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The firmer

Finding your jawline isn't as taut as it used to be? Bring on the new skin treat! Going beyond collagen-plumping creams, you now need to look for products formulated to tighten or firm, says skincare expert and CVC beauty programme presenter Alison Young. Don't expect results overnight, but used regularly, they'll give you firmer-feeling skin in about four weeks.

TRY
 • **Skin Doctors Instant Facelift**, £29.99 Could this be a miracle in a bottle? Use this fast-acting serum after cleansing. It contains a protein molecule that has an instant tightening and lifting effect, and reduces the appearance of fine lines.
 • **No7 Lift & Luminate Day Cream**, £19.10 Formulated for 45+ skin, this SPF15 cream is packed with anti-ageing peptides and white lupin to boost moisture and improve firmness.

The precenter

Our skin faces a daily assault course with exposure to sunlight, pollution and stress, explains Alison. I believe the rate at which our skin notches up the years depends less on good genes and more on how we protect it. Be skin savvy and your complexion will thank you for it.

The best defence is to smooth on a UVA/UVB cream every day before applying make-up. Look for "old school" antioxidants, like vitamins A, C and E, but also watch out for hot new ingredient hesperidin, a molecule found in orange peel,

which is a powerful anti-ageing antioxidant," says Alison.

TRY
 • **Ultrasun Face30, £50** (for two), www.ecsk.com No fancy packaging, but this hard-working cream is the perfect base under make-up. As well as boosting moisture so skin feels plumper and looks more youthful, it has SPF30 to protect against future damage.
 • **Clarins Multi-Active Day, £37** A bit expensive, but fans of this day cream love the way it absorbs easily and leaves skin feeling firmer and hydrated. Recently reformulated, it also contains the antioxidant hesperidin.

Miracle age erasers

Want to look younger than you really are? Beauty expert Alison Young reveals how to practise a little deception...

The plumper

Hyaluronic acid is found naturally in the skin and helps retain moisture to give our skin its youthful bounce. But it reduces with age, so skin feels drier and less plump, says Alison. Used in the beauty industry as an injectable filler -- in Restylane,

The skin brightener

"We all want glistering skin as it helps us feel younger," says Alison. Exfoliating once or twice a week keeps skin glowing. But a common mistake is to pile on moisturiser, hoping it will make skin look glossy when, in fact, it sits on the surface and leaves skin visibly greasy. Instead, smooth on one of the new light oils or serums before applying moisturiser. These absorb quickly and are full of radance-boosting ingredients to give the skin a dewy, youthful appeal.

TRY
 • **Lulu's Time Bomb Youth Juice, £30**, www.lulusplace.co.uk The youth-boosting addition to Lulu's stop-the-clock range, this light combo of olive, avocado and jojoba replaces skin's natural oils lost with age. A small amount applied with fingertips is all you need.
 • **SkinVitals Brighten Everyday Illuminating Lotion, £13** (01622 859 898) This wonder booster revives lacklustre skin with its mix of skin-brightening, must-have vitamin C and white peony.

PRO TIP
 It's normal to feel a slight stinging when using a glycolic or salicylic acid-based product for the first time. But if you have sensitive skin, do a patch test 24 hours in advance to test for sensitivity.

The retoucher

"Blotchy skin tone ages you faster than wrinkles," says Alison. "Once we hit our 40s, dark areas of pigmentation on the face, backs of hands or chest can be a sign of too much sun, as well as hormonal changes. To look more youthful, choose dual-action products containing salicylic or glycolic acid (which exfoliate and help reduce discoloration) and natural ingredients, such as liquorice or grape, which boost skin's radiance."

TRY
 • **Clinique Even Better Skin Tone Corrector, £30** Contains a special yeast blend to brighten skin and reduce age spots and acne blemishes. Use after cleansing, toning and moisturising.
 • **Alpha-H White Gold Skin Brightening Solution, £31**, www.alpha-h.com A bestseller in Australia, now available in the UK, this overnight treatment contains glycolic acid, white mulberry, grape and hibiscus. It improves skin tone in four weeks.

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