

KEEP YOUR HANDS YOUNG

Even in this age-evading era, the old adage that you can tell a woman's age just by looking at her hands is truer than ever. Here's how to cheat the hands of time



KEEP SUNSCREEN HANDY

The majority of hand ageing is caused by the sun, so sunscreen is essential. Squeeze out more than you need and apply the excess to the backs of hands. Don't forget to reapply after washing hands or use a waterproof product. Suzie Hoitink, a nurse and founder of Clear Complexions Clinics, recommends using a zinc-based formula. "It not only protects skin but it's anti-inflammatory and supports many of the skin's metabolic processes."

HANDLE WITH CARE

Hands show many of the same signs of ageing as the face – fine lines, crepiness, pigmentation – so Hoitink suggests using the same skincare products on them. "[Look for active cosmeceuticals] that contain antioxidants such as vitamins A, C and E to protect skin and boost collagen synthesis; niacinamide or vitamin B3 to boost the skin's immune responses and target pigmentation; and alpha and beta hydroxy acids to keep cell turnover fresh and reactivate vital youth enzymes, smoothing texture and hydrating your hands."

BUFF AND FILE

"When we age our body doesn't produce as much keratin, which can result in ridged nails," Sally Hansen nail expert Alison Bowhill-Hayes says. "You might notice discoloration in the nail plate, which is due to the circulation slowing." Buff every second manicure to stimulate cell turnover and soften ridges, she says. "Buff vertically from the cuticle and go easy – most ridges won't be removable, just smoothed out. If

you can feel tingling, you're over-buffing." If a nail splits, seal off the edge with a file to prevent further damage.

GIVE THEM A MASSAGE

Don't just slap on hand cream, work it in to stimulate blood flow, Bowhill-Hayes says. "Massage is the best remedy as it hydrates, stimulates blood flow, evens out skin colour and rejuvenates muscles." She adds that vitamin E oil is especially good for circulation and for rubbing into your cuticles, too. "It keeps the cuticle healthy and intact to prevent moisture loss and it stimulates circulation."

DRINK MORE WATER

Nails and hands are one of the first places to show dehydration. "Skin is made up of 70 per cent water and nails are made up of about 25 per cent water. However, they're very porous and can lose this moisture easily, particularly if we're use polish and nail polish remover a lot," Bowhill-Hayes says. "Keep yourself hydrated inside and out. Drinking lots of water is crucial for hands and nails."

WEAR GLOVES

It may sound over-the-top but it's a good idea if you do a lot of driving, golfing, gardening or sailing. "I have clients who've taken to wearing driving gloves," Hoitink says. Soft leather gloves may look lovely but they can be impractical. Instead, look for a functional option with UV protection. The patented fabrics available contain activated carbon with UV protection of 50+ that blocks 98 per cent of UV rays.

WORDS: SIGOURNEY CANTELO; PHOTOGRAPHY: FOLIO-ID



(from left) Skin Doctors Younger Hands (\$34.95, skindoctors.com.au); Nivea Anti Age Q10 Plus Hand Cream (\$4.37, 1800 103 023); LonVitalite C10 Crystal Whitening & Moisturising Hand Mask (\$7.50, lonvitalite.com.au);

Clarins Age-Control Hand Lotion SPF15 (\$38, available from David Jones); Clinique Even Better Dark Spot Correcting Hand Cream SPF 15 (\$45, 1800 556 948); Sally Hansen Nail Rehab (\$16.95, 1800 812 663).

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