

Sensory Assessment

The customer's acceptance of a cosmetic product is based on its tactile properties, i.e. how the product feels on the skin. These are always subjective and cannot be verified with objective measuring methods.

The term "Sensory Assessment" represents a test method which records the sensory effects of a cosmetic product. This method requires a panel of testers who are trained in sensory evaluation and who can assess cosmetic formulation as precisely as possible with reproducible results using reference samples and exact test instructions.



Assessment criteria for emulsions:

Application: How easy is it to remove the product from the packaging? How easy is it to apply the product to the skin?

Texture / Surface / Appearance: What is the first visual impression made by the product? Shiny or matt? Structured or smooth? What colour is the product?

Viscosity: Describe the viscosity/consistency of the product? Does it have low, medium or high viscosity? Does it have a runny consistency? Creamy? Is it thick in consistency? Or is it paste-like?

Spreadability / Distributability: How easy is it to spread or distribute the product over the skin? Does the product leave a white film on the skin (whitening effect) when it is distributed?

Absorption properties: How well is the product absorbed into the skin? Slowly, moderately or quickly?

Skin sensation directly after application: How does the skin feel after applying the product? Velvety, smooth, soft, moisturised, dry, richly nourished? Cooling or warming effect? Does the product leave a sticky or oily/greasy or occlusive film on the skin?

Smell: What olfactory impression does the product leave in the jar / on the skin? What do you think about the perfume – is it too weak, pleasant, intensive, too overpowering, dominant? Can you smell the product base? Do specific raw materials/active substances determine the smell of the formulation? Are there any smells resulting from interactions in the formulation?



Oil components have a major impact on the sensory profile of a cosmetic formulation. Depending on their viscosity, molecular weight and structure, these components lead to differing results in how the product is distributed on the skin and how fast it is distributed which in turn has a significant impact on the perception of greasiness, absorption and the resultant feeling on the skin.

For example, oils that spread quickly give a distinct feeling of smoothness immediately after application. Slowly spreading oils on the other hand, lead to a less pronounced feeling of smoothness but one that lasts longer. The combination of quickly, moderately and slowly spreading lipids leads to a sort of cascade of spread which achieves an ideal smoothing and nourishing effect and so guarantees the cosmetic acceptance of the product.

Assessment criteria for surfactant systems:

Application: How easy is it firstly to remove from the container / secondly to apply to the skin?

Texture / Surface / Appearance: What is the first visual impression made by the product? Shiny or matt? Smooth or structured?

Viscosity / Flow properties: Describe the viscosity / flow properties of the product? High or low viscosity? Low or moderate flow rate or thick in consistency?

Foam formation / Foam volume: How does the foam develop on distribution of the product? What is the average pore size distribution in the foam? Even or uneven?

Foam quality? How long does the foam last?

Spreadability: How easy is it to spread the product over the skin/ in the hair? Easy, moderately easy or not very easy?

Ease of removal from skin/hair: How easy is it to remove the product from the skin/the hair with water? Easy, moderately easy or not very easy?

Cleansing effect: Describe the cleansing effect of the product? Good, moderately good or inadequate?

Skin and hair sensation directly after application: How does the cleansing product make the skin feel after application? To what extent does the cleansing product dry out the skin after application? How does your hair feel?

Smell: What smell does the cleansing product itself have? Can you smell the product base? Do specific raw materials/active substances determine the smell of the formulation? Are there any smells resulting from interactions in the formulation? What smell does the cleansing product leave on the skin and hair? What do you think about the perfume – is it too weak, pleasant, intensive, too overpowering, dominant?



Have you ever heard about the surfactant handwash test? To assess the foam properties, sensory properties and skincare performance of a surfactant, we recommend carrying out a hand-washing test first. You'll be surprised ...

