

Toss it, or keep it?

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Toss it, or keep it?

By Jennifer Holder

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If you are a product junkie like me then you probably have lotions, creams, tubes of lipstick etc that have been sitting in the same spot untouched for several months or even years. You know the items that you just had to have but then forgot about after the thrill of buying it wore off. This article is intended to be used as a guide for product junkies everywhere to know when a product should be thrown away or kept around for a little while longer.

Everything has a shelf life including our make-up and all other potions and lotions. But there are things you can do to lengthen the life of your products.

1. Keep your products out of the bathroom this includes any prescriptions or over the counter medications too. Humidity can affect the life of all products.
2. Keep away from extreme temperatures including direct sunlight which could change the color and fragrance.
3. Do not share any products unless they come in a pump bottle or new applicator for each use. Bacteria can build up and shorten the life of your product. Or worse cause you to get an infection.

Lotions and Creams

Separation after sitting for a while means the product should be tossed. Smell is also an important factor. If the products smell changes in any way that is a good indication that it has expired. Toss it! Foundations, moisturizers etc all have a shelf life of about a year after opening as long as they are stored properly. If you notice any change in consistency or fragrance it's a pretty safe bet that it is no longer good. If you still have that cover up from when you went to prom do yourself a favor and Toss it!

Fragrances

If stored properly away from heat and cold your favorite scent can last 3 to 5 years. It is a good idea to store fragrances in a cool dark area such as a jewelry box or drawer.

Powders

All types of powders including blush and eye shadow have a pretty long shelf life as long as you use a new or cleaned applicator with each use. Have you ever seen someone's powder compact with a dark film on top? That is an accumulation of oils from the skin that have been trapped in the puff and then absorbed into the powder. Yuck! Avoid this by either washing your applicator regularly or buying a bag of applicators at a dollar store and use a fresh one each time you apply your powder. Powder brushes

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for loose powder should be cleaned at least once a week to keep your powder fresh.

Pencils

Pencils have a pretty long shelf life because every time you sharpen eyeliner or lip pencil you are exposing new product. It is a good idea to sharpen your pencils at least once a week to remove any contaminants. Do not let your pencils get wet and then dry out again. This may cause mold to form.

Lipsticks and glosses

Bacteria does not thrive on wax based products so these types of products tend to last quite a long time about 1 to 2 years. If you notice "beading" on the surface of your lipstick this indicates that it has been exposed to heat or is aging. Check the color and consistency and if it appears to have changed: Toss it! Lip glosses with wand applicators should never be shared because bacteria can get trapped inside the container. To be on the safe side replace these types of glosses every six months.

Mascara and Liquid Eyeliner

The MAX shelf life for these kinds of products is 3 months!! Do yourself a favor and label your mascara's and liquid eyeliners with the date that it was opened on the package somewhere. Your eye area is one of the most sensitive parts on your body. You do not want to take any chances of getting some sort of infection. It is also a bad idea to share these types of products too. When you use mascara or liner do not pump the wand, this causes air and bacteria to get trapped inside. Instead wipe the sides of the tube to pick up color.

Products like the ones mentioned in this article can make you look and feel your best but it is important to know that it is not a good idea to keep these types of things for an extended period of time. I would suggest you do a "spring" clean of your make-up bag every three months or so. Then go shopping for new products! You deserve it!

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How To Better Handle Your Mail

By Sue and Chuck DeFiore

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Letters, magazines, bills, flyers, what to do with them all. There should be only two responses to every piece of mail or e-mail, do something with it, or toss it!

The best way, as always, to deal with it all is in an organized fashion.

One of the quickest ways to do this is to have the following folders:

A red one for things that must be dealt with immediately. This would include anything that needs an

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immediate response, something that has to be done today. A letter you must respond to, a meeting you have to schedule, a report you need to do, a telephone call that needs to be made. Within this folder you will need to prioritize what needs to be handled first, second, etc.

Bills that come in and need to be paid should be placed in your tickler file a couple days before their due date to account for mailing time. So as you are opening your bills that come in the mail, check the due date and place them in your tickler file. If it has to be paid upon receipt, put it in the red folder so you can deal with it immediately.

Meetings (flyers) that have to be attended are placed in a gray folder. Be sure to check the dates, highlight them. Your next step is to be sure to place them on your calendar, and then to tickle them two days before for your review or if there is anything you need to do or prepare for the meeting.

If you receive meeting highlights or minutes by mail, these can be placed in a yellow folder for your perusal at a later date. These are the types of things that can be read during lunch, or while backing up files, printing, etc.

Magazines and articles you receive can be placed in a black folder. This is your reading folder. Take it with you when you go on appointments that you know you will have some lag time. Read during lunch. Schedule time in the morning and weekends. If you make reading a part of your daily schedule, it won't pile up. And remember, once you read it, file it away, or toss it.

Every piece of paper should generate a reaction, the reaction might be to deal with it, file it, or toss it, but one of them needs to occur. If you follow this simple rule, you can keep mail and paperwork under control, and your sanity to boot.

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