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**GOLDEN
RULE**

“ALWAYS HAVE
A TRIAL FIRST
AND GO FOR THE
LIGHTEST OPTION
FOR YOUR SKIN”

says James Harknett



James Harknett, spray tan expert

TANNING

Fake tans have had a bad press thanks to over-exuberant celebs who prefer satsuma to sun-kissed, but a subtle glow can give you a big confidence boost

The secret to bronzing success is to have a trial in advance," says tan aficionado James Harknett, either by experimenting at home or at a professional salon.

"No bride wants to look back at her wedding photos and see an obvious deep spray-tan against an ivory dress," he says. "Nowadays there's a finish to complement all skin tones but it's important to discuss the shade of the dress, too. During the first consultation, I always ask brides how much skin will be showing, and what shade of dress they're wearing – white or ivory." Whether you choose the professional spray tan route or prefer to buff up your home bronzing skills, the key to success is patience and preparation.

LEE'S BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LOOKING TAN-TASTIC

TIME IT RIGHT Have your treatment 48 hours before the wedding. The Sienna X Touche De Soleil professional spray solution, £20, is a must. It settles beautifully with all skin tones but is a classic finish for fair heads or brides who just want to glow on their big day. I recommend you have your tan applied two days before the wedding. That way the three-shower effect (which reveals the most flattering tone, three showers after your colour has been applied) is perfect at balancing the colour on the skin and there's no chance of any rubbing off on your dress.

PREP YOUR SKIN Make sure any shaving or waxing is done at least 24 hours before application to enable the pores to close. If you're worried about open pores on the face, Clarins Gentle Exfoliator Brightening Toner, £25, is an effective and gentle exfoliant that cleans and seals the pores, too.

EXFOLIATE Slough away any older self-tan and the remnants of any oil-based products. A hot soak and salt scrub is just the trick, then avoid using any body lotion to keep the skin like a clear canvas so the tan can cling evenly.

AVOID STREAKS Always clean your teeth before self-tanning to avoid water or toothpaste reacting with tan at the side of your mouth. Remember, you don't want to get your tan wet for at least eight hours after you've applied it.



DIY TIPS TO GLOWING IT ALONE

Seven ways to get a gorgeous glow

- 1 Complete all your prepping so skin is smooth, polished and fuzz-free (see left).
- 2 Tie your hair back and apply a little Elizabeth Arden Eight Hour Cream, £25, or Vaseline, carefully over the eyebrows. Brides with fair hair should also apply a little around the hairline to avoid staining.
- 3 The Garnier Ambre Solaire Dry Face Mist, £5.66, is perfect for that sun-kissed glow and can be applied in seconds. It leaves a dewy gleam on the skin and is the perfect base for your make-up.
- 4 When it comes to tanning the body, many brides feel more confident by building up the colour gently. Famous Dave's Gradual 10, £15.99, builds up to a subtle yet nut-like brown and is easy to apply.
- 5 For gradual tanning take your time in front of the bathroom mirror and work methodically in sections.
- 6 When it comes to tanning your feet, pour a small drop of tan into the palm of your hand, then dip the tip of a fluffy make-up brush into the tan before lightly brushing over heels and ankles, using small circular motions. This stops the colour clinging too deep to these problematic areas.
- 7 If you're left with unwanted signs of tan on tricky spots like the palms, wrists or heels, use a little olive oil on a cotton pad to help the colour fade and finish with a little salt scrub. Laura Mercier's Crème de Pistache Scrub, £36, not only does the trick but smells sublime, too.

