



The best products to prevent and treat dry chapped lips in 2024

To help you prevent and treat dry chapped lips all winter, we asked board-certified dermatologists for their personal favorite lip balms, masks and chapsticks. We also included a handful of NBC Select-staff favorites.



EltaMD UV Lip Balm Broad-Spectrum SPF 36

Sun damage “can really tear the lips up,” says Navin Arora, M.D., a board-certified dermatologist and founder of Borealis Dermatology in New York. This is why he recommends EltaMD’s balm, which has broad-spectrum protection. “It’s also water resistant, so this is going to be good if you’re going to go on a ski trip or hikes in the winter,” he says. “It’s going to really protect you in all different environments.”



Blistex Repair and Protect

For chronic chapping, Arora likes Blistex’s medicated lip balms, especially the Repair and Protect formula. It has 45% petrolatum in addition to other occlusives including beeswax, shea butter and lanolin, which makes it “one of the better ones when you have thicker cracking or chronic dryness,” he says.

Vaseline Healing Jelly Original

All four dermatologists we spoke to recommend good, old-fashioned Vaseline. “It’s the OG product for chapped lips,” says Castilla. Pure petrolatum jelly is fragrance free, unlikely to cause irritation, and is an excellent occlusive, according to Castilla. “It’s going to hold in that moisture and is good to use morning or night,” she says.

Aquaphor Lip Repair

Another classic formula — and favorite of NBC Select updates editor Mili Godio — is Aquaphor. She swears by the simple formula which has chamomile essence to help soothe irritated lips, according to the brand. “It just gives the perfect amount of hydration and moisture, especially in the colder winter months,” says Godio.

Lanolips Golden Dry Skin Miracle Salve

“Dehydration and Accutane have crafted me into a lip balm connoisseur,” says NBC Select editorial director Lauren Swanson. “I carry this around in every bag I own and keep one in my desk.” Lanolips Golden Dry Skin Miracle Salve is heavy, “taffy-like goo” that delivers a serious dose of moisture and is best used as a lip mask, according to the brand. It has antioxidant vitamin E and antibacterial manuka honey to help heal any cracks. For easier application, “warm the balm on your fingertips a little to make application onto your lips smoother,” Swanson says.

Ghlee Lip Balm

While she prefers a thicker salve for stubborn dry lips, Swanson also likes Ghlee’s lightweight formula for its layering ability. “I like to use the Ghlee lip balm (which comes in great, tasty flavors) under a thicker product like Aquaphor or the Lanolips,” she says. “The Ghlee is so smooth without any stickiness.”

Vaseline Lip Therapy Cocoa Butter Stick

For those who prefer a chapstick-like formula, King likes the Vaseline Lip Therapy Cocoa Butter Stick. Its formula checks all the hydration boxes: glycerin (an emollient) helps smooth skin along with vitamin E (which works as both an emollient and a humectant) and all that moisture is sealed in with occlusives petrolatum, shea butter, cocoa butter and beeswax.

Cerave Healing Ointment

While not technically a lip balm, Cerave’s all-purpose healing balm is a favorite of both Mian and Castilla for helping chapped lips. Like Vaseline, it’s petrolatum based, but benefits from the addition of ceramides, which can help repair the skin barrier, according to Mian. “I like it because it is good for a lot of places — your lips, your cuticles, the corners of your eyes, the corners of the nose,” she says. For really chapped lips, she recommends using this at night layered over a lighter balm.

U Beauty The Plasma Lip Compound

For mild dryness with a bit of shine, Swanson is a fan of U Beauty’s Lip Compound. It has alpha hydroxy acids and salicylic acid to help exfoliate dry skin, ceramides to help repair, and shea butter and beeswax to lock in moisture. “I love the clear option, but I think the star of the show is the color varieties. They have a subtle tint, while still being moisturizing,” says Swanson.

Smith’s Rosebud Salve

“Rosebud’s salves make my lips feel smooth and hydrated, even when they’re at their driest,” says NBC Select production coordinator Kelsey Fredricks. The petrolatum-based formula is versatile; you can use it on lips, hands, or anywhere else you’re dealing with dry skin. “I apply it whenever I want a little sheen but don’t want to reach for a gloss or matte lip product,” says Fredricks.

Charlotte Tilbury’s Magic Lip Oil Crystal Elixir

For a luxury option, King likes Charlotte Tilbury’s Magic Lip Oil Crystal Elixir. Unlike some of the more intentionally simple formulas on this list, the Magic Lip Oil has a stacked ingredient list: a mix of hydrating humectants and emollients that help repair damaged skin barriers, says King. She particularly appreciates the addition of shea oil, which has emollient and occlusive properties to help lock moisture in. Plus, it has a fun shimmer.

Colorescience Sunforgettable Total Protection Color Balm SPF 50

Who says chapped lips have to be boring? For a dash of color King recommends Colorescience’s Sunforgettable Total Protection Color Balm SPF 50, which comes in six shades: Blush, Berry, Bronze, Pink Sky, Violet Haze, and Golden Hour. In addition to the sweep of color this stick-based balm provides protection against UVA and UVB rays and blue light, which can further damage lips. The formula has antioxidants to protect against free radicals and has squalene to provide moisture, says King.

La Roche Posay Cicaplast Lip Hydration Restore Lip Balm

It’s no surprise that dermatologist-loved brand La Roche Posay makes a lip balm favored by experts. Castilla particularly likes the nonshiny finish of this formula. “It’s not as greasy as Vaseline but it’s still hydrating,” she says. “It’s more creamy and ends up a matte finish once you rub it in.” It’s perfect for those who don’t want to look like they’re wearing anything.

Avène Cicalfate+ Lips Restorative Lip Balm

For those who can’t imagine going a day without lipstick, Castilla recommends using this as a primer. “It rubs in clear and it works well if you’re going to put a lipstick over it,” says Castilla. It’s also fragrance-free making it a good choice for ultra-sensitive lips.