



# NATURAL HEALTH

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## Natural Beauty

ONE of the most versatile beauty products you can buy. It cleans your hands, your face, your body, your feet, even your hair. But it wasn't always that way. It didn't become a staple in American households until 1879, when Ivory mass-produced an inexpensive body bar, and an industry was born.

Soap has become such a success that in the past five years alone, 1,428 new bars were introduced, according to Mintel research. No wonder searching for the best one seems almost impossible! But with a little understanding about what soap is and how it works, you can find the best one for your skin.

ment of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of Colorado. "The combination creates a molecule that attracts both water and the dirt or oils on the surface of your skin." Some soaps are also made with petroleum by-products and other synthetic ingredients;

By OLESSA PINDAK  
Photography by JACK MISKELL



A botanical bar, free of fragrance and color, **DHC White Soap** (\$5; [dhccare.com](http://dhccare.com)) uses hydrating olive oil extract to calm irritated skin.

LATHER UP: A good bar is sudsy, well-scented, and long-lasting.

## bar exam

All soaps will get you clean, but some leave your skin feeling silkier than others. Here's how to select your favorite.

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