



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?
It takes about eight minutes for light from the Sun to reach the Earth.



Stay safe in the sun

Protect your skin from the Sun's rays with these smart habits.

One of the best parts of summer is spending time outdoors, whether you're heading to a park, the local pool, or your backyard. But there's one crucial thing you need to keep in mind—sun safety. Here's why protecting your skin from the Sun's rays is important and some simple steps you can take.

Learn the basics

The light from the Sun contains ultraviolet (UV) rays, invisible rays that react with your skin to cause damage. A painful sunburn and a suntan are both types of sun damage. Too much unprotected time in the sun can increase a person's risk of skin cancer (an illness) later in life.

Wear sunscreen

It's important to put on sunscreen whenever you're going to be outside. This rule goes for everyone. Even if you have darker skin, or don't usually burn, the Sun can cause damage that you can't see. Choose a sunscreen that has an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 30. This means that the product will block 97% of the Sun's rays. Your sunscreen should also be water resistant and protect against UVA and UVB rays. These benefits should be marked on the label. If possible, opt for a sunscreen lotion rather than a spray, since it's hard to tell if you've applied enough when using a spray.

Apply it correctly

Put on sunscreen at least 15 minutes before you go outside so it has time to absorb into your skin. And make sure you use enough—most people need about two tablespoons of sunscreen lotion to fully cover their body. Be sure to slather it on spots that are easy to miss, such as the tops of your feet, your ears, and your knees. Once you're outside, reapply every two hours or after you get sweaty or go for a swim.

Add extra protection

In addition to sunscreen, layer on other types of sun protection. Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes. To shield your face, put on a hat with a wide brim (this will keep the back of your neck protected too). Apply lip balm with SPF to keep your lips from getting sunburned.



Sunglasses
protect your eyes.

Watch the clock

The Sun's rays are at their strongest between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm. If you can, plan your outdoor activities either first thing in the morning or later in the afternoon. Look for shady spots and try to spend time there when the Sun is strongest. For example, if you're at the beach, read under an umbrella or take a break inside for lunch. If you're hiking, find a shady place under some trees where you can sit down and cool off.

Sunny day checklist



Don't leave home without these must-have items for enjoying a safe and fun day in the sun.

Hat

Wear one with a brim that goes all the way around, if possible. A baseball cap also works, but it won't protect your neck.



Sunglasses

When choosing a pair, make sure the label says they block 100% of UVA and UVB rays.

A coverup

If you're wearing your bathing suit, bring a shirt with long sleeves to put on when you're not swimming.



Sunscreen

Bring the bottle with you so you can reapply it every two hours and after you sweat a lot or spend time in the water.



Water

Fill up a big reusable water bottle and take it with you wherever you go. Take sips from it regularly, even if you don't feel thirsty. It's easy to get dehydrated on a hot, sunny day.



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