

I Added Lavender Essential Oil to My Moisturizer for the Best Skin of My Life

In the case of [wellness trends](#), I am completely guilty of bandwagoning jade rolling, microneedling, and oil-pulling — so it should come as no surprise that [essential oils](#) are my current vice. I diffuse them; I roll them; I bathe in them; I even add them to my favorite unscented skincare products, which just so happens to be one of the best things I've ever done for my skin.

I first discovered essential oils almost two years ago. At the time, they were popular in [aromatherapy](#) (for obvious reasons) and DIY beauty products but had yet to hit the mainstream. To clean up my skincare routine — and solve some mysterious breakouts (yay mid-twenties!) — I picked up Adina Grigore's book, *Just The Essentials*, as my monthly subway read. Little did I know, a world of tiny, amber-colored bottles with invigorating scents — and the best skin of my life — awaited me.

After tearing through the pages in just one week, I knew I needed to try essential oils. There was just one small problem: I didn't know where to start. Grigore's book offered me some incredible insight, but you can't ask a book for further help. Fortunately, I know a guy. My friend Google told me to buy a diffuser and add a few drops of lavender for a spa-like experience. I like spas — and I definitely liked the idea of my small, New York City apartment smelling like one — so I immediately hit up Amazon Prime (as one does). Fast forward a year later, and I was about to make a cross-country move from New York City to Los Angeles. I was stressed AF. To calm my nerves, I upped the ante and — GASP — incorporated essential oils into my routine in a much different way. Instead of strictly diffusing, I tried adding one drop of lavender to my favorite unscented face lotion (hello [Glossier Priming Moisturizer](#)). I was desperate to calm my senses — and get some much-needed sleep — so I didn't even think about the impact lavender would have on my skin.

As my moving date got closer, I became more obsessed with adding lavender to my moisturizer. The scent helped me sleep better at night and made me feel like I was starting each day with a spa-worthy facial. Then one morning I looked in the mirror and saw something I hadn't noticed before: My skin was SO clear. I'm not talking breakout-free (though it was also that), my complexion had an undeniable crystal-clear glow akin to that of Disney Princesses. After racking my brain for a cause, it dawned on me: The only thing I had changed about my skincare routine was adding lavender essential oil to my moisturizer.

Was lavender essential oil responsible for my clear skin? What kind of witchcraft was this? I hit up my friend Google again — and then a real dermatologist because I take

investigative journalism (and my skin) *very seriously* — and confirmed that lavender was probably the reason my skin looked hella good. “Lavender has exceptional anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties,” [Debra Jaliman](#), NY-based dermatologist, told me. “It helps to brighten the skin [and] treats acne by soothing and nourishing the skin.” After learning that lavender can brighten the complexion, I wanted to know more. I’ve used other skin-brightening products before, but nothing made my skin look as healthy or glowy as lavender. “Lavender is known to promote antioxidants which help repair the skin,” [Melissa Doft](#), NYC-based plastic surgeon told me. This was all great news. However, I had one concern. In her book, Grigore talked a lot about mixing essential oils with a certain ratio of carrier oil (or, in my case, moisturizer). Apparently, adding too much essential oil can cause irritation and other mishaps. Was my newfound method safe? Luckily, Jaliman confirmed that one drop of lavender in a dime-sized dollop of moisturizer was totally cool. “One part lavender and four parts moisturizer is recommended,” she advised.

Lavender isn’t the only essential oil with skincare benefits. According to Jaliman, “You can mix almost any essential oil into your favorite [unscented] moisturizer.” Lavender oil is a well-rounded option because it can help combat acne-causing bacteria. “It soothes and heals skin issues, so it’s [also] good for combination skin,” she added. “Patchouli oil has anti-inflammatory properties [and] is good for skin that tends to be both dry and oily.” For those with skin on the normal side of the spectrum — AKA neither oily nor dry — you could use almost any essential oil. Jaliman recommends starting with either lavender, peppermint, orange, or tea tree.

I have yet to stray from my beloved lavender essential oil but am oh-so-curious about how some of the others work.