

LET'S RED-EO!

I've been fascinated with makeup since preschool days, during which I spent a perhaps unhealthy amount of time gazing at the artistry of my dolls' creamy complexions, rosy cheeks, and thick, glossy eyelashes.



As recently as last month, Target's end-aisle display of Bratz dolls distracted me enough that I wandered over for a lengthy, up-close inspection of their makeup technique. I know, I know.

But as one ever-mesmerized by what makeup does, I have never quite bought into the whole idea of makeup trends. Or, rather, makeup that's not in style. Really, is there a makeup version of acid-wash jeans? Well, maybe. The Just Plain Bad cheekbone-stripe blush of the Dynasty years and beef-liver-lipstick hues of the nineties come to mind. But if you aren't sporting the latest in so-called makeup trends, does anyone really notice?

Probably not. What makeup trends can do, though, is to give you an affordable, easily gotten way to play dress-up for the season. Afraid you'll break an ankle in platform booties? Gonna pass on that fur-trimmed leather bomber jacket? Get au courant at the makeup counter.

THIS JUST IN

A fall 2007 trend, as you may by now know, is pinup-girl red lips. Gorgeous look, stunning classic. My knee-jerk reaction: count me out. My lips are thin; coloring them red brings me dangerously close to looking like the Joker. It's easier to stick to my wallflower neutrals. But not as much fun, especially come sweater season.

So the key is adaptation. Just as magazines interpret "runway" to "realway" for mere mortals not endowed with a five-eleven, 120-pound frame and a blank-check clothing allowance, we can vary dramatic makeup trends for fun-without-foolishness.

With red lipsticks there are warms and there are cools, and typically, cool shades flatter cool skin tones. If you're not sure of your undertone, you can ask a makeup artist, but they can often disagree. I've heard that if silver glows on your skin, you're cool-toned, and if gold looks better, you're warm-toned. Some people can wear both warm and cool colors. What my vast experience in makeup accumulation has taught me is this: you pretty much just have to try something to see how well it works.

And when a red works, you'll know it. Your eyes will look brighter, the color more intense. Your skin will look healthier and your teeth whiter. If you try it on, look in the mirror, and go, "Wow, hey, all right," then that's your red.

If your desire is overshadowed by inhibition, ease into the look. Wear red lips around the house or out on weekends. Get used to seeing yourself in them. Dab the color on with your pinkie for a stained finish, rather than applying it in layers as you would your softer colors.

PREFER-REDS

For a just-slurped-a-berry-popsicle pucker, try N.Y.C. **Sheer Red**. It's a fabulous color and fantastically cheap: 99 cents. **N.Y.C Retro Red**, also dirt cheap, has a more typical lipstick texture and is a shade that would do Jane Russell proud.



Revlon Super Lustrous Lipgloss in Cherries in the Glow is a kind, gentle red, with a sheerness that allows subtlety. Its classic big sister, **Cherries in the Snow** lipstick, is pinker and denser.



Clinique Angel Red gets raves, and MAC Russian Red is what you want if drama's your style.

Chanel Rouge Allure #14, Passion, is a gorgeous, neutral-to-cool red that applies softly and feels light, not waxy. If the color doesn't make you feel sleek and sassy, then its 007-James-Bondian high-tech tube will.

Bobbi Brown Lip Color in Raisin is another fave of mine. Its brick tone is dramatic without being in-your-face. The formula is dense and matte, but not Goth.

Nars Red Lizard is a sophisticated neutral shade that makes you look like a grown-up (in the good way). It fades to a nice stain.

PREP SCHOOL

Red requires more attention than less showy colors. Make sure your lips are de-flaked. Rubbing a damp washcloth over your kisser is a good habit to get into. **Aquaphor** is my favorite balm for overnight smoothing—it's a more emollient, less sticky version of Vaseline. It has recently become available in sets of two travel-size tubes. Keep a tube in your desk, purse, car, nightstand—it's also great for cuticles, elbows, and dry knuckles.



IF LOVING A PENCIL IS WRONG, I DON'T WANT TO BE RIGHT

When you're ready to apply color, pay attention to your lip line. Hard to do if you are a die-hard lip-liner hater like I am. Which is why I'm shocked and delighted that my lip product Find of the Year is **Laura Mercier's Flawless Fix Pencil** (I have it in Neutral). It all started when I went to the Mercier counter to buy a birthday gift for my dear friend who rocks red lipstick every day. The sales associate recommended a deep coral lipstick, the balm, and this "un-liner" pencil.



When she described it, I thought, "Oh, right. Another gimmicky product—and get away from me with that thing." But I let her try it on me (very rare for this germaphobe) and was amazed. As she predicted, it made my bare lips look so much more defined and noticeable, yet natural. I snapped up one for my friend and one for myself.

The Flawless Fix Pencil is magic because it matches your skin color, not your lip color. You apply it just outside your lip line, then blend into your skin with your pinkie. It takes away those scattered, random, microscopic discolorations that border your lips and imparts a clean, highlighted edge. What eyeliner does for your eyes this does for your lips, only in reverse, enhancing with light instead of dark.

It's also good for dotting onto little blotches on my face, like the broken blood vessel in the crook of my nostril. It's not a concealer, though, just a perfecter. It's got a sharpener in the cap, so it's always ready to use. Get one and you won't be sorry.

EASY ON THE EYES

Finally, red lips call for downplay elsewhere: a polished, neutral face is the goal. Go easy on foundation by applying it with a damp sponge, or just press loose powder into your moisturized and sunscreensed skin with a good-quality puff. I love the **Laura Mercier Velour Puff**. Keep cheeks understated with soft, subtle blush: some good ones include **Chanel Joues Contraste in Nude**, **Revlon Powder Blush in Naturally Nude**, **Lancôme Blush Subtil Delicate Oil-Free Powder Blush in Miel Glace**, and **Sue Devitt Silky Blush in Tralee**.



For natural, polished lids, sweep them with a neutral shadow. I prefer matte or low-shimmer ones, including **Stila Dune**, **Milani Almondine**, or **Bobbi Brown Bone**. **Estée Lauder Signature Silky Eyeshadow Duo in Cappuccino** is a staple, as are any number of **Shu Uemura's** gorgeous neutrals, including **P Beige 800**, **M Brown 850**, and **M Beige 820**.

Find Bobbi Brown at bobbirowncosmetics.com, Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, and Saks Fifth Avenue.

Find Chanel at chanel.com, Dillard's, Macy's, Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue.

Find Clinique at clinique.com, Dillard's, Macy's, Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Sephora.

Find Estée Lauder at Dillard's, esteelauder.com, Macy's, Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Sephora.

To continue receiving Counter Intelligence, please be sure to sign up on the [TEXAS MONTHLY newsletters](#) page. Happy Autumn, and bye for now!

This is an advertising message from TEXAS MONTHLY. You signed up to receive email messages from TEXAS MONTHLY either online at texasmonthly.com, at the web site of one of our business partners, or when you filled out a reader response card. You may cancel your subscription to this and other TEXAS MONTHLY newsletters at any time.