

Due to a number of overzealous dermatologists, the Nineties saw peels labelled as a skincare pariah. More recently, however, they've become a trusted part of salon facials and are even popping up in the beauty aisles. There's no particular age at which you should first try a peel as, given the chance, they can help all manner of skin complaints. Pigmentation, dullness, acne, fine lines: you name it, there's an at-home peel you can try.

The new formulas contain salicylic acid, glycolic acid and fruit enzymes that shift dead cells and speed up the turnover rate of young cells to make the skin look more alive and youthful. 'Peels use a chemical action to smooth skin, rather than an abrasive one,' explains Candice Gardner of The International Dermal Institute. 'They provide varying degrees of resurfacing, so you can choose according to your skin type.'

Everyone deserves a second chance, so it's time to welcome a full-scale peel revival.



SKIN SCIENCE

Cell SHIFTERS

Look on the bright side – Jess Lacey samples six of the best next-generation facial peels



PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN KAUFFMAN. STILL LIVES BY PIXEYES

1 TO PLUMP UP DRY SKIN La Prairie Cellular 3-Minute Peel, £144

A veritable cocktail of AHAs, BHAs and salicylic acids boosts elasticity, and there's a satisfying tingle from the get-go.

2 TO GIVE A GLOW Algenist Triple-Action Micropolish & Peel, £58.50

The granules buff the skin's surface, while the acid works at a deeper level. My skin was bright even after a 14-hour flight.

3 TO POLISH ROUGHNESS Dr Perricone MD Blue Plasma, £78

The non-acidic cream means zero irritation, so works for sensitive skin. After two weeks' use my face was much smoother.

4 TO DETOX CITY SKIN Sampar Equalising Foam Peel, £48

The gorgeously silky texture and knockout smell make this a pleasure to apply, and my skin felt genuinely detoxed.

5 TO FADE AGE SPOTS The Organic Pharmacy Enzyme Peel Mask, £49

Packed with vitamins. After applying it every two days for two weeks, my patchy pigment had noticeably evened out.

6 TO SMOOTH FINE LINES Cane & Austin Retexturizing Treatment Pads, £48

These fuss-free pads are super-easy to use and sloughed off dead skin cells. My forehead lines and crow's feet definitely looked less pronounced.