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11 best lip scrubs for a smoother, softer, plumper pout

Kiss and make up with a scrub that's the perfect priming base for your lipstick

Sara Pollock • Tuesday 21 June 2022 12:15

The skin on your lips is delicate, so apply gently for a smooth finish
(The Independent)

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Picture the scene – you've applied a perfect make-up look and are just finishing off with a bright, on-trend lip colour but – horror – your pout has become all lumps, bumps and flakes.

If you can relate to this scenario, it might be time to consider adding an exfoliating product to your lip-care arsenal – especially with summer on the horizon (sunshine is no friend to dehydrated lips).

There are various benefits to adding a lip scrub to your routine. Most importantly, an exfoliating product not only makes a huge difference to the speedy healing process of cracked, parched lips – it also helps to increase blood flow supply to the surface of the skin. The result is a temporary plumping effect (*sans* surgery or scary-looking devices).

A great way to incorporate lip exfoliants is to use them for lip-colour prep. To get optimum wear out of your favourite products, use a scrub prior to applying liner and colour. This will help to slough away dead skin cells, resulting in a smooth and soft canvas, ready for long-lasting wear.

There are different types of lip-care formulations on the market, and while most are sugar based, we've also come across chemical-based exfoliations and rose extract-based scrubs – all promising to soften the driest of pouts. Need help finding the right one? We've got you covered.

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How we tested

For a product to be included in this round-up, it had to be easy to apply, with minimal mess. We also sought out scrubs that left our lips feeling supple and smooth after exfoliation, without the need to apply a second balm-based product. Our preferences were with those products that absorbed into the lips rather than ones that had to be rinsed off.

Other key factors for each scrub to make the cut were product consistency and the overall condition of our lips after application. Whilst our tester has a penchant for a fun flavour and nice scent, we didn't let this influence our picks, focussing instead on the all-important results. We tested each balm twice daily (once in the morning before make-up application, and again at night time) over a period of three weeks.

The best lip scrubs for 2022 are:

- **Best overall** – Mac lip scrubtious: £17.50, maccosmetics.co.uk
- **Best fuss-free application** – Ciaté raspberry burst exfoliating aha lip serum: £18, ciatelondon.com
- **Best non-abrasive scrub** – Avant Skincare velvet perfecting rose sugar lip scrub: £58, lookfantastic.com
- **Best for clean ingredients** – La Bouche Rouge lip scrub: £36, laboucherougeparis.com
- **Best for plumping ingredients** – Project Lip scrub me up lip scrub: £8.95, thefragranceshop.co.uk
- **Best all-in-one treatment** – Tinker Taylor little lip scrub: £12, tinkertaylorbeauty.com
- **Best value for money** – Anatomicals snog me senseless mint scrub and lip balm: £7, anatomicals.co.uk
- **Best two-in-one** – Dr. PawPaw scrub and nourish: £8.95, hollandandbarrett.com
- **Best for night time use** – French Girl Organic's rose lip polish: £15, freepeople.com

- **Best for a barely-there pink tint** – Dior addict lip sugar scrub: £29.50, boots.com
- **Best for full-on exfoliation** – Morphe 2 prep polish lip scrub sweet lips: £4, uk.morphe.com

Mac lip scrubtious

Best: Overall

Score: 9.5/10

If anyone knows about perfecting a pout, it'll be make-up maestro Mac. The chunky sugar granules got to work quickly upon application – whilst the formula is gritty and thick, our tester found that it absorbed in extremely quickly after getting to work on dry lips.

With a super-nourishing jojoba and grape-seed oil base, it's no wonder that our lips felt super supple and hydrated after usage. The final result? A comfortable balmy base, no need to rinse away and a gorgeous fresh, fruity scent. Everything you could want from a lip scrub.

Buy now £17.50, Maccosmetics.co.uk

Price comparison		
John Lewis & Partners	**£17.50**	**Buy now**
Lookfantastic	**£20**	**Buy now**
Amazon	**£22.02**	**Buy now**

Ciaté raspberry burst exfoliating aha lip serum

Best: Fuss-free application

Score: 8/10

Who says lip exfoliators have to be in the form of a scrub? Taking inspiration from facial chemical exfoliants, Ciaté's offering comes in a fuss-free slick glass rollerball applicator and has a light raspberry scent.

The formulation is enriched with fruit enzyme AHAs, which essentially unbind the top layer of skin and exfoliate dead skin cells – without the need for an intense scrubbing process.

The application was mess free, as the formula is a gel to serum base, and our lips felt supple and nourished without an overload of excess product. If you're not so keen on sugar scrubs, this will be the one for you.

Buy now £18, Ciatelondon.com

Avant Skincare velvet perfecting rose sugar lip scrub

Best: Non-abrasive scrub

Score: 9/10

For the ultimate luxury lip experience, look no further than Avant's velvet perfecting lip scrub. Enriched with rose, peony extract and sweet almond oil, this trio works to smoothen and hydrate lacklustre lips.

We found that this was the gentlest exfoliator of the bunch – the rose extract is used to facilitate exfoliation, which also boasts light-reflecting properties. In addition, the peony extract helps to protect lips against environmental aggressors and works to enhance the lips' natural glow. Whilst the instructions told us to rinse the scrub off after two minutes, we let it absorb in fully, which left our lips feeling instantly pillow soft.

Although we said flavour wouldn't sway us, it must be said that we adored the syrupy-sweet taste of this scrub and found it a real treat to use.

Buy now £58, Lookfantastic.com

Price comparison

Amazon	**£58**	**Buy now**
Lookfantastic	**£58**	**Buy now**
HQhair.com	**£58**	**Buy now**
Beauty Expert	**£58**	**Buy now**

La Bouche rouge lip scrub

Best: For clean ingredients

Score: 8/10

For the very best in eco-friendly French lip luxury, plump for La Bouche Rouge. The vegetable- based squalene, jojoba and cranberry seed formula provided a gentle exfoliation, which rejuvenated and softened our lips immediately. And there was no need to lick or rinse off the scrub, as it absorbed into our lips easily.

The formula is invisible once on, but provided us with a moisturised, long-lasting matte base – fantastic for lip colour application. All of the brand's products are vegan friendly, plastic free, gluten free and fully recyclable. They also have the option to purchase a fancy refillable monogrammed lipstick case if you so wish.

Buy now £36, Laboucherougeparis.com

Project Lip scrub me up lip scrub

Best: For plumping ingredients

Score: 8/10

This Manchester-based brand specialises in pout-perfecting products, so they know a thing or two about a great formulation.

We were fans of this papaya scented, sweet-tasting (but not overpoweringly so) scrub, which worked its magic at soothing away our pesky dry patches. The emollient-rich formula left our lips feeling soft and smooth, and there was no need to top up with a balm afterwards.

We were impressed with the addition of sweet orange as an ingredient, which stimulates collagen production – and is probably why our lips felt slightly plumper after usage.

Buy now £8.95, Thefragranceshop.co.uk

Tinker Taylor little lip scrub

Best: All-in-one treatment

Score: 9/10

Created by renowned make-up artist Zoe Taylor, this organic sugar-based scrub felt like a gorgeously decadent caramel desert on our lips. The super-rich product includes a mini spatula to mix the all-natural formula and provides easy, even application.

We loved the comforting feeling of this on our lips – it managed to shift away dead skin cells whilst feeling more like a lip mask than a scrub. Thanks to added ingredients such as rice bran oil (for hydration) and baobab seed oil (for anti-aging benefits), this left our lips feeling silky soft after usage. The only struggle? Not licking it all off straight away!

Zoe also recommends using the scrub to remove those heavy-duty lip colours that ordinary cleansers can't budge.

Buy now £12, tinkertaylorbeauty.com

Anatomicals snog me senseless mint scrub and lip balm

Best: Value for money

Score: 8/10

For an invigorating kick, we recommend reaching for Anatomicals paraben-free mini lip kit. The coconut oil-based lip scrub felt refreshing and tingly upon application, thanks to the peppermint and menthol scent, and brought patchy lips back to their former glory.

With slightly larger sugar granules, this scrub was quick at getting to work. After wiping away the residue, our tester was left with a smooth, shiny pout – and that was without needing to apply the additional lip balm that comes in the kit (although our tester has since reported that this was also extremely nice). Plus, at just £7 for two accompanying products, it's a lip-smacking bargain.

Buy now £7, Anatomicals.co.uk

Dr. PawPaw scrub and nourish

Best: Two-in-one

Score: 8.5/10

We all love a good two-in one product, and this offering doesn't disappoint. The clever component offers a duo set consisting of a sugar scrub and the brand's award-winning balm. The scrub side is surprisingly smooth, while still packing in a punch of exfoliation. Our lips felt replenished and soft straight away, but topping up the treatment with a slick of the balm ensured that our pout stayed in tip-top condition.

We also adored the strong pineapple scent – perfect to mentally transport us to a tropical holiday beach. We can assure you that this double pot of goodness will be by our side all summer and into the cold winter months.

Buy now £8.95, Hollandandbarrett.com

Price comparison

Amazon	**£7.92**	**Buy now**

French Girl Organics rose lip polish

Best: For night-time use

Score: 9/10

Housed in a generous 30ml jar, we were thoroughly impressed with this rose lip polish. The clean, Seattle-based brand has nailed a great formula, with the delicate rose and mint-scented scrub working its magic on our dry lips, leaving them feeling supple and pillow soft – even hours later.

Our tester highly rated the intensely moisturising shea butter and coconut base, which acted as a balm after the initial scrub – essentially making this a two-in-one product. We'll be incorporating this polish into our bed-time routine for an intense boost of overnight moisture in addition to an effective scrub.

Buy now £15, Freepeople.com

Dior addict lip sugar scrub

Best: For a barely-there pink tint

Score: 9/10

Dior's addict lip range is infamous with beauty obsessives, so our tester's expectations were high – yet we were still highly impressed. We adored the covetable pink packaging – definitely one you'll want to pull out of your handbag at any given opportunity.

The scrub applied almost as seamlessly as a lip balm, without the typical grainy sensation one would expect from an exfoliant. Whilst the application was non-abrasive, our tester's lips still felt sufficiently exfoliated and nourished, with no dry patches in sight. After swiftly absorbing into our lips, we were left with a comfortable, lightweight balmy base.

However, it was the subtle pink glow that made this product really stand out – we loved this dewy effect so much that we didn't feel the need to apply lip colour on top.

Buy now £29.50, Boots.com

Morphe 2 prep polish lip scrub sweet lips

Best: For full-on exfoliation

Score: 8/10

A great all-rounder, this scrub gave our tester a really intense, satisfactory scrubbing session with fast absorption. The thick, stick formula applied with ease, providing a balmy base in addition to full-on exfoliation. Our tester enjoyed applying this hardworking product, which does everything you'd want from a scrub.

We loved the delicate scent and taste, too – great if you don't like overpowering sweet-tasting scrubs. The shea, coconut and jojoba base ensured that our lips were in pucker-up condition once it had settled in. A great all-rounder at an extremely affordable price.

Buy now £4, Uk.morphe.com

The verdict: Best lip scrubs for 2022

The product that ticked all of our boxes was Mac's lip scrubtious, which gave a great overall exfoliation, absorbed well and left our lips feeling incredibly pampered – the fresh, peachy scent was a plus, too. For an all-in-one treatment, we highly rated Tinker Taylor's little lip scrub, which not only smelt glorious but left our lips pillow soft. If you're after a luxury scrub that doubles up as a subtle lip colour, then you'll love Dior's lip sugar scrub, which applied as easily as a balm and left our lips silky smooth with a natural soft, pink flush.

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