

## Why Top Facialists Are Swapping Out Body Cream for Dry Oil in the Summer



Photographed by Mikael Jansson, *Vogue*, May 2009



When Los Angeles facialist Joomee Song needs to prep clients quickly for a summertime event—when baring tawny, healthy skin is a must—she relies on a super-effective product in her kit: dry body oil. “It absorbs into skin instantly and doesn’t leave a sticky residue,” she says of the glow-enhancing elixir often found in the European pharmacies that now has a cult following among skin gurus on U.S. coasts.

Unlike traditional body oils that often sit on the skin’s surface and leave a slippery feel, dry oils have a matte finish, sink in quickly—in seconds, not minutes—and lock in hydration so your “skin appears to have a sheer crystal layer on top,” enthuses Song, who tends to the radiant bodies of [Lady Gaga](#) and model-artist Lilliya Scarlett. But finding these under-the-radar picks often requires a bit of expert knowledge. Similar to beauty terms like “natural” and “clean,” there is “no exact definition for what makes a dry oil,” says cosmetic chemist Stephen Alain Ko.

So, how to find one? Scan the ingredient list: dry oils contains higher percentages of low-viscosity oils—such as grape seed, argan, and rose hip—which have a molecular structure that gives them a lightweight feel. “Wet” oils, by contrast, tend to feature coconut, jojoba, sweet almond, and other oils that linger on the skin longer and have a richer texture (not a bad thing in the depths of winter). Super-facialist [Joanna Czech](#) likens dry oils to body

serums (many are labeled as such), and calls them “a great quick fix for dehydrated skin.” Plus, she adds, “you can apply to legs, arms, and décolleté without worrying about staining clothing.”

Some of the latest formulas now have supercharged ingredients for extra benefits, too. OLVERUM Dry Body Oil, for example, combines smoothing poppy seed and collagen-boosting algae, and is a favorite of Song, Czech, and New York facialist Jordana Mattioli, who says it “dries almost instantly when running out the door.” She’s also partial to Kypris’s “super-glowy” sunflower seed–infused Body Elixir: Inflorescence, and Mun Ayour Body Toning Serum with revitalizing prickly pear seed oil, which Mattioli glides over legs “to help tighten and even out skin.”

As for the best application method, Song recommends first dry brushing limbs “to stimulate the lymphatic drainage system and activate blood flow” and help the ingredients penetrate deeply. For a cooling sensation that reduces puffiness, put your dry oil in the fridge for a few hours (but not so long that the oils harden, says Mattioli). Then, apply directly to damp skin (to seal in hydration) using gentle, sweeping strokes—there’s no need to spread between your palms or intensely massage in, since dry oils have less slip and vanish into skin fast.

If you’re heading out in the sun, Ko says to look for a dry oil formula with built-in SPF. If it’s after sundown? Just “smooth on and go,” advises Song. Here, the best dry oils that disappear into skin, leaving nothing behind but a summer glow.



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OLVERUM Dry Body Oil, \$66, [joannaczech.com](http://joannaczech.com)

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