

How to
flaunt
(or fake!)
your

freckles

I've had freckles for as long as I can remember—but not the kind that creep out over the summer, sprinkling themselves shyly across your nose and cheeks. I have the kind that last all year, cover me from head to toe and multiply the moment I step into the sun.

When I was little, my friends would yell, “Hey, Freckles!” across the playground. Some kids called me “Dalmatian” or pointed out my “chickenpox.” I'd laugh along with them, pretending that none of it bothered me—because really, what else could I do?

Insecurity snuck in: I was different...but I wasn't sure how to deal with it. If I mentioned my struggle with accepting my skin, the popular “embrace your uniqueness!” mantra was often offered up in return.

But society was sending a much different message. The celebs on my feed flaunted porcelain skin. Sponsored ads showcased creams promising to fade “imperfections.” My favorite shows starred gorgeous girls with flawless faces (and it was the little kids they babysat who sported the quirky-cute freckles). Selfie apps—promising to make you look your best—blurred any trace of that uniqueness off my face.

Everything was telling me that I needed to blend in—so I turned to makeup. I tried every full-coverage foundation, spackled on concealer and then looked to YouTube for help. My searches to “cover freckles” yielded tons of how-to's for hiding zits and blemishes.

So I treated my skin's spots like they were thousands of mini flaws and learned techniques to cover each and every one. The result? My face was hidden behind a mask of makeup.

But one day, things just changed. When I started high school, my new guidance counselor asked me to think of something I love about my least favorite part of myself. As I looked at my skin from a completely different angle—really staring at it, trying to embrace the beauty—I began to find patterns and shapes in my freckles that I'd never noticed before: I have a perfectly straight line of freckles on my knee, a half-circle on my collarbone and a squiggly line on my foot.

My freckles are actually pretty cool, I thought to myself. And it was that teeny, tiny acknowledgment that completely altered my attitude. I stopped editing my pictures, I stopped caking on foundation and I embraced a new relationship with my skin. I focused on how to protect it (sunscreen became my best friend) and highlight it, not hide it.

And when that little bit of confidence helped me treat my freckles differently, the way everyone else viewed them changed, too. “Your freckles look so cute today,” my friends started saying. Yep, you bet they do.

— Caitlin Moynihan

TUTORIAL

Flaunt 'em

Want to let your freck flag fly? Celeb beauty expert Tomy Rivero shares his secret technique for making spots pop.

Step 1



Step 2



Step 3



Step 4



GO PRIME TIME

“Prepping your skin is key,” says Rivero. Try a luminous-finish primer like e.l.f. Retro Paradise Primer Glow Oil (\$10, elfcosmetics.com) to give your skin a boost *without* the need for foundation that'll cover up your freckles.

HIDE AND SEEK

Grab a medium- to full-coverage concealer for Rivero's spot technique: Use a small concealer brush to cover any blemishes, then dab a couple dots along the nostrils (where almost everyone has redness) and blend. Try Milk Makeup Flex Concealer (\$28, milkmakeup.com).

WIN THE BRONZE

Spotted sweeties should actually skip the bronzer—terra cotta tones can blend freckles together. Instead, snag a powder foundation that's one or two shades darker than your natural base tone. We love BareMinerals Original Loose Powder Foundation SPF 15 (\$32, bareminerals.com).

CRUSH ON BLUSH

“Girls with freckles carry color beautifully,” shares Rivero, who says that coral tones look phenomenal whether you have light or dark skin. “It brings out the brown in your spots, making skin look even and healthy.” Dip a fluffy brush into a hot hue like Juvia's Place Bella Blush (\$10, juviasplace.com), tap off any excess, then swipe the shade onto the apples of your cheeks and toward the top of your cheekbone, stopping just before the temple. Perfect!

FAKE A FRECKLE FILTER

No spots? No problem. Here's how to dupe sweet speckles.



“Finally, the faux freckle trend is back!” says makeup pro Lisa Aharon. Her go-to product? Freck OG (\$22, freckbeauty.com). “Start on the high points of your cheeks and the bridge of the nose, lightly dotting on a few freckles. Then, tap them out with your fingertip,” she explains. The stamping technique will help diffuse the spots for the most natural finish. Gently top cheeks with a cream blush or bronzer, and you'll look like you just left the beach.