

The Encyclopaedia of Cosmetics

B is for



Bancroft's rule

A rule created by Wilder Dwight Bancroft, an American physical chemist, which states that a mainly hydrophilic (= water-receptive) emulsifier stabilises an O/W emulsion and a mainly hydrophobic (= water repellent) emulsifier stabilises a W/O emulsion.

Barrier (of the skin)

Separates the horny layer from the underlying skin tissue. This is constructed similarly to a brick wall, with the horny cells forming the “bricks” and the “cement” between the horny cells consisting mainly of fatty acids, ceramides and cholesterol.

Basal cell layer

Also known as the stratum basale. This is the lowest layer of the epidermis and consists mainly of cylindrical basal cells. The stratum basale divides every 200–400 hours to supply new cells.

BB Cream

Blemish balm. This is said to care for the skin, conceal impurities, protect against too much light and harmful substances, and smooth wrinkles.

Benzyl alcohol

Also known as phenyl methanol, this is a colourless fluid with a smell similar to jasmine, which is soluble in oils and ethanol, and insoluble in water. This substance is used in the perfume industry and cosmetics as a preservative.

Betaine

White powder resembling salt, which is easily soluble in water. It is often used in cosmetics as a moisturising or conditioning raw material.

BHT

Butylhydroxytoluene. Is used as an antioxidant and primarily prevents unsaturated fatty acids oxidising and becoming rancid.

Broadband Filters

Filters that absorb the entire range of ultraviolet radiation. They are used as UV filters in sun protection products, and filter out a portion of the UV-A and UV-B rays in sunlight.