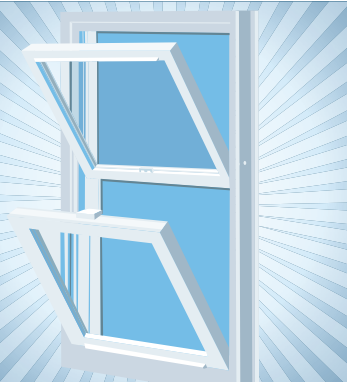


Opening the Windows of Curiosity

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WORLD OF WONDER

Exploring the realms of history, science, nature and technology

COSMETICS

People have been applying creams, lotions, scents and paints to their bodies since the rise of civilization. Throughout history, cosmetics have played a role in religion, social hierarchy and personal expression. Today, cosmetics, toiletries and personal care products are a multibillion-dollar industry, one that continues to grow and is rarely impacted by sluggish economies.



In a word

The word **cosmetic** is derived from the Latin word “cosmetae.” A cosmetae was an enslaved Roman responsible for the appearance of their master or mistress.

Ancient history

The ancient Egyptians developed cosmetics similar to those we use today. Facial makeups, creams and body oils were considered sacred and used as a way to honor the gods. Cosmetics were fashion statements and also served as health and hygiene aids. Used by both men and women, some creams and oils protected the skin from the sun and wind, while scented oils masked body odor.

Ancient Greek women whitened their complexions with chalk or lead-based powders and used crushed berries as a cheek rouge. They colored their lips with a mixture of red ochre clays combined with red iron. Ancient Olympic athletes used a mixture of sand and oil to protect their skin from the sun.

Ancient Chinese and Japanese upper-class citizens used rice powder to achieve a light complexion. Eyebrows were plucked or shaved off, and teeth were sometimes painted gold or black.

In ancient Rome, people applied sheep fat and blood on their fingernails as a polish. Mud and steam baths were all the rage. Some Roman men dyed their hair blond.

In Elizabethan England, wealthy women dyed their hair red and applied egg whites or white lead paint to their faces in order to achieve a pale complexion.

In the 1800s, cosmetics fell out of fashion when Queen Victoria of England declared makeup to be vulgar.

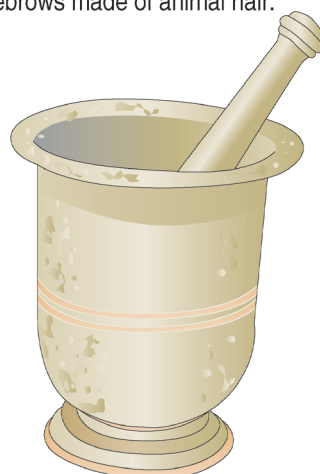
The pale complexion went out of fashion in the 1920s, and tanned skin gained popularity.



Kohl was a black powder used as an eyeliner. It was made of crushed antimony, burnt almonds, lead, oxidized copper, ochre, ash and malachite.



Ancient Greek women applied heavy eyebrows made of animal hair.



Ancient cosmetics often contained poisonous ingredients. Arsenic, lead and mercury have all been used to achieve a pale appearance.

Mehndi is an art form that applies complex designs onto the hands and feet.



Science & beauty

Plants, oils, minerals and all other manner of materials have been used to make cosmetics. Today, cosmetic science is the study of how raw materials and mixtures affect skin, hair, lips and nails. From the 1920s to the 1940s, chemists and cosmetologists developed a variety of new cosmetics. Pharmacies and drugstores have traditionally sold these personal hygiene and beauty products.

Modern cosmetics companies create personal care products with natural, herbal and chemical materials.



1938 cosmetic cream ad

Big business

The largest cosmetic company in the world today is L'Oreal. They started their business in 1909, and are currently owned by the founder's granddaughter Françoise Bettencourt and the Swiss food company Nestlé.

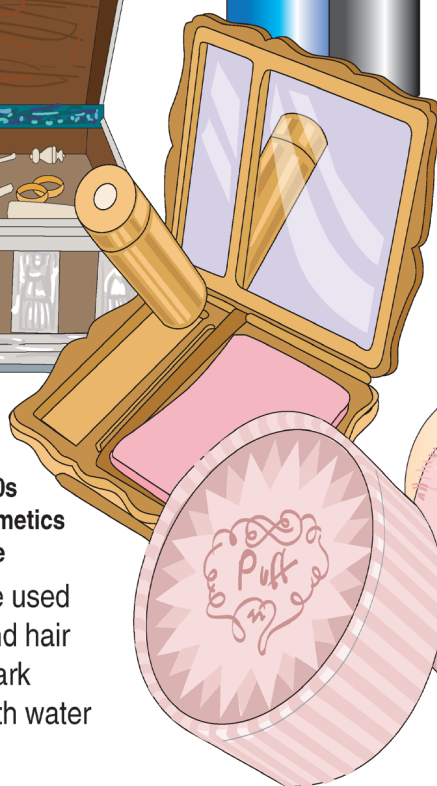


Ancient Roman cosmetics case

Henna

Henna is a natural dye used for body decoration and hair coloring. Mixing this dark orange-red powder with water forms a paste.

1950s cosmetics case



Lipstick

The ancient Sumerians applied crushed gemstones to their lips, but the word “lipstick” did not come into use until 1880. The Sears Roebuck catalog first offered rouge for lips and cheeks in the 1890s. Dark red has been one of the top lipstick colors for the past 200 years.

Nail polish

The Chinese began coloring their fingernails about 5,000 years ago. Different colors indicated social class.

Nail polish and coloring as we know them became popular in Europe and North America in the 1920s and 1930s. Revlon introduced the first nail polish brand in 1932 when they released a cream color.

Mascara

Mascara is used to thicken and lengthen the eyelashes. The ancient Egyptians blended kohl with crocodile dung, water and honey to make mascara. Modern mascara is made with water, waxes, thickeners and a variety of pigments.

Foundations

Makeup bases, or **foundations**, were developed to cover up skin imperfections. Women throughout the centuries have used a variety of homemade recipes.

Powders

Face powder is one of the oldest cosmetics. In the 1800s, zinc oxide replaced the potentially deadly mixture of lead and copper facial powders. Originally sold in loose form, the first pressed compact powder was introduced in 1923.

Fluffy puffs and brushes are used to apply dry powders to help keep makeup in place.

SOURCES: World Book Encyclopedia, World Book Inc.; <https://en.wikipedia.org>; <https://www.britannica.com>; <http://www.cosmeticsinfo.org>; <http://makeupmuseum.org>; <http://glamourdaze.com>; <http://www.historyofcosmetics.net>

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