

WHAT'S TRENDING?

ISSUE #5

CLEANSING

OCTOBER 2026



CRODA | Beauty

SMART SCIENCE TO IMPROVE LIVES™



Emerging trends in cleansing

CLEANSING IS EVOLVING FROM A FUNCTIONAL FIRST STEP INTO A MORE CONSIDERED PART OF THE BEAUTY RITUAL.

The role of cleansing within beauty and the skincare routine is expanding. Once seen as a purely functional step, cleansing solutions are now expected to also protect skin health, deliver visible results and create moments of joy. Consumers seek gentle yet effective formulas with purposeful ingredients and sensorial textures to provide an experience and go beyond a simple clean.

Market drivers

- Simplicity and beauty routine guidance
- Visible results and efficacy
- Premiumisation and personalisation
- Fragrance and emotional benefits
- Wellness and self-care
- Skin health and barrier protection
- Sustainability and transparency

The skin cleansing market

The global market for facial cleansers (including makeup removers) was valued at \$14.1bn in 2024. It is expected to grow 5.9% CAGR between 2025 and 2034, reaching \$24.8bn.

Source: Mintel, 2025



There's a strategic opportunity to reinvigorate facial cleansing through differentiated, benefit-driven innovation that aligns with emerging consumer needs.

Source: Mintel, 2023



05

Everyday cleansing

Evolving cleansing from a core step to one that helps to maintain skin comfort, balance and health.

06

Conscious cleansing

Conscious formulations that effectively balance efficacy, transparency and sustainability.

08

Scientifically proven cleansing

Evidence-backed cleansing solutions that deliver targeted, measurable skin benefits.

10

Elevated experiences and luxury

Transforming the everyday routine into a moment of indulgence through sensorial elements.

07 & 11

Cleansing for self-care

Using cleansing as part of the self-care routine to support relaxation and wellbeing.



Mild and gentle everyday cleansing

Everyday cleansing has often focused on the idea of simply getting the skin clean. However, as consumer knowledge of the skin barrier grows, this core step is also expected to contribute to maintaining skin comfort, balance and health.

This is driving preferences for gentle, hydrating offerings that remove impurities including dirt, oils, makeup and SPF, whilst addressing both hydration and sensitivity concerns.



say it's important to use gentle beauty products in their beauty routines.

Source: Mintel, 2025

Microbiome-friendly, pH-balanced, and non-stripping formulas appeal to these consumer needs, alongside formats that make cleansing convenient and adaptable to different skin types.

Brand opportunities

- **Low-pH formulations** align with the skin's natural acidity, preserving the acid mantle to prevent moisture loss and play a crucial role in maintaining skin health
- Educate consumers on the **science behind microbiome claims** and their positive impact



1 **COSRX** Low pH Good Morning Gel Cleanser
Protects the skin barrier and restores pH balance.



- Use **sensory cues** to evoke a perception of gentleness, such as a lightweight foam
- **Address specific skin concerns** such as skin dryness to build on current cleansing routines
- Explore **biosurfactants**, known for their ability to minimise skin irritation while maintaining efficacy
- **Seek professional approval and certification** from accredited organisations to build trust and credibility
- Take inspiration from K-Beauty and emphasise **fermentation-derived** and **probiotic ingredient complexes**

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- Clinique** Extra Gentle Cleansing Foam - A plush, velvety foam cleanser safe for sensitive skin.
- YOHADA** Night Care Body Wash - Low-irritation formula created to protect skin from overnight dryness and roughness.
- BIOEFFECT** Facial Cleanser - Leverages a biosurfactant recognised for its soothing and hydrating properties.
- Byoma** Sensitive Skin Body Wash - Gently cleanses whilst providing relief to dry skin. Dermatologist approved and clinically proven.

Focus on filter technology for healthy skin

Awareness of the impact that water quality has on skin is creating opportunities for beauty brands to incorporate or partner on filtration technologies.



Filtered Beauty Shower Filter
Filtered water for healthier skin.



Conscious skin cleansing

Conscious beauty is evolving beyond ingredient exclusion lists and a preference for natural ingredients. Consumers are looking closely at what is in their cleanser, why it has been added and how it has been sourced.

For beauty companies, this means that many elements are considered as part of the value proposition and each can influence perceptions of a product as clean, considered and responsible such as:

Product transparency

Ingredient selection

Traceability

Sustainability

Biodegradability

Responsible sourcing

Packaging choices

Product formats

Proven efficacy

The demand for more evidence around ingredients and sustainability, alongside regulatory pressures such as the proposed Green Claims Directive, means that **natural ingredient selection is critical**. The market is moving in favour of those that are known to be gentle on the skin and provide skin benefits.



Aloe vera

Hydrating, soothing and skin-calming properties.



Charcoal

Deep-cleansing and oil-absorbing abilities.



Oats

Known for their soothing and anti-irritant qualities.



Turmeric

Used for its anti-inflammatory and skin-brightening benefits.

Plant milks are also becoming popular in cleansing, offering natural ingredients with the soothing connotations of milk.



Brand opportunities

- **Offer solutions that are effective in reduced water temperatures** which may be used due to hotter climates, the sustainability benefits, economic savings or consumers understanding the benefits of using cooler water on the skin

54%

Say the rising cost of living has meant they have reduced the water temperature of their showers/baths (Europe- Germany).

Source: Mintel, 2023

- Concentrated body washes and bars can **reduce water in the product** whilst powder-based, waterless cleansers **reduce water during consumer application/usage**
- **Add convenience to sustainability** by developing convenient, travel-ready formats while minimising packaging waste
- **Boost sustainability through biotechnology** by developing effective and eco-friendly formulations connecting biotechnology with sustainability and enhanced ingredient efficacy

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- 1 Nivea Refreshing Body Wash** - The brand website and packaging offers guidance on products suitable for cold showers while highlighting the skin health benefits cold water provides.
- 2 Olay Cleansing Melts** - delivers potent skincare efficacy in a convenient, travel-ready format.
- 3 African Botanics** - Forest Bathing Invigorating Body Wash - formulated with gentle, naturally-derived, plant-based surfactants.



Performance driven cleansing

Consumer expectations of the cleansing category are rising as the broader shift towards science-backed beauty extends into the first step of skincare routines. The cleansing category is being viewed through a skin health lens and products are expected to do more than remove impurities.

This is creating a space for targeted claims, additional skin care benefits, sophisticated cleansing technologies and high-performance ingredients. Some of the additional benefits seen in cleansers include:

Hydration

Brightening

Strengthen the skin barrier

Prevent ageing

Address skin concerns (acne, pigmentation)

Consumers also want to understand how and why a product performs. Whether through clinically tested claims, dermatological expertise, ingredient science or visible results, they need reassurance that even the short contact with the product can deliver meaningful benefit.

70%

agree that beauty brands should provide more scientific evidence to validate the claims they make (France).

Source: Mintel, 2024

91%

of female consumers say they research ingredients before purchasing skincare products (Germany).

Source: Mintel, 2025

From barrier-supporting lipids and ceramides to prebiotic and microbiome-friendly approaches, cleansing is becoming a space for more sophisticated formulations.



Brand opportunities

Body wash: the first step to hydrated skin

To meet the need for moisturisation and preventing post-wash dryness, enhance formulations with moisture locking ingredients like ceramides or hyaluronic acid.

Facial cleansing: as a primer for skin care

By positioning cleansers as the foundation for optimal skin absorption of subsequent ingredients, brands can highlight their importance within the routine and emphasise skin preparation.

52%

hope to achieve skin hydration in their daily skincare routines (US).

Source: Mintel, 2025

Build trust through the power of science

As 'skinification' of cleansing continues, consumers will seek clinical credibility and expert-backed solutions to meet their individual skin needs.

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1 Charlotte Tilbury Charlotte's Magic Hydration Revival Cleanser is formulated with hyaluronic acid.

2 CeraVe Soothing Body Wash for Very Dry Skin is formulated with three essential ceramides along with hyaluronic acid.

3 Dove Melanin Even Tone Serum Body Wash with Pro-Ceramide is a pH balanced body wash that gently exfoliates to promote skin renewal.

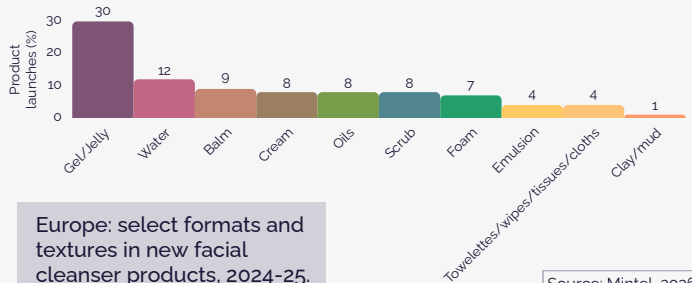


Premiumisation of the mass market

Previously seen as a purely functional step, cleansing is now being considered a part of the overall beauty experience. Brands can use this category as a key entry point into prestige beauty, meeting the desire for small, affordable luxuries that make every day routines feel special.

Sensorial experiences

Formats such as gels, balms, oils and transformative textures can enhance sensory appeal while fragrance, foam and after-feel also play a role in making it feel luxurious.



Brands may also reinforce the feeling of indulgence through spa-inspired rituals, in-store experiences, luxury brand heritage and innovative packaging.

Skinification of cleansing

Premiumisation is also being driven by the skinification trend. As consumers expect their products to deliver more, ingredients and claims traditionally associated with leave-on skincare are being incorporated into cleansing formulations.

These elements combined can help brands to elevate product positioning and use more premium price points.



Premiumisation of the mass market

Many mass market brands are elevating cleansing through innovative textures, skincare-inspired ingredients, exotic botanicals, elevated sensory, mood-boosting scents and more premium packaging. This offers consumers a sense of indulgence and added value without the high price point, while helping brands to drive category value and growth.

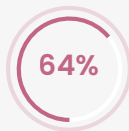
MARKET EXAMPLE **Dove**



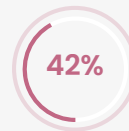


Cleansing for self-care

The popularity of enhanced self-care routines continues to rise as consumers increasingly pursue innovations that improve their total wellbeing, including mood and sleep.



of consumers are interested in trying mood-boosting products (USA).



aged 25-34 are interested in innovation to enhance sleep (Italian).

Source:
Mintel, 2025

They are drawn to offerings that provide multisensory experiences through features such as whipped textures, transformative formats, indulgent fragrances or appealing visuals. As a result, brands are elevating cleansing beyond function and positioning it as a meaningful wellbeing moment.



The everything shower

The emerging 'everything shower' trend further underscores the importance of self-care within the category. It involves an elaborate, often weekly shower routine that includes additional steps, such as hair masks and exfoliating scrubs, for a comprehensive self-care experience.



#EverythingShower

6.3bn views | +296.1% YoY growth

Source: SPATE

Brands can position their products or extend ranges to introduce new elements to soap, bath and shower routines.

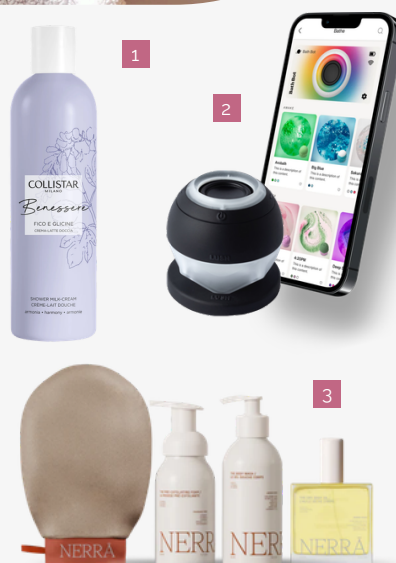


Brand opportunities

- **Invest in the science behind neurocosmetics** and help consumers to unlock and understand this innovative field
- **Use cutting-edge technologies** to elevate the experience and design the future of bathing
- **Create salon-at-home wellness experiences** to bring luxury to self-care routines
- From traditional bathing rituals to facial massage and botanical cleansing practices, **promoting routines inspired by tradition and heritage** can bring a deeper sense of ritual, connection and wellbeing to the everyday cleanse

Did you know? We have a trend section on our website exploring the heritage beauty and neurocosmetics trends in more detail.

Click to explore more...



- Collistar** Shower Milk-Cream - features a neurocosmetic active ingredient to create a feeling of harmony and balance.
- Lush's** Bathbot 360 - uses immersive colour and 180-degree sound for a super-powered sensory bathing experience.
- NERRA** Hammam 4-step ritual - a bathing practice inspired by ancient Mediterranean bathhouse traditions.



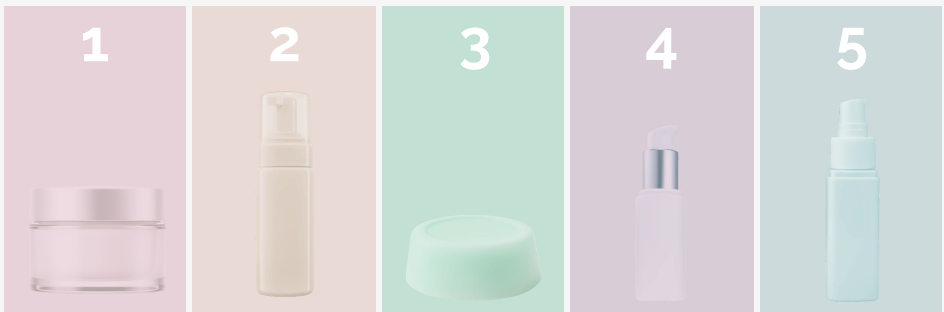
Key takeaways

- 1 Strengthen the skin barrier with low-pH and microbiome-focused products.
- 2 Advance sustainability by reducing water usage and exploring biotechnology-derived solutions.
- 3 Use credible science and actives to deliver expert-backed skin solutions, including post-wash benefits.
- 4 Be creative with formats, textures and fragrance for a more premium experience.
- 5 Elevate self-care routines through spa like experiences and neurocosmetics.

Formulation inspiration

Meet the trend with our top five cleansing formulations

Look out for our cleansing formulation collection that will launch soon. The collection includes five new formulations, providing inspiration for meeting the trends identified.



COMING SOON

Ingredient inspiration

Here we highlight some innovative products from our portfolio that will help you to meet the trends and consumer needs identified. Click the  symbol to discover more.



Adinol™ CT30 DS

A powerful, yet mild, sulfate-free surfactant that creates a luxurious foam to cleanse the skin and hair.



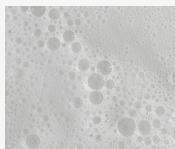
NatraFusion™ SL HA

An ultra-mild sophorolipid biosurfactant produced via biotechnology.



NatraGem™ S140 NP

An effective cleanser designed to incorporate a wide range of lipophilic ingredients into clear formulations.



Crodamol™ IPIS

Exceptional cleansing emollient offering outstanding performance in make-up removers.



Zenakine™

Unlock the power of skin chronobiology and combat cortisol damage with this neuroactive ingredient.



Phytessence™ Pink Pomelo EC

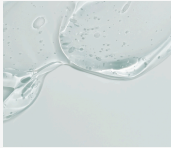
Promotes well-being, free from stress and anxiety by activating cell renewal for a radiant complexion.





Crodarom® Cider Vinegar EC

A fermented ingredient made from apple cider with astringent, antibacterial and balancing powers.



Amipreserve™

Natural salicylic acid helping deliver clearer skin and enhanced formulation preservation.



Heliami™ Osmanthus EC

Soothes and protects skin, ideal for luxe heritage and wellness concepts.



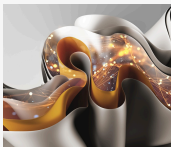
Phytofoam™

A botanical complex of three cleansing plants that boosts the foam and ameliorate its sensorial properties.



MOIST 24 PLUSNAT™

A greener version of Moist 24™, a recognised hydrating ingredient.



DS-HydroCeramide50™

Provides optimal skin protection, barrier repair and hydration as well as ceramide replenishment benefits.



Pacifeel®

A plant-based active ingredient that addresses both signs and causes of sensitive and reactive skin.



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*Can be considered to be generally suitable for vegan; however, as there is no single agreed definition nor a standard, global certification, if you are interested in making a vegan claim, please request our Vegan Suitability statement for specifics on this product, and compare to the certification(s) you are seeking to meet.

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