

# YOU GLOW, GIRL!

Avoid a tan faux-pas on your big day with our guide to achieving a flawless, radiant look

Every bride wants to look as glowing on the outside as she feels on the inside. And what's the safest and most effective way to achieve a perfectly sun-kissed complexion? From a bottle, of course. With the fake tan industry worth an estimated £75 million in the UK alone, this is one beauty trend that's here to stay.

"For many, it's about enhancing features; eyes seem brighter, teeth look whiter, the cheeks more pronounced, the lips pinker and skin appears more toned," explains tanning expert to the stars, James Harknett ([www.jamesharknett.co.uk](http://www.jamesharknett.co.uk)). Although fairer A-listers such as Nicole Kidman and Cate Blanchett are flying the flag for pale and interesting, the Californian complexions of Jennifer Aniston and Blake Lively are sought after this summer.

## A TREND IS BORN

It's Coco Chanel who is widely credited with starting the trend for tanned skin in 1923, when the French designer accidentally caught the sun while sailing aboard a yacht to Cannes. When she returned from the Riviera a golden brown hue, a fad was born. As beauty pharmaceuticals picked up on the consumer demand, sunless tanning products were developed. Unfortunately, the first generation of sunless products caused more of an orange glow than golden brown, giving fake tan the long-standing reputation of looking unrealistic and obvious. However, celebrity tanner Jimmy Coco ([www.jimmycococo.com](http://www.jimmycococo.com)) says: "It's surprising to see how much the sunless tanning industry has grown over the last 40 years. The stigma associated with fake tan has faded and people are utilising regular tanning products in their everyday skincare routines." The 1990s saw a new batch of products laden with additives that promised to give

even the palest complexions an olive finish, but the alcohol-infused ingredients caused streaking and skin outbreaks. Thankfully, it was the country's leading tanning brand which saved the day: "Back in the mid-to-late '90s, St Tropez took a phenomenal step in revolutionising the self-tan industry," says James. "The colour guide in the tan made it impossible to miss areas on the skin and the vegetable extract ingredients were natural and nourishing. From that moment, self-tanning became part of beauty regimes, particularly for brides-to-be."

With a host of other brands following suit, there is an overwhelming range of products available, which can often leave us confused as to which is the best. "Premium brands such as Sienna X and Xen Tan have disguised the biscuit-like fragrance with a subtle aroma. It derives from a sugar cane plant and works with the proteins on the surface of the skin," explains James.

## THE GOLDEN RULES

However, if your skintone is more *Twilight* than *TOWIE*, there is a way to achieve a naturally bronzed finish which will leave you looking like you've spent a weekend in St Tropez (that's St Tropez, France). Jules Heptonstall, finishing expert at St Tropez ([www.st-tropez.com](http://www.st-tropez.com)) says: "When tanning for your wedding, it's important to think of the bigger picture. If you're wearing white or cream, don't opt for a super-dark tan. Keep it light and natural for the big day." So how can you achieve the perfect colouring? Jimmy suggests testing different shades on an area of skin two weeks before the big day: "Wait six hours for your tan to develop and whichever shade develops most natural to your skin tone is the best shade for you," he advises.



## Faking it

Tanning expert James Read ([www.jamesreadtan.com](http://www.jamesreadtan.com)) gives his tips for achieving a flawless glow:

- 1 Always do a test at least a month before the big day to see how the tan takes to your skin. Take a picture with your mobile phone to see how it looks in photographs.
- 2 Tan two days before your wedding day and exfoliate 48 hours prior to that. Have your facial a week before your wedding, and wax and shave the day before.
- 3 Moisturise daily to ensure your tan lasts as long as possible.
- 4 On the day of the wedding, rub talcum powder around the tight parts of your dress, this will stop the tan from rubbing on these areas.
- 5 Try not to scrub your hands too much for around eight hours after tanning as you don't want both white hands and brown arms.

## The best five-star tanning treatments

### FOR DAINTY DOLLS

**Elemis Total Glow at The Athenaeum Hotel, Mayfair**

A top-to-toe treatment which includes a full-body massage, scrub to prepare the skin and nourishing oils applied to the body and face. After the exfoliation, the Elemis Glow Sun treatment is massaged in to reveal a gentle tan just a couple of hours later. Finished off with a luxury pedicure, you're ready to go! From £60-£100 based on two people sharing the experience. Visit [www.athenaeumhotel.com](http://www.athenaeumhotel.com).

### FOR ENGLISH ROSES

**James Harknett's Bespoke Spray Tan at The W Hotel, Leicester Square**

After a brief consultation about your lifestyle and skin needs, James selects the products that perfectly match your skintone. After your spell in the spray booth, the tan dries almost instantly so there's no sticky residue, giving an incredibly realistic sun-kissed result. Price on request, call 020 7758 1071 or visit [www.jamesharknett.co.uk](http://www.jamesharknett.co.uk).

### FOR GOLDEN GIRLS

**St Tropez Custom Contoured Tan at Selfridges**

Ideal for those looking for a more in-depth colour, this treatment starts with a base of St Tropez Dark Self Tan Mist which is applied in layers to sculpt, tone and hide imperfections. The St Tropez Shimmer Stick is then buffed into the contours of the collarbone, shoulders and limbs to provide the perfect highlighting finish. From £25, call 0800 138 7425 or visit [www.selfridges.com](http://www.selfridges.com).

### FOR MOCHA MADEMOISELLES

**Fake Bake Airbrush Tan, available nationwide**

Fake Bake's very own 'tanalyst' builds colour in light layers by spraying a fine mist in a booth for 15 minutes. It dries straight away and gives a gorgeous glow, perfect for special occasions or pre-holiday prep. From £25, call 0844 856 5758 or visit [www.fakebake.co.uk](http://www.fakebake.co.uk).

## Bridal tanning traumas

The experts answer your big-day worries to ensure you never have a tanning tragedy again...

**Q When I had my fitting, my tan rubbed off onto the inside of the dress. How can I stop this happening again?**

"Have your tan at least two days before. That way you are guaranteed there will be no transfer onto your dress," says Jules. "In my opinion, a spray tan's optimum colour is on day two – so if you're getting married on a Saturday, have your tan on the Thursday."

**Q How do I get my hands right for the all-important ring shots?**

"Be sure to work-in the excess," says James Read. "Then dab moisturiser on a make-up brush and work into your knuckles, on your toes and fingers to avoid an orange build-up in the creases."

**Q Help! I've woken up with awful streaks down my arm!**

"Take a long hot bath, the heat will help lift the tan, and lightly buff the area with a mitt," James Harknett advises. "Then mix a little bicarbonate of soda with lemon juice and rub over the area, and use an oily moisturiser to break down the colour. If all else fails, a little tan around the area will help it blend in."

Can't make it to a salon? Try some at-home tanning treatments with our pick of the six best...

