

# PRIME TIME

How to prepare your skin to ensure you'll grin when you bare it



With summer fast approaching (allegedly), it's time to dust down the old body in readiness for the flesh-baring months to come. Personally, I find the quickest route to achieving the perfect summer physique is to ruthlessly cut back on my intake of junk. That means no diet books, no inch-loss specials and no women's magazines stuffed with bikini-clad models and ridiculous five-day fad diets promising instant Kate Moss-ification. Do that and, I promise, you will suddenly find that you have the body of a goddess.

Anyway, so there I was, a good few days into my detox and doing well (apart from a peek at a discarded issue of *Grazia* on the train), when Liz Hurley pops up all over the press, looking obscenely good in a succession of skimpy bathing costumes. If it had been anyone else, I might have been able to ignore it, but she is actually a whole year older than me, which is not only just plain rude, it hurts. Telling myself that she's been digitally retouched doesn't help either – it would take a lot more than Photoshop to make my stomach look that flat.

Still, onwards and upwards. I may not be able to look like Ms Hurley, but with a

little imagination and a lot of product, I can at least feel as good as her.

Daily exfoliation is key. In the shower, for ease of use, you ideally need something that comes in a tube. **Liz Earle Energising Body Scrub** (from £5, [www.lizearle.com](http://www.lizearle.com)) is a real winner. It smells faintly orangey and the consistency – a sticky gel that foams slightly, giving you just enough time to exfoliate before washing it off – is perfect.

Exfoliating in the bath is a rather more languid process. **Jo Wood Organics Tula Exfoliating Salt Scrub** (£24, [www.jowoodorganics.com](http://www.jowoodorganics.com)) is a true luxury: Dead Sea salt in jojoba and rosehip oil, headily fragranced with frangipani and jasmine. It moisturises as it exfoliates, leaving skin sublimely supple.

You can also very easily make your own: a couple of handfuls of Maldon sea salt, some olive oil and sprigs of thyme whizzed up in the liquidiser and scented with a few drops of lavender essential oil and/or some rosehip oil.

Afterwards, while your skin is still damp, more oil is the thing to add luminosity and a superstar sheen. Opt for something light in a spray, so you can reach your back – **Miller Harris Body Oil** (£28, [www.millerharris.com](http://www.millerharris.com)) is delicately scented with pure botanical extracts. Choose from citrus, floral, chypre or oriental. The **Coeur de Fleur**

is divine: light, summery and feminine.

Finally, an old friend – **Nuxe Huile Prodigieuse** (£21, 020-7734 1234) – a brilliant multi-tasking classic, has been re-formulated for even more moisturising power. Thankfully, though, it still smells the same: the very essence of summer. ■



Effective, non-scary, daily tanner: **Origins Let it Show**, £15 ([www.origins.co.uk](http://www.origins.co.uk))

ELIZABETH HURLEY FOR MANGO, GETTY IMAGES

It would take a lot more than Photoshop to make my stomach look as flat as Liz Hurley's



**Q** I have less than three months to lose my fine but dark moustache before my wedding. What are my options?

Z, LONDON



**A** I, too, am the lucky owner of a very dark but very fine moustache, so you've come to the right place.

Essentially, you have two options. You can bleach it, or you can have it threaded, which will remove the hairs and spare you the stubbly grow-back (not a good look on your honeymoon). For bleaching, nothing beats **Jolen Crème Bleach**: cheap (under £5), easy to use and effective. You can buy it almost anywhere. I would recommend you get the one for sensitive skins.

You have to follow the instructions by the letter, though. Really. I find the effects last six to eight weeks, but this will vary. It's also important not to overbleach. This will make your hairs go yellow and you'll look like you've been smoking Woodbines.

If you just want rid of the thing, put yourself in the hands of a professional. Since you have dry, sensitive skin, I would avoid waxing like the plague; instead, get it threaded. As you're a London girl I would recommend the queen of threading, **Vaishaly Patel** (or one of her girls). Prices start at £25 (020-7224 6088).

Oh, and congratulations!

Please e-mail your beauty questions to [sarah.vine@thetimes.co.uk](mailto:sarah.vine@thetimes.co.uk)