

*This book is the definitive guide to simplifying your skincare regime while maximizing your results. Certified whole health educator and licensed esthetician Nancy Bliss, shares her easy-to-use system for creating a simple skincare regime that gets incredible results with fewer products.*

## **Simply Beautiful Skin: Minimize Your Skincare Routine - Maximize the Results**

by Nancy Bliss, illustrated by Anastasia Goodwin

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# Simply Beautiful Skin

**Minimize Your Skincare Routine —  
Maximize the Results**

**Nancy Bliss**

Esthetician and Holistic Skincare Advisor

## Praise for *Simply Beautiful Skin*:

*Simply Beautiful Skin* provides clear and simple advice for attaining radiant, healthy skin. It includes valuable information for improving your nutrition and lifestyle, as well as essential instructions for selecting a minimal number of the skin care products most effective for your own age, skin and circumstances. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and am recommending it to all my friends and clients!

Emma Hefti

International Model, Licensed Medical Esthetician and Laser Technician at *Mint and Thyme Medical Spa*

I love Nancy's less-is-more approach to skincare! She highlights effective ingredients and simple means to get glowing skin. This skincare guide needs to be in the hands of every man and woman who wants to look and feel beautiful inside and out.

Elizabeth Ash

Licensed Esthetician, Owner of *Blessed Space Day Spa*

As a healthcare professional, I insist on effective, yet safe products. As a middle-aged woman, I expect skin care products to produce the results they promise! How often I have waded through the skin care "jungle" of overhyped promises and inflated costs. My wallet is empty, and my skin looks the same. Nancy has given us a skin care tool box to get the results we are looking for, without spending money needlessly. I highly recommend *Simply Beautiful Skin* to anyone who cares about their skin and wants to make educated and effective decisions about their product and service purchases.

Lisa K. Cauto, R.N.

## *Simply Beautiful Skin*

The minimalist lifestyle is gaining immense popularity, while the skincare industry is exploding with new products every day. Nancy tackles both of these areas by combining her extensive skincare knowledge with reducing the noise of skincare promotional claims. How can we get the most bang for our buck while addressing our skin concerns effectively? This book provides a step-by-step guide to minimizing the number of skincare products you use, but still actively caring for your skin and its needs.

Chamagne Williams

Model, Licensed Esthetician, Owner of *Pink Daisy Beauty Bar*

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## *How to use this book (and keep it simple):*

If you have picked up this book, you either A: love the idea of simplifying your skincare regime and want to learn everything you can about it. Or B: you love the idea of simplifying your skincare regime but don't have a lot of free time to read a book cover to cover.

Whatever your scenario, rest assured this book was written for you. Here are three ways to use it to get the most out of the information provided and reach your individual skincare simplification goals fast.

**#1: Your first choice is to read this book, in its entirety, from front to back.** This option will appeal to those who love the science of skincare as it provides a solid background on skin structure, skincare ingredients, and product components; and you will learn skincare strategies for a variety of skin types and conditions.

This reading route is best if you are very interested in your skin and its care, want information on a formal nutrition program, need to know everything about an approach before trying it out, or you're interested in a thorough summary of skincare products and the industry that produces them.

For full understanding of each section, I recommend you read the book in its entirety, because many of the concepts build upon each other.

**#2: Your next choice is to focus your reading on areas of the book relating to your skin type or skin condition.** This option is useful if

you have a basic understanding of your skin, are strapped for time, and just want to get to specific, practical suggestions.

To do this, I recommend starting with *Chapter Three: Skin Types and Conditions, and the Skincare Ingredients Best for Each*, which describes ingredients best for your skin type. You can then reference *Chapter Two: Skincare Ingredients* for more in-depth information on ingredients listed in *Chapter Three*. Next, skip over to *Chapter Six: Skin Nutrition* for nutritional guidelines specific to your skin types and condition. Lastly, choose the tear-out sheet in *Chapter Eight: Simply Beautiful Skin Regimes, Skincare Ingredients, and Nutritional Guidelines Tear-Out Sheets* applicable to your skin type or condition which you can refer to as you shop or clean out your skincare drawer (the skincare “detox”).

If you need some extra motivation, you can also scan the chapters that include topics on product components, the skincare industry, spa treatments, de-stressing, and the *Simply Beautiful Skin* nutrition plan.

**#3: The third option is to use this book as a workbook.** This option is best for the doers, the time-starved, or those who really want to dive in after reading the book in its entirety.

- Begin with *Chapter Eight: Simply Beautiful Skin Regimes, Skincare Ingredients, and Nutritional Guidelines Tear-Out Sheets*, and tear out the pages that apply to your skin. For example, if you have dry, sensitive, and premature aging skin, tear out the pages with those headings.
- Then choose the skin type or condition that *most* pertains to your skin and your skincare goals and mark those pages. For example, if fine lines are really keeping you up at night, you’d choose: premature aging skin. These are the “work pages” on which you will take notes.

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- Next, turn the pages you have removed from the book to the sides that list “Ingredients to look for” and “Nutritional Guidelines”.
- Now turn to *Chapter Two: Skincare Ingredients* and *Chapter Three: Skin Types and Conditions*, and the *Skincare Ingredients Best for Each* to read about all the ingredients listed on the *Ingredients to look for* page(s) in front of you.
- Highlight on your work page the ingredients you definitely want included in your skincare products.
- Do the same on the Nutritional Guidelines page(s), condensing suggestions specific to your needs to your work page. In our example, premature aging is the most significant concern, so highlighting and notes were made on this page. Notes included ingredients and nutritional guidelines most applicable from the dry and sensitive pages.
- Now scan your work page and either choose “Simple A, B, or C Regime”, or create your own by mixing and matching the regime components. For example, our person with premature aging skin may choose “Simple A Regime” but wants to add eye cream to his or her routine.
- Now you have a completely personalized guide to shopping for products or “detoxing” your current skincare products.

Whichever way you choose to use this book, my greatest wish is that it will serve you as a powerful and trusted tool to help you heal your skin, simplify your life, and optimize your overall health and well-being.

In appreciation,

*-Nancy*

# Introduction

It all started with bad skin and a ton of skincare products.

My battle with acne, rosacea, dermatitis, and most recently, wrinkles, led me to try every miracle-in-a-jar. My bathroom drawers and cabinets overflowed with special cleansers, creams, serums, and treatments. Desperate to solve my skin problems, I threw everything possible on my face, yet had no idea what was working and what wasn't. Yes, my skin was getting nominally better, but I was completely confused by product claims and ingredients.

Oh, and by the way, I'm an esthetician— a skincare professional who was lost in skincare products.

Then I stumbled onto a crazy and round-about way to weed through my skincare mess: the minimalist movement.

I watched a documentary called *Minimalism: A Documentary About the Important Things* because it was recommended to me, and, honestly, I was between television series on Netflix.<sup>1</sup> One of the most noteworthy messages of the film is that downsizing can bring peacefulness and more time to spend doing the things we love. That piqued my interest. Another idea that resonated was “the more stuff you own, the more it owns you.” Was I giving up partial control of my own life by having all these things around me? Was I losing freedom to do what I wanted, when I wanted to do it? Over time, I began to reflect and ask some tough questions of myself including whether I could, possibly, live with less stuff.

One of the contributors to the film, Courtney Carver creator of *Project 333*, stood out from the others.<sup>2</sup> Check out her website—but in a nutshell, she challenges participants to use only 33 articles of

clothing, shoes, and jewelry for 3 months. Could I do this? I read her website top to bottom and, using her tips, I cleaned my closet and clothes dressers and even parted with some items that I had saved for 20 years (I swore I was going to wear those strappy four-inch heels again one day!). I must admit that my own *Project 333* is a work in progress; I have not gotten down to 33 things yet—I'm somewhere around 80. But after that first huge closet cleaning and smaller ones since, I have found that I rarely miss what I have given away. And I do feel lighter and, dare I say, even happier.

Since my closet is a part of my bathroom, I couldn't avoid noticing the state of my bathroom cabinets and drawers, which were stuffed with cosmetics, cleansers, creams, oils, moisturizers, and serums.

Granted, I am a lotion and potion junkie, and I was looking for the best way to treat my skin conditions, but the amount I had was ridiculous. **I realized I had fallen prey to all those advertising campaigns claiming younger, healthier, clearer skin.** I would use the products for a few weeks, see no change in my skin, and then into the drawer they would be dumped. By that time, a new product would be out with even "better" claims, and soon I was on to my next miracle cure. Just lather, rinse, repeat. Perhaps you can relate?

Then a crazy thought came to me. Could I challenge myself to *minimize* my skincare products while *maximizing* my results? I decided to "rehab" my skincare routine by researching the best ingredients for specific skin concerns, so that I could discern the most effective products, and then see how much I could reduce my products while attaining better results.

I did a complete blitz of my bathroom cabinets, threw away expired products, and began investigating the ingredients in the rest. My experiment ended with reducing my daily skincare product to just the ones that benefitted my skin. (See *Chapter Three: Skin Types*

*and Conditions, and the Skincare Ingredients Best for Each* for my personal skincare regime.)

I discovered I am not a minimalist (paring down to only the most essential items), but I want to incorporate minimalist aspects into my life, such as removing what is non-essential and focusing on what works for me. Therefore, my goal was not to create a skincare routine that is as small and short as possible, but to implement one that is effective, personalized, and uncomplicated. You will find this same philosophy throughout this book. Recommended skincare regimes, nutritional guidelines, and de-stressing techniques are first and foremost results-oriented. They are simple, but not necessarily *easy*. The case studies highlight individuals with skin types and conditions who, first and foremost, wanted to use the best products for their skin, and, secondly, wanted to reduce the quantity of skincare items. (Plus, it would be awfully boring to read about Mary who applies sunscreen in the morning and then is out the door!)

Since my own product rehab, I don't think (or overthink) anymore about my routine, and my skin has never looked better. I love the time and mind-space this has freed up. And since I'm "in the business" of skincare, if a new ingredient or product is promoted as the latest and greatest, I will consider its claims, but I've made a commitment to only try it if I can substitute it for a product I already use.

While researching products, I gained a lot of knowledge about skincare companies. I began to separate companies into three different categories:

1. The first I named "small-batch, non-corporate."
2. The second "mid-sized spa."
3. And the third was "large corporate" - the majority of skincare products fall into this group.



Large conglomerates control most of the beauty and skincare industry. In fact, seven of these companies control 182 beauty brands.<sup>3</sup> In the interest of full transparency, these brands also include makeup and haircare products; but the point is, many brands that *appear* independent are really controlled by large corporate companies whose main goal is to make money, not improve your skin. They do this by **charging a high price, using cheaper ingredients**, and/or **selling as many products as they can**. And, usually they employ all three tactics. In most instances, they spend more money on advertising than on research and product development.

For the sake of simplifying our understanding of the skincare industry, let's unpack the messages and tactics of most large corporate skincare lines:

**Corporate Skincare Tactic #1: Charging a high price.** There is nothing wrong with charging a higher price for products with quality ingredients. Higher quality products will be more effective in achieving the results you want. Also, these products can be multitaskers, so you will have fewer bottles lining your counter. Plus, you really, truly can use a lot less, making them last longer.

But, how do you know which ingredients to look for? And how do you read those unpronounceable ingredient lists? It would be great to have the knowledge to quickly scan a product list to know if you are getting your money's worth and if that product will live up to its claims. Armed with this information, you wouldn't feel pushed into buying the latest and greatest skincare product simply because they state that their blend of ingredients will work wonders. I found some of the best products have just one ingredient (and may even be found in your kitchen).

**Corporate Skincare Tactic #2: Using cheaper ingredients.** Large manufacturers of skincare products fill their products with cheaper ingredients for two reasons.

First, this practice increases their profit margin (obviously).

Second, to ensure a long shelf life they must fill their products with a large quantity of typically cheap and toxic preservatives. This is especially true of drugstore and department store products. In my research, I found simple, yet highly effective products that either do not require any preservatives or, if they do, they only require the least toxin-producing ones possible.

**Corporate Skincare Tactic #3: Strong-arming you into buying zillions of different products.** This, in my opinion, is the greatest scam that large, corporate companies commit. I have attended many corporate product trainings given by these companies as an esthetician, and, not all, but many skincare companies have an extensive line of products. In one training, for example, the company insisted their customers use twelve different products in the morning and thirteen at night, plus a once-a-week exfoliation treatment. In my opinion, totally crazy!

To justify this, manufacturers will claim they need to spread out the “active ingredients” in different products or they will become too diluted to have an effect. Really? Great moisturizers and hydrating ingredients can’t be included in a product that also contains sunscreen? You can see I get a bit frustrated when these “explanations” (read: excuses) for selling more products are given.

However, keep in mind not *all* companies are like this. In today’s market, there are many smaller skincare companies who do business with integrity. These are the companies I named “small batch, non-corporate.” And while they still rely on profits, they have your best interests at heart.

There are also many mid-size companies that sell exclusively to spas and carry brands that focus on effectiveness in addition to their profits. Many of these skincare lines are called “cosmeceuticals.” This name was created by skincare marketing to have you believe that the products are a cross between a pharmaceutical and a cosmetic, thus giving the impression that they work better than traditional skincare.

In truth, these claims are false. However, the good news is that these products may contain more active ingredients—ingredients that work to treat (such as soothe, plump, or heal) or protect your skin. Or they may contain a greater quantity of active ingredients. Usually, these skincare lines charge a pretty penny for their products, but at least you know you are getting your money’s worth.

Though most spa estheticians have integrity, some earn commissions, and thus have incentive to encourage you to purchase several products at a time. If you explain your skincare goals, including your minimalist approach of using less products, in most cases you will receive honest recommendations.

However, it never hurts to have some ingredient and product knowledge under your belt, which we will cover throughout this book.

In the past, I advised my clients on what I thought was an appropriate number of products for their needs, many times bucking the suggested protocol by the manufacturer. But now, with the minimalist idea stuck in my head, my challenge became to recommend the least number of products and the easiest routine, while still delivering the same or higher level of effectiveness.

My research, subsequent changes in my personal skincare regime, and my work with clients, were the motivation behind this book. I want to give you just enough information to make the best, yet simplest, choices for your skincare regime.

Regarding your skincare, this book will help you:

- Reduce the number of skincare products you use;
- Choose the most effective skincare products based on the knowledge of what ingredients work best for your skin type or condition;
- Detect whether a product contains a sufficient amount of active ingredients and minimal amount of fillers, preservatives, colors, and fragrances;
- Choose foods that support healthy, vibrant skin, and gain knowledge of foods that address particular skin conditions;
- Discern if a spa treatment should be in your skincare regime;
- Empower you to be able to weed through (or ignore) those ubiquitous skincare ads,
- Save time and energy for more worthwhile endeavors;
- And most importantly, feel amazing after your own skincare rehab with radiant, healthy skin.

*What you will learn:*

- In this book, we will start with the basics of skin anatomy.
- Then, we will dive into understanding key ingredients (including ingredients for specific skin conditions).
- Next, typical products are defined with suggestions of simple non-commercial substitutions; this is followed by a discussion of spa/facial treatments and why they may make your daily skincare routine easier.
- Then, we will cover nutrition and food choice information, because so much of our skin health is determined internally.
- Next, you will learn a simple de-stressing technique to help stave off the signs of skin stress, including breakouts, premature aging, and more.

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- And lastly, we will put it all together with nifty tear-out sample skincare routines based on your skin type or condition.

My hope in publishing this book is that you will find information to make confident decisions about the type and number of skincare products you really need. My goal is for you to choose products that are the most effective, so that you can reduce the number of products you use.

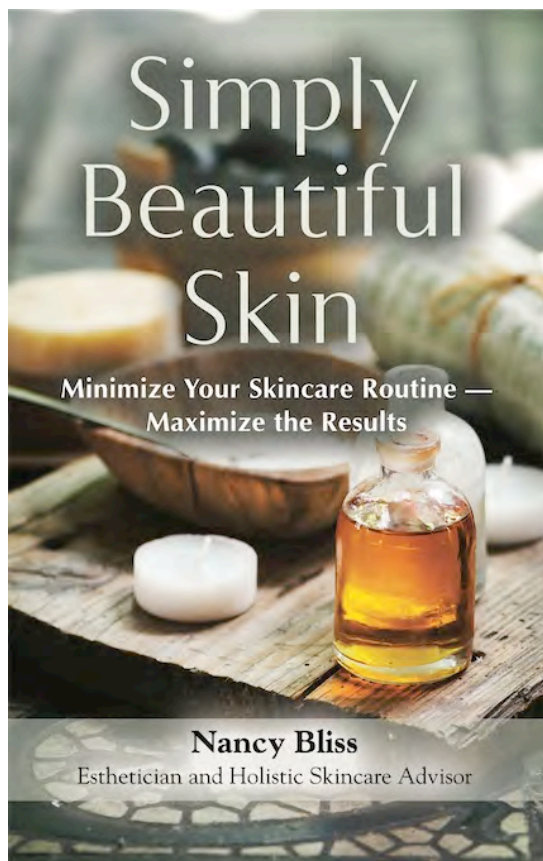


How might this look for you? Maybe you will get down to using only one product in the morning and at night. Perhaps you will be able to pare down your products so that you can see to the bottom of your bathroom drawers. And, maybe because you are armed with

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knowledge, you will be able to wave off most or all the 25 products the salesperson at the beauty counter encourages you to buy.

My ultimate wish is that you find this philosophy to be one facet of a life of reduced stress, saving time, and accomplishing more with less, while attaining beautiful, glowing skin!



*This book is the definitive guide to simplifying your skincare regime while maximizing your results. Certified whole health educator and licensed esthetician Nancy Bliss, shares her easy-to-use system for creating a simple skincare regime that gets incredible results with fewer products.*

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