit, like a peel does. While this is happening, I have to "quickly rinse the bowl and brush", put the Neutralizer in, and brush it over the peel. Tell me—what comes to mind when you hear the word "neutral?" Do you think of "bland", "innocuous," or "safe" (some synonyms) or do you think of "searing pain with every brushstroke"? I had never known that my skin could burn and sting at the same time, until I met Olga Lorencin's Red Carpet Facial. It would make a wonderful sequence in an forthcoming *Saw* film. The mask that followed afterward was whipped and nice.

After neatly returning Pandora to her Olga Lorencin Red Carpet Facial box, my skin looked smooth, soft, and bright crimson, like a beefsteak tomato with eyebrows. This seems like a great time for Tweezerman No-Slip Extractions. At the slightest application of pressure, junk slides out of my pores. Isn't there some adage about beauty and pain? That would fit nicely here.

Act 3: The Recharge

Duration: 7.5 hours

For most of this facial, I have been lazing about my home—gazing at my reflection in my bathroom mirror and gazing at my reflection in my laptop between episodes of *Unreal*. Now, four hours in, I have to go to a dinner that I had already rescheduled twice before. If I become mobile, so does the facial. And it's great time to transition to Act 3, in which I moisturize myself until my skin changes its state of matter.

In the Juno to the restaurant, I put on Klorane's Soothing Under Eye Patches. Next to Skyn Iceland's version, they are my favorites for imparting moisture unto my fallow, genetically unblessed undereye region. I thought it was going to be a thing, but the driver didn't even notice, which kind of bugged me more? I also brought a moisturizer with me—Make's Succulent Skin Gel—which I put on before I leave and plan to reapply throughout dinner. The package says it's good for travel, which is great for traveling two miles from your home in Brooklyn to a restaurant in Brooklyn.

The second layer is applied during the appetizer. I am weary of touching my face, but Make's Gel is abundantly hydrating.

"Does my skin look dewy, like I'm wearing highlighter?" I ask my friend while smearing it on.

"It looks like you're putting moisturizer on at a restaurant," she replies.

So rude—can I not just live my damn life? We mutually end our friendship and I return home. The way I've timed it, I will sleep through the rest of the moisturizing facial. I've already selected the rest of the products I want to use, and because I hate this and want it to end, I'm going to put them all on at once while I sleep. This looks like:

- Caudalie Vinosource SOS Serum all over my face
- 111Skin Cryo Activating Hydra Gel on my cheeks and forehead
- Natura Bisse Diamond Extreme Retinol Mask on my neck and nose haphazardly
- M-61 Eye Cream under my eyes and just under my browbone
- Lanolips on my kneecap, genius, where do you *think* I put it?

Then I slept for seven hours.

Epilogue: Intimate Reflections

My skin feels fine, and I only kind of broke out a little bit. Please don't ever exfoliate for more than an hour.

—Brennan Kilbane

Photographed by the author.

Direct Link: <https://intothegloss.com/2017/03/diy-facial-steps/>