

How to Make Your Own Mineral Makeup

Although mineral makeup has become a huge trend in the cosmetic industry with a rapidly growing number of competing products, there is no clear definition what a product must or must not contain to claim to be a mineral makeup. It is, however, widely agreed that the term mineral makeup relates to a kind of makeup that is “powdery” rather than liquid or creamy and contains certain minerals including sunscreen minerals but no oily ingredients or other liquid ingredients. Mineral makeup were probably first introduced to the market by Bare Escentuals with the brand bareMinerals™. The founder of Bare Escentuals, Leslie Blodgett, says of here products that they are “..composed of 100% pure minerals free of preservatives, talc, oil, fragrance and other harmful chemicals”.

Further, Bare Escentuals claims that their “foundations, cheek and eye colors have been crushed to a silky, creamy powder form...but it's NOT a powder”. But what else is it? - Most companies, however, do speak of powders (loose or compact) of their mineral makeup. Other companies like Illuminaré, for example, also make liquid mineral makeup. Hence, it seems that each producer creates its own form of mineral makeup.

“Definition” of Mineral Makeup

Makeup typically in powder form (but also liquid) that contains certain sunscreen minerals and color minerals but no or only little oily ingredients

Basic Ingredients: The Minerals

As there is no clear definition of the term mineral makeup there is a great variability of ingredients found in mineral makup. Typical or “obligatory” ingredients include the two sunscreen minerals titanium dioxide and zinc oxide, often used in their micronized (superfine) form. Both sunscreens are naturally derived minerals: titanium dioxide is produced from the mineral ilmenite and zinc oxide from zinc ore. Hence, they are naturally derived but not pure natural as they do not occur in this form in the nature. So don't be fooled by the term “pure natural minerals”! - Nevertheless, these two ingredients are responsible for one main property of mineral makeup: they protect the skin from the damaging effects of sun rays as these crystals reflect the UVA and UVB rays. Since both titanium dioxide and zinc oxide are white powders they also help to lighten up dark color ingredients. The colors typically include iron oxides and often also micas. Iron oxides are inorganic colors (true

pigments) and are also naturally derived minerals as they are composed of insoluble metallic compounds which are derived from natural sources including china clay or carbon deposits. Micas are also natural colors derived from the mineral Muscovite Mica. They provide lustre effects and a silky feel. Sometimes, bismuth oxychloride is also added to mineral makeup products. Bismuth oxy-chloride is a pearlescent pigment composed of bismuth (naturally occurring metallic element) and provides excellent whiteness and lustre. It also gives the mineral makeup a more compact, smooth texture.

Basic Ingredients of Mineral Makeup

- Titanium Dioxide (sunscreen mineral)
- Zinc Oxide (sunscreen mineral)
- Iron Oxides (pigment minerals)
- Micas (glitter pigment minerals)
- Bismuth Oxychloride (texturizer pigment), not always included

Ingredients Usually Not Included

Oily components are not included in most mineral makeup products to keep the powder very finely ground, light, and easy to apply. The minerals work with the skin's own fatty components to create a smooth cover without looking thick, cakey or dull. Sometimes, however, a small amount of oil may be necessary for formulation purposes since minerals can be blended and held together better with a little bit of oil.

Most brands do not use talc in mineral makeup although talc is also a naturally derived mineral (magnesium silicate). Why that? - Because of its reputation of being cancerogenic. In fact, the reputation of talc has become so bad that companies proudly label their products “Talc-Free” to make the customer think it is healthy and a “true” mineral makeup. Many now think that a mineral makeup that contains talc is not a mineral makeup! This is nonsense. - But is there scientific evidence of cancerogenicity? All accusations so far (as ovarian cancer upon perineal use of talc or lung cancer upon talc inhalation) could never be shown clinically. As summarized in a recent review article by the Biomedical and Environmental Consultants, Inc. (Richland, WA) it was concluded that considering talc a carcinogen lacks convincing scientific documentation (see ref.). Also the FDA lists talc as generally safe ingredient for food and cosmetics. Hence, we think that talc can be used safely in mineral makeup and, if needed, can provide more stability and texture to the powder. Talc may also be especially useful for oily skin.

As mineral makeup does not usually contain water growth of bacteria is limited and preservatives may be omitted. Zinc oxide may also help to reducing bacterial growth.

Performance and Application

Mineral makeup has several great advantages over traditional liquid or cream foundations. First, mineral makeup provide sun protection and thus reduce the risk of UV-induced skin aging. It also gives great coverage and looks more like “real skin” than other makeup as it does not give a mask-like look and feel. Mineral makeup are highly water resistant and adhere all day long. Another great advantage is that mineral makeup are multi-use products as they combine foundation, sunscreen, makeup and concealer in one. Most women don't need a moisturizer underneath. Mineral makeup is also favorable for those who have allergies or problematic skin such as eczema, acne or otherwise irritated skin.

Mineral makeup is also very easy and quick to apply. The foundation brush (kabuki brush) gives a smooth “airbrushed” effect and well controlled coverage around the eyes, nose and lips.

Advantages of Mineral Makeup

- Provides sun protection
- Multi-use: combines foundation, makeup, sunscreen and concealer in one
- No mask-look or mask-feel
- Great and long lasting coverage (all-day)
- Favorable for irritated skin
- Easy to apply
- Easy and cheap to produce

Homemade Mineral Makeup: Cheap & Easy

As the production of mineral makeup is much easier than the traditional foundation requiring much less working steps (e.g. no emulsification) and the minerals are rather inexpensive, it is surprising that mineral makeup is priced so highly by various brands. So why not producing your own mineral makeup? It is very easy as you basically just need to blend various minerals and pigments together to create your own color shade. In our website at www.makingcosmetics.com you can find sample recipes of powder and also liquid mineral makeup. Or you can buy our mineral makeup kit that contains all the ingredients, tools and recipe for creating a great powder mineral makeup.

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References:

Wehner AP. Cosmetic talc should not be listed as a carcinogen: comments on NTP's deliberations to list talc as a carcinogen. Regul Toxicol Pharmacol. 2002;36:40-50.