

cc cream

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CC Cream

"Colour correcting" or "colour control" cream — a light-coverage tinted base aimed at tone rather than texture. It arrived as the sequel to [BB Cream](#) and, like it, **has no regulatory definition**; the difference between the two is a positioning decision by each brand, not a standard.

What distinguishes it, when it does

The consistent claim is that a CC cream targets **discoloration** — redness, sallowness, dullness, dark spots — while a BB cream targets overall evenness and coverage. In practice that shows up as:

- **A lighter, thinner texture** than a BB cream, often with more slip.
- **Optical correctors** — encapsulated or dispersed colour pigments, sometimes visible as green, lavender or peach beads that break on application.
- **Brightening actives** — niacinamide, vitamin C derivatives, licorice extract, tranexamic acid.
- **Light-diffusing fillers** — mica, silica, boron nitride — that scatter light so discoloration reads less sharply.

Coverage is generally sheerer than a BB cream. Both usually carry an SPF.

The colour-correcting mechanism, honestly

Correction works on the colour wheel: a complementary hue neutralises what it opposes. Green cancels red, lavender cancels yellow, peach and orange cancel blue-grey. That is real and it is how [Colour Corrector](#) products work.

What a CC cream carries is a **whole-face wash of that correction at very low intensity**. Over a general cast — flushing, an overall sallow tone — this works well. Over a discrete problem — a single dark mark, a bruise, an inflamed spot — it does essentially nothing, because a face-wide tint at 2% strength cannot neutralise a concentrated area. That is a job for a targeted corrector followed by [Concealer](#).

Who it suits

Anyone whose complaint is **tone rather than texture**, who wants very light coverage, or who wants one step to do the work of moisturiser, sunscreen and a tint. Anyone needing genuine coverage should buy [Foundation](#); a CC cream applied in multiple layers to build coverage goes patchy rather than opaque.

Where it sits in the rules

Cosmetic in the US — FDA primary category (08), makeup preparations (not eye) — with the standard colour additive requirement: only additives approved for the intended use, and certified colours from FDA-certified batches.

Almost all CC creams carry an SPF, which makes them **also OTC drugs** in the US: the sunscreen monograph applies, the filters appear as active ingredients in a Drug Facts panel, and the product carries a **printed expiration date**. In the EU the same product is a cosmetic throughout, with UV filters drawn from the closed positive list at **Annex VI**.

The claims worth watching are the treatment ones. "Brightens the appearance of discoloration" is a cosmetic claim; "treats hyperpigmentation" is a drug claim. See [Brightening Treatment](#) for where that line sits and why it matters.

Shelf life

With SPF, the **printed expiration date** governs. Without, twelve months after opening. CC creams containing vitamin C derivatives discolour as they oxidise, and a tinted base that has shifted orange in the tube has changed shade as well as potency.

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- Regulatory statements here follow the FDA and EU sources listed on [Cosmetics](#), read 16 August 2026.