

Consumer Corner

Getting The Most Beauty For Your Buck: A Guide For Riding Out The Economic Blues

(NAPSA)—Here's a quick test: Would you ever go without makeup because the economy has you so jittery you're trying to save every last dime possible?

Most women would answer a resounding “No way.” And they'd be right—not because there's anything inherently wrong with scrimping, but because it turns out there's really no need for such sacrifices.

“Quite often, products at lower price points work just as well as higher-end brands,” says Martha McCully, a lifestyle expert who was formerly beauty director at Allure magazine and executive editor at InStyle. “You just need to do some research and discover what's best for you.”

Here's a cheat sheet for separating the must-haves from the nice-to-haves:

Buff, don't polish. Giving up weekly trips to the manicurist may seem like an obvious solution to budget cutters. But there's a sensible middle ground: having your nails buffed, which can last two to three weeks. Plus, there's no agonizing over whether your burgundy or black polish will chip.

Drugstore finds. Next time you are at your local drugstore, look for great deals on products that offer multiple functions for a single price (e.g., tinted sunscreen that provides protection while also serving as a foundation). Similarly, high-end department stores charge \$50 or more for a pair of tights. For a mere \$15, however, you can get both fashion and function with a pair of black or nude compression stockings from Futuro Hosiery's Energizing collection. “They look like regular



Recessionistas have learned how to shop smart.

stockings but help relieve common symptoms we all deal with like tired, achy legs, swelling and even spider veins,” says McCully. “They're the perfect accessory for those of us who are often on our feet or sitting for long periods of time at work or on a plane.”

Skip the deodorant. What makes underarms so potentially “aromatic” is bacteria, and using an alcohol swab instead of deodorant—at a cost of about 2 cents each—works just as well. “I've been doing this for years without incident and so has a doctor friend of mine,” says McCully, who's also known for her three years as a celebrity judge on the HGTV hit series “Design Star.” “In a pinch, you can even use the antibacterial hand sanitizer you keep in your purse.”

The right tools. What you buy can save you money, but so can how you use it. Prime example: the right makeup brush. Use it to apply eye shadow instead of your fingers—which can leave a hard sheen that renders the product unusable—and you may be surprised how much longer your shadow lasts.