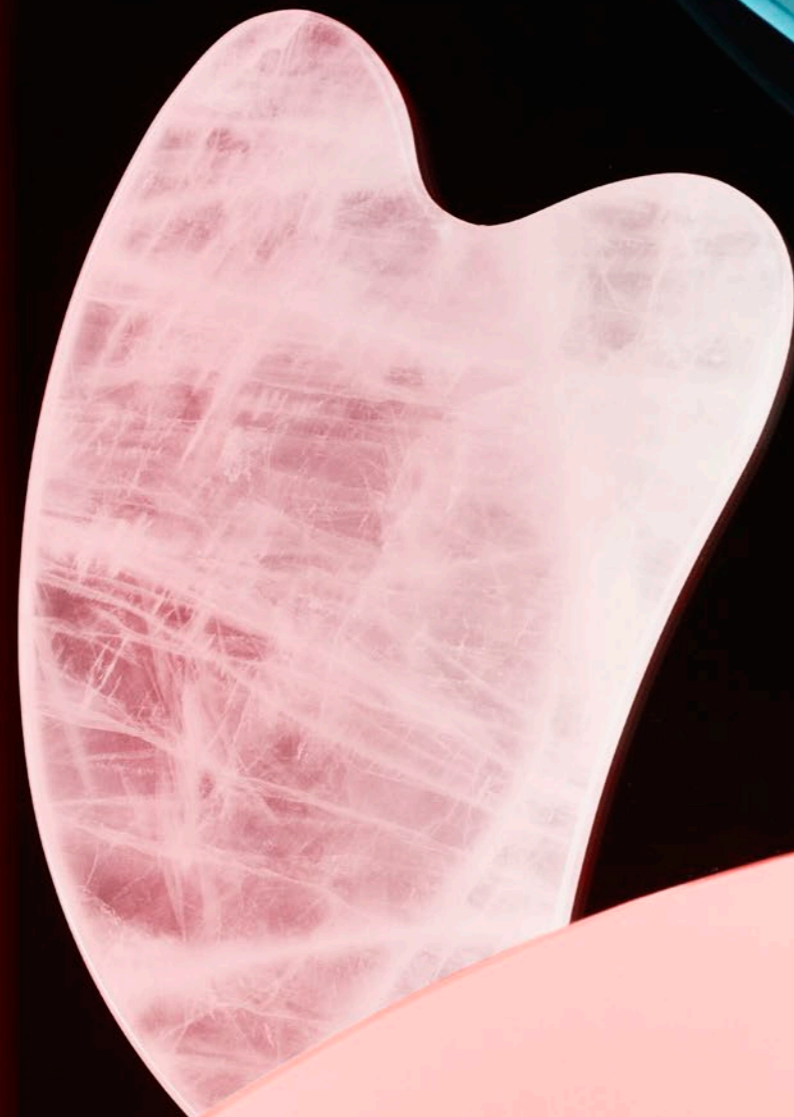


THE EDITORS ON... FACE TOOLS

OUR TEAM OF EXPERTS ON THE GADGETS THEY USE TO TREAT PROBLEM SKIN, FROM CONGESTION TO INFLAMMATION

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL ZAK



JENNIFER GEORGE: OLD-SCHOOL TOOLS

I'M ALL FOR A BUZZY SPECIALIST AND WHIZZY GADGET (PLUS, unashamedly, the help of the odd toxin-filled needle or two). But, day to day, I rely on tools that don't require a steady-handed doctor, batteries or instructions. In fact, the first is something almost everyone, even your dad or your gran, will likely have: a flannel.

Some might not call it a 'tool', but why not? It thoroughly cleanses, makes your facial wash go further and provides gentle exfoliation. A hot flannel draped over the face will help to open pores for a deep clean; a cold one (in the summer I keep one in the freezer) can soothe irritation or puffiness. It's a true do-it-all piece of kit.

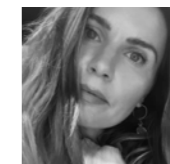
For a slightly more thorough exfoliation, I use a konjac sponge, which is made from konnyaku, a root vegetable grown in Asia. It was originally harnessed by Japanese farmers around 1,000 years ago to cleanse their babies' skin. You simply soak it to soften to a squishy texture with an almost gel-like surface, which prevents the scrubbing from being abrasive. Rub in circular motions alone or with your cleanser. It's weirdly satisfying to use, and my skin loves it.

Another object that is steeped in history is the gua sha. It might not be as high-tech as other devices, but this hand-held tool (usually crafted from jade or quartz) has time-proven benefits in Traditional Chinese Medicine for releasing tension, draining puffiness, sculpting contours and stimulating blood flow. I use it – over a generous layer of serum or oil for slip – when travelling or battling the hangover bloat. I'm no expert, but a few vigorous swipes along my jawline, cheeks and down my neck do a stellar job of masking one too many cocktails.

1 Facial Puff Sponge with Green Tea, £8.99, THE KONJAC SPONGE COMPANY **2** Face Towel, £35, RESORÉ **3** Jade Beauty Restorer, £42, HAYO'U



1 Gold Sculpting Bar, £185, JILLIAN DEMPSEY
2 Anti-Wrinkle Sleep Mask, £59.99, DR HARRIS
3 LED Eye Perfector, £199, CURRENTBODY SKIN



KATY YOUNG: LINE-SMOOTHING KIT

A LAISSEZ-FAIRE APPROACH TO BEAUTY COMBINED WITH A FIRM belief that more sleep and less hassle is the best answer to good skin means I save neither time nor space in my skincare routine for fiddly facial tools or massages. I would rather catch an extra forty winks or, let's be honest, binge another episode of my latest TV obsession – particularly if it means more revived eyes by morning.

Yes, you read that right: no square eyes here. For my latest beauty trick, I've enlisted the help of an LED mask to iron out both lines and bags while I sit back and press play. A science-backed theory, LED-light therapy comes in various colours. Each has its own wavelength to penetrate skin at a specific depth to do a particular job. I use amber and red light to stimulate collagen and plump lines up and out for more revived-looking eyes.

By the time I've watched the opening credits and recap (that's just three minutes), the 80 LED bulbs on my CurrentBody Skin LED Eye Perfector have done their glow-getting. And after six weeks of daily use, you start to see change, which feels like pretty low-level commitment to me. (Even better, it works on all skin types.)

Jillian Dempsey's vibrating tool then deals with puffiness, which I find leads to crêpiness around my eyes. Since I don't need a mirror for this one either, it makes it to my 'easy win' list. The gadget emits 6,000 vibrations per minute to stimulate facial muscles and streamline contours. I also find it incredibly relaxing pre-bed.

These multitaskers fit efficiently into my routine, while hiding any sign that I've stayed up way too late watching those aforementioned box sets. Play on... >

AN LED MASK IRONS OUT LINES AND BAGS WHILE I SIT BACK AND PRESS PLAY



MEDINA AZALDIN: COOLING GLOBES FOR INFLAMMATION

THE BEST FACIAL I'VE EVER HAD WASN'T IN A SWANKY, FIVE-STAR hotel spa or a discreet Mayfair clinic. It was in the welcoming space of Westbourne Grove's Young LDN, a one-stop shop for all things beauty, from peels to pedicures. Senior aesthetician Roxanne Lanthier not only managed to perform endless extractions on my acneic skin without traumatising it further, but also introduced me to the calming benefits of cold-steel globes.

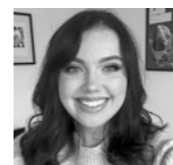
The cynic in me once believed that the TikTok-famous 'ice globes' were yet another fad that looked (forgive the pun) cool, but did next to nothing. How wrong I was. While skincare tools such as cleansing brushes and microcurrent devices can aggravate and sting active spots (as I've learned the hard way), these extra-cold balls offer a form of cryotherapy that, 'helps to reduce discomfort associated with larger pustules, decreases inflammation and calms any redness or heat as the cold constricts the blood vessels,' explains Lanthier.

On my active breakouts, she recommends gently gliding the ice globes from the centre of the face out and up towards the lymph nodes after prepping with a hydrating serum. There are also the additional depuffing benefits to perk up tired eyes. After every use, simply clean your tools and keep them in the freezer.

ONCE BELIEVED THE ICE GLOBES WERE JUST A FAD. HOW WRONG I WAS



1 Evercalm Barrier Support Elixir, £44, REN 2 Cooling Derma-Globes, £100, OMOROVICZA 3 Mini Super-Cryo Massaging Orb, £14, NURSE JAMIE



KATIE WITHINGTON: TONE AND TEXTURE MULTITASKING

AS EARLY ACNE SUFFERERS MAY UNDERSTAND, MUCH OF MY younger years involved derailing family supermarket trips by heading straight to the beauty aisle in search of those extraction tools that promised me clear skin by the next school day.

Today, the thought of these manual blemish-busting techniques and my enthusiastic face-scrubbing sends a shiver down my spine. My current routine focuses on tackling post-acne texture and stubborn uneven tone, and includes two targeting tools that don't demand lots of time.

While my love of scrubs persevered into my twenties, I now opt for a much kinder cleanse, with Foreo's vibrating, bacteria-resistant silicone

MY CURRENT ROUTINE INCLUDES TWO TOOLS THAT DON'T DEMAND LOTS OF TIME

bristles. With three intensities and skin-clarifying, LED-heated technology, known for balancing discoloration when used regularly, this tool is easy to use, which is what appeals to me most: exfoliation with spot-busting benefits, all in the time it takes to do my second cleanse.

The other portion of my skin's new-found clarity can be credited to radiance-boosting red-light therapy, low-vibration facial massage and therapeutic gentle heat: it sounds like the treatment list from a salon, but in reality is nothing more than 10 soothing minutes of Solawave before bed. No squeezing or scraping, just smart skincare tools made simple.



1 LUNA 4 Plus, £379, FOREO 2 Makeup Remover Pad, £7, FACE HALO 3 Advanced Skincare Wand, £123, SOLAWAVE



1 HYDR8 B5 Intense Hyaluronic Acid, £59, MEDIK8 2 FaceGym Pro, £515, FACEGYM 3 The Contour Pro, £249, DR LEVY



DR EWOMA UKELEGHE: MICROCURRENT FOR LIFTING

TAKE MY ADVICE: THE ONE THING I'D SUGGEST YOU INVEST in right now is the FaceGym Pro. Yes, I know – it retails for over £500. But, for me, it's been worthwhile. Powered by patented triple-wave technology, the device delivers electrical impulses to activate the facial muscles, which provide deeper action than traditional microcurrent devices.

Within 10 minutes, your face will look like you've had an express facelift. It also does wonders for combatting morning puffiness. The only downside to this device (apart from the price) is that the electrical impulses are pretty intense, particularly on bony prominences such as the forehead. Start on a low setting and work your way up according to what you can handle.

For those who aren't keen on tweakments, this is a great option to consider if you want the results of Botox but are wary of the needle. Equally, for those well-versed in non-surgical procedures, facial tools are a great way to amplify the results achieved.

But remember, as with any tools, consistency is key. The best and most long-lasting results are seen when something is done daily. For any technophobes however, don't overlook manual facial massage (look up one of the many tutorials on YouTube). It's effective, equally therapeutic – and, crucially, free.

THE BEST AND MOST LONG-LASTING RESULTS ARE SEEN WHEN DEVICES ARE USED DAILY