



### 1. How does sunscreen protect your skin?

Sunscreens may contain physical or chemical barriers to protect the skin from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Physical barriers reflect or scatter the UV rays to prevent them from touching the skin, while chemical barriers absorb the radiation before it reaches the skin.

You should choose a sunscreen that is broad-spectrum, meaning it protects you from both UVA and UVB rays. If you have sensitive skin, you can choose a hypoallergenic or low irritant type of sunscreen.



### 2. How to protect your children with sunscreen

Babies and children have very sensitive skin and can burn easily. While skin cancer often appears later in life, most of the damage is done in a person's childhood, so keep babies and children out of the sun whenever possible. Once a baby is moving, patch test a sunscreen on the skin for 24 hours before applying it widely, to check for a reaction.



### 3. How to read sunscreen labels

SPF stands for sun protection factor. It is a measure of how much UVB the sunscreen can filter (but there is currently no international standard for UVA rays). Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30, which filters out over 96 percent of UV radiation when applied correctly and reapplied as instructed. No sunscreen can entirely protect against all UV radiation.

### 4. How to effectively apply sunscreen

- Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before sun exposure to allow time for it to be absorbed into the skin.
- An adult should apply at least one teaspoon of sunscreen to each arm and leg, and 1/2 a teaspoon to the face, neck and ears.
- Always reapply sunscreen every two hours when you are outdoors, and more often if you are sweating or in water - even if the sunscreen is water resistant.

2 out of 3 Australians will get skin cancer.  
Prevention and early detection is the only defence.  
Protect yourself with regular skin checks at National Skin Cancer Centres.