

A Guide To Never Getting Chapped Lips Again



Like your soul, your lips take a battering from cold, cruel winter. They chap, flake, burn, and can feel drier than a week-old baguette. This is partly because they don't have sweat glands, just a small number of oil-producing glands, according to Dr. Heidi Waldorf, the director of laser and cosmetic dermatology at the Mount Sinai Hospital.

Related: [*The Ultimate Guide to Winter Skin Care*](#)

But though chapped lips are annoying, they're also one of the easiest beauty problems to solve. Read on for tips from dermatologists about how to prevent and treat chapped lips, and for our recommendations of lip balms that will make your mouth feel like it's summer all year round.

Tip No. 1: Don't be a mouth-breather. Not only is it annoying to anyone you cuddle with, but it can also give you flaky lips. Moisture evaporates faster from your lips when you breathe in and out with your mouth because of the hot air you're expelling.

Tip No. 3: Don't do the Kylie Jenner Lip Challenge. Topical enhancers like lip "venoms" work by dilating blood vessels, which swell the lips but also dry them out. Also avoid any long-wear lipsticks that include alcohol. As [you've learned from American Psycho](#), alcohol dries out your skin, including your lips.

Tip No. 4: Drinking water won't help you. Unless you are very, very dehydrated, your dry lips have nothing to do with how much you're drinking. They're more likely to be dry for the reasons above. "For your lips to be dry, it would have to come from days of not drinking water. Not because you went to hot yoga," says cosmetic dermatologist [Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank](#).

Tip No. 5: Get a humidifier. It doesn't only help your skin but your nose, throat, and lips, too.

Tip No. 6: Don't forget to apply lip balm after eating and drinking water. "You have to reapply it regularly after eat and drinking," says Dr. Waldorf. Water left on the lips from food or drink can also evaporate, adding to dryness.

Tip No. 7: Look for lip balms that seal in moisture and hydrate. In moisturizer terms, you want a lip balm that is both humectant, which draws in moisture, and occlusive, which seals in moisture, Dr. Bowe explains. Waxes and petroleum jellies are occlusive, while shea butter is a humectant. If your lips are cracked, Dr. Waldorf suggests avoiding balm that contains menthol or camphor, as those can sting.



[Kiehl's Lip Balm No. 1, \\$7 at Saks](#)

This is a nice, semi-splurgey lip balm you could ask your grandma for as a gift without feeling bad that she's wasting her Social Security money on you. It's the OG of luxury lip balms, back when the only options came from a drugstore or the Gap. Years later, it still holds up, feeling more like a lip oil than a balm, with a blend of moisturizing ingredients like squalane and petroleum. Some complain about its beeswax-y scent, but I like that it smells so no-nonsense.



[Homeoplasmine](#), \$18.93 at Amazon

Since I'm not fluent in French, I don't know exactly what's in this French drugstore favorite, but I do know that it solves chapped everything -- chapped lips, the cracks you sometimes get on the side of your lips from winter, dry cuticles, and even chapped nipples (the original purpose of this non-sticky balm was for nursing mothers). It's a multipurpose reliever that earns its [MVP status backstage at Fashion Week](#).



[Dior Addict Lip Glow](#), \$33 at Saks

If your natural lip color can only be found on a true-crime show, this lip balm is for you. Although the balm is a light pink, it morphs on your lips to create an individual color using what Dior calls "Color Reviver Technology." Some people get a rosy shade, some get more of a pastel pink, but the color is always naturally flushed. A heavy dose of mango butter keeps your lips feeling moisturized but not overly weighed down with gunk.



[Chanel Hydra Beauty Nourishing Lip Balm](#), \$50 at Saks

Packaged in a hefty branded tub, this is the only lip balm to go along with your [fancy Chanel cotton face wipes](#). It's scented in Chanel's signature camellia and uses a heavy dose of the oil to moisturize. But it's not just pretty -- the formula is a nice balance between being too heavy or too light, gliding over any cracks and dryness to create a moisturizing base that doesn't rub off with drinks.



[Shiseido Benefiance Full Correction Lip Treatment](#), \$36 at Macy's

This lip oil feels like a lip-balm Snuggie, smothering your lips in moisture. Since it's a little thicker in texture than a traditional balm, it fills in cracks so that your lips no longer double as sandpaper. The oil also acts as a nice barrier to that windchill of 6 degrees (or as Chicagoans call it, that warm breeze) you're currently feeling outside.



Sisley ComfortExtreme Nutritive Lip Balm, \$74 at Saks

Think about precisely whom you'll kiss with this lip balm on. Is that person worth it? Because while the mix of sunflower oils and shea butter feels like a cashmere blanket of moisture on your lips, the price of this lip balm may make you more discriminating about who you smack lips with.



La Mer the Lip Balm, \$55 at Saks

Does anyone need a La Mer lip balm? I'm sorry to report that this feels really, really good. It may cost more than most people's foundations, but it feels great, covering your lips with a silky sheen of moisture that lasts for hours. The main ingredient is petrolatum, along with a mix of other oils including sesame and eucalyptus, as well as seaweed extracts.



Lancôme Absolue Precious Cells Nourishing Lip Balm, \$50 at Saks

This lip oil is like if your fanciest face oil got extended to your lips. Can lips look glow-y? If so, this one does the trick with a mix of moisturizing acacia honey, beeswax, and rosehip seed oil. It also contains Vitamin E, which is supposed to help with anti-aging, but honestly, who has time to worry about lip wrinkles?



Clark's Botanical Ultra Rich Lip Balm, \$19 at Amazon

This balm feels more like a salve than a paste or balm. It has a viscous texture but is based on shea butter, not formulated with petrolatum. While the texture is unusual, it's a savior when your lips are so dry that it hurts to put anything on them.



[Grown Alchemist Lip Balm Watermelon and Vanilla, \\$23 at Shen Beauty](#)

This is probably Instagram's best-loved lip balm, since its sleek Impact font and black-and-white packaging make it popular among people who live for prop-designing scenes against marble countertops. Compared to most lip balms, it has a stickier lip-gloss feeling that protects the lips from frigid winds (though also has a tendency to trap stray hairs). And its watermelon-and-vanilla fragrance makes it smell like a specialty cocktail from a fancy speakeasy.