

Health

SHOCK REPORT

Is your make-up bag a

HEALTH HAZARD?

Can't bear to part with your last smidge of lippy or your dried-up mascara? Maybe it's time for a clear-out. A new study has revealed that 90 per cent of women keep make-up past its use-by date and this can cause rashes, infections, weepy eyes and spots. So when should you throw it out?

'If you can't remember when you bought it, or if it smells funny, it's no good,' says NARS make-up artist Sarantis Tsimilimis. **'There's definitely a shelf life for cosmetics.'** And **it's not as long as you think...**



Britney Spears



Victoria Beckham



Amy Winehouse



If it's strewn with old mascaras, blunt lippies and manky brushes, it might be. Scientists say your faves could make you ill

1 Lipstick and lip gloss

A good lipstick is hard to part with, but if you've had it for two years, it has to go. That goes for old lippies that you haven't opened yet, too. 'Lipsticks are fairly long-lasting because of the way the pigment and fat are formatted,' says Sarah Brock, artistic director of make-up for

Daniel Sandler. 'But if kept for too long they can cause an allergic reaction and dry out your lips. And if you share them, you risk an infection. In particular, you increase the chances of getting herpes simplex infections, which can lead to nasty cold sores.'

If you share make-up with friends, take a tip from Elle Macpherson's make-up artist Lee Pycroft: give them a cotton bud to apply it with. 'This will help to avoid transferring germs,' she says.

SHELF LIFE
Lipstick 2 years
Lip gloss 18 months

2 Blusher and bronzer

'Powder blushers and bronzers generally last up to two years, after which time they start to dry out and develop a slippery texture which is caused by mixing with natural oils on the skin,' explains Sarah Brock, 'and that means spotty, pimply cheeks. It's also important to wash your brushes at least once a week.'

Clinique has a brush-cleaning solution (Makeup Brush Cleanser, £11, clinique.co.uk), but you can also use a mild shampoo to clean your brushes. What about those cream blushers and bronzers? 'These have a shorter shelf life - up to 18 months - because they contain more emulsions, which are less stable and break down over time,' says Sarah.

SHELF LIFE
Cream bronzer/ blush 18 months
Powder bronzer/ blush 2 years

3 Eye make-up

'Despite the fact that it's the fastest to expire, mascara is one of the worst offenders in terms of being kept too long,' says Sarah Brock, who advises that it should be binned after four months to avoid eye infections and watery eyes. Liquid eyeliner fares slightly better. 'They can last up to six months,' she says.

Powder eyeshadow and eye pencils can be kept longer - up to three years, unless in that time you've had an eye infection. 'If that's the case, bin everything that touched your eyes during the infection to avoid getting another,' says make-up artist Kay Montano, who works with Drew Barrymore. 'Never share eye make-up,' she warns. 'Tear ducts are bursting with viruses such as colds and flu.'

SHELF LIFE
Mascara 4 months
Eye pencil if sharpened, up to 3 years
Eyeshadow Up to 3 years
Liquid eyeliner 6 months

4 Foundation and powder

If you haven't changed your foundation or concealer in the past 12 months, chances are it's out of date. 'Oil-free foundations last for around a year,' explains Sarah Brock. 'Cream, concealer and moisturising or compact foundation last longer. After that, the product

will settle or separate and cause spotty or dry skin.'

Keep your applicators clean and hygienic too and your complexion will thank you for it. 'It's amazing how many people use a sponge for foundation, but never wash it,' says Kay. 'When you use it for touch-ups your skin isn't even clean, so you pick up even more bacteria to spread around your face, which means more spots.'

Kay advises regularly washing your applicator with soap and water. 'Don't leave it unwashed longer than a week maximum,' she says.

SHELF LIFE
Foundation 12 months
Concealer 12 months
Powder Up to 2 years

Five ways to make your make-up healthier

- To maximise the shelf life of mascara, don't pump the wand up and down. 'This pushes air into it, which will dry it out,' says Kay Montano. 'Instead, if you need to get rid of any excess product try twisting it in the tube instead.'
- Clean your make-up bag with antibacterial wipes. 'You can also use them to clean the inside edges of the [cosmetic] packaging and the outer packaging,' says Sarantis Tsimilimis.
- 'Slicing off the tops of your lipsticks and wind-up liners will keep them hygienic for longer, as will sharpening your lip and eye pencils,' says Sarah Brock.
- Keep your make-up bag in a cool and dark place - definitely not your bathroom. Heat and light exposure will quickly reduce the shelf life of products.
- Battered lipsticks can be sliced up and decanted into a mixing palette - Screen Face Empty Lipstick Palette (screenface.com) has 18 lipstick wells for just £6.95 and is a great way to keep them clean and tidy.