

AUSTRALIAN GUIDE TO NATURAL SUNSCREEN



GREEN FOOT MAMA



cheatsheet

- 1 Sunscreen protects skin from the sun's rays responsible for aging (UVA), burning (UVB), and sun damage linked to skin cancer.

- 2 SPF measures how much *more* time it takes for skin to burn with SPF than without it. Eg. if your unprotected skin burns in 10 minutes, SPF15 will prevent burning 15 times longer - about 2.5 hours.

- 3 Physical sunscreens reflect and block the sun's rays. Chemical sunscreens absorb them. Broad spectrum sunscreen protects your skin from both UVA and UVB. Zinc blocks UVA without other chemical ingredients.

- 4 Only TGA approved products can use the term sunscreen in Australia. They have AUSTL on the label but only need to list active ingredients and known irritants.

- 5 Cosmetics with sun protection (like Organic Sun) do not need AUSTL and must list all ingredients. They can only claim up to SPF15 and need to comply with ingredient, safety and efficacy rules.



tips

what to look for

- 1** Choose a mineral based formula with broad spectrum protection. I prefer Zinc Oxide as it protects against both UVA and UVB.

- 2** If the SPF advertised is over 15, check that it has a TGA AUSTL number on the packaging. This way you can be sure the product is made and tested to meet Australian safety standards.

- 3** Select a brand that lists ALL ingredients on the label. TGA approved products only *need* to list active ingredients and known irritants. Many natural brands in Australia list all ingredients though they don't have to.

- 4** If the ingredient list includes water/h₂O/aqua, check it uses a safe natural preservative. Otherwise, choose a formula that doesn't need preservative because it doesn't use water - like an oil or balm.



tips

what to look out for

Take care choosing hand made or artisan natural sunscreen in Australia. You need to be sure it is both effective and safe before using it on your family and risking skin damage.

5 Fake Australian Brands

- Some foreign brands are selling natural "sunscreen" on social media as "[brand name] Australia".
- The products are not made in Australia, to Australian standards, using approved ingredients.
- They're not listed with TGA but use the words "sunscreen", "water resistant" and SPF up to 40.
- They offer no evidence of understanding SPF or stability testing.
- When you buy these products, your money goes offshore.
- The ACCC and TGA have no jurisdiction over anything you choose to buy from overseas. Their stance is "buyer beware".



tips

what to look out for

6 Artisan Products

Handmade, natural sunscreens often pop up for sale at local markets in Australia.

Made with good intentions, these products often claim to be “sunscreen”, waterproof, with SPF over 15. This may be due to a lack of knowledge of Australian regulations.

While the product may be safe and effective, you want to be sure before you use it on your family and risk skin damage.

Before you buy, ask about the SPF testing done to achieve the rating claimed. It's not enough to include a certain percentage of zinc and mix.

Zinc molecules are difficult to disperse to achieve the desired SPF rating.

Also ask about shelf life, preservatives and testing to ensure safety from microbial growth.

You should get a good sense from the quality of the answers, if the product is right for your family.