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Tattoos? No Problem! Tattoo Coverage for Performers

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Visible Tattoos? No Problem!

By Christina Johnson



Cultures across the world have histories of adorning themselves with symbols thought to be therapeutic. With the help of carbon dating and the discovery of the Iceman in 1991 we now know tattoos can be dated at around 5,200 years old.

Throughout time the practice of tattooing has meant many things from being marked as a criminal/servant to different forms of personal expression.

Statistics have shown that we are currently moving towards a high percentage of the population having at least one tattoo in their lifetime.

Though most employers have no issues with them as long as they can be covered, theatre has its own difficulties with the issue. During an audition tattoos can be very distracting and in the run of a show most common coverage options rub off on the costumes.

There are many different options now for the coverage of all shapes and sizes of tattoos but the prices can be pretty high. In this project I explored various professionally recommended coverage techniques/products with the addition of some cheaper, inventive products.

Statistics

- Annual amount of U.S. spending on tattoos \$1,650,500,000
- Total percent of Americans (all ages) who have at least one tattoo 14 %
- Percentage of U.S. adults 18 – 25 who have at least one tattoo 36 %
- Percentage of U.S. adults 26 – 40 who have at least one tattoo 40 %
- Total number of Americans that have at least one tattoo 45 million
- Number of tattoo parlors in the U.S. 21,000
- Average cost of a small tattoo \$ 45
- Average cost of a large tattoo \$150 / hour
- Percentage of people with tattoos who claim they are addicted to ink 32 %
- Percentage of people who have some regret after getting their tattoo 17 %
- Content Author: Statistic Brain
- Date research was conducted: August 13, 2016
- <http://www.statisticbrain.com/tattoo-statistics/>

Fun Fact: In 1898 tattooing was considered to be a popular pastime and the aristocracy of Europe was at the forefront of the craze.

Rising Numbers

- About three in ten Americans (29%) have at least one tattoo, up from roughly two in ten (21%) just four years ago. What's more, few inked Americans stop at one; among those with any tattoos, seven in ten (69%) have two or more.
- These are some of the results of The Harris Poll of 2,225 U.S. adults surveyed online from October 14-19, 2015.
- Tattoos are especially prevalent among younger Americans, with nearly half of Millennials (47%) and over a third of Gen Xers (36%) saying they have at least one, compared to 13% of Baby Boomers and one in ten Matures (10%). Millennials and Gen Xers (37% and 24%) are also exponentially more likely than their elders (6% Baby Boomers, 2% Matures) to have multiple tattoos.
- Rural (35%) and Urban (33%) Americans are both more likely to have a tattoo than Suburbanites (25%).
- Those with kids in the household are much more likely than those without to be sporting at least one tattoo (43% vs. 21%).
- Political persuasion doesn't seem to factor into the decision to get a tattoo, with little difference between Republicans, Democrats and Independents (27%, 29% and 28%).
- Information collected from: http://www.theharrispoll.com/health-and-life/Tattoo_Takeover.html

Tattoos & Hiring

- LEGALITY
- Countries you can be arrested in or fined for certain illegal religious, political or racial tattoos is 13. (Primarily Socialist and Islamic countries.)
- Tattoos in America are a form of expression and are protected from criminal law by the Constitution, but are not federally protected in the workplace.
- OCCUPATIONS
- The job industry with highest percentage of tattooed staff is the military.
- The occupation with the second highest rate of tattooed employees is agriculture.
- The occupation with the most lenient tattoo and piercing policies is the government.
- However, only 8% of government employees have ink or piercings.
- HIRING
- 76% of employees feel tattoos and piercings hurt your job interview chances.
- However, 73% of people say they would hire staff that had visible tattoos.
- 6% of tattooed people say they wouldn't hire someone with visible ink.
- Only 4% of tattooed or pierced people say they've actually faced discrimination in their current job.
- LIVING
- States with the highest percentage of tattoo discrimination statistics are South Carolina, Oklahoma and Florida.
- States with the most piercing and tattoo friendly public opinion are Montana, Colorado and California.
- Information collected from: <http://www.stapaw.com/tattoos-in-the-workplace-statistics>

Products Being Tested



Ben Nye Crème Foundation Technique

Basic Application Technique:

Step 1.) First, thoroughly clean the tattoo with alcohol.

2.) Use the opposite end of the spectrum with color. For example, if you are trying to cover a blue tattoo you would use an orange palette to cover up how dark the tattoo you're covering is. For a dark tattoo we usually start with either a much darker tone or a much lighter tone than your natural color

3.) Use a neutral set or translucent powder to set this layer (Ben Nye Theatrical Crème Makeup Kits come with powder)

4.) Choose a concealer to apply over the orange/base color. Choose a color that is close to your own skin tone. It may be necessary to mix it with your highlight to achieve the right shade.

5.) Apply the foundation to the sponge using a patting motion. Pat the tattoo rather vigorously in and around the outside. Powder set one more time and apply hairspray or final seal.



Ben Nye Crème Foundation + Ben Nye Final Seal Technique



Step 1: Applied
KF-5 Brown
Medium MHK-
11 Ben Nye
Crème with
sponge



Step 3: Applied
MKH 07 Rio
Tan Ben Nye
Crème with
sponge



Step 2: Set
with Neutral
Set Ben Nye
Powder;
applied with
powder puff



Step 4: Set
with Neutral
Set Ben Nye
Powder;
applied with
powder puff;
applied Ben
Nye Final
Seal

Ben Nye Crème Foundation + Ben Nye Final Seal Technique



Pre-Step:
Applied
coconut oil
as
moisturizer
/primer



Step 1: Applied p-
45 Olive Fair
Crème Foundation
with sponge and
powder set with
Ben Nye
Translucent Fair
Powder



Step 2: Applied P-
42 Ultra Beige
Ben Nye Crème
with sponge and
powder set



Above:
Coverage after
held under
running water
for 5 minutes



Above:
Coverage after
towel drying
and brushing
against clothing

*Note: Ben Nye has consistently been shown to crumble after extended wear

Pros & Cons of Ben Nye Crème Foundation Technique

Pros:

- Available at Norcostco and typically in stock with most theatres
- Price: \$9.50-\$15.00 (\$9.50 per crème;\$15.00 for concealer ring)
- Blends well with various skin tones
- Easy to remove with makeup wipes or soap and water
- Minimal drying time
- Overall application can be done under 4 minutes which may vary depending on size and colors involved in tattoo

Cons:

- Usually has to be purchased online and color can be hard to match
- Typically have to use two colors to completely cover a tattoo
- Tends to crumble up on skin leaving a flakey texture
- Does rub off on costumes even with final seal applied
- Sweat can cause it to melt off

Sally Hansen Airbrush Legs Technique



Manufacturer's

Instructions:

Shake well - hold can 15cm/6 inches from skin. Spray directly into hand and apply evenly all over legs. Wait 60 seconds before dressing. Wash hands after use. Wash off easily with soap and water.

Tattoo Coverage

Instructions:

Shake well- hold can 6 inches from skin and lightly spritz across tattoo; use hair dryer to make it dry to the touch then continue misting layers until coverage is achieved; wash your hands



*Note: this is Sally Hansen Airbrush Legs in Deep Glow that matched to a Ben Nye Tk-6 Skin Tone. The first layer takes the longest to dry with following layers drying markedly faster. The photos above depict two layers of Airbrush Legs.

Sally Hansen Airbrush Face Technique



This technique was done by misting thin layers of Sally Hansen Airbrush Face in Classic Ivory. For Ben Nye reference my tone is usually a mixture of Olive Fair and Ultra Beige. The dry time is longer than any other option but the coverage is waterproof/durable and does not smudge. This is 3 layers because colored tattoos require more layers. Photos represent each layer starting with a primer layer using coconut oil on the far left.

Sally Hansen Airbrush Technique With Powder Set Between Layers



We started with the darkest tone of Sally Hansen Airbrush Legs which was Fairest Glow and applied Airbrush Face Makeup in Ivory on top (middle photo). Attempting to set this with powder causes the color to flake off if it has not been allowed to properly dry. It is important to either spray this over a towel or over a sink. Several thin layers work better than one thick layer of the spray

Pros & Cons of Sally Hansen Airbrush Product Techniques

Pros:

- Can be purchased at most drugstores/Walmart
- Travel size bottle is under \$5.00 and could be used to cover small tattoos numerous times (full sized bottle is under \$10.00)
- Application is fairly simple
- Waterproof
- Smudge proof
- Does not come off on clothes
- Comes off with soap and water

Cons:

- Color range is very limited
- Color of the bottle is not true to the makeup color
- Drying time can range from 1 minute to 20 minutes depending on if you use a hair dryer
- Spray range can be an issue (should be used away from costumes and over a surface that can be wiped down)

*Note: when applied with Ben Nye Crème to match color better it does help the Ben Nye to last longer instead of becoming crumbly.

Mehron Tattoo Cover Ring Application



How to use this product:

Choose the tattoo cover shade closest to skin tone and apply with a sponge using a patting, not a stroking motion (color used above is TC 1 Light). Set with Ben Nye Translucent Powder using a powder puff. Remove with makeup remover followed by soap and water.

Artist Tip: once tattoo cover is set, apply cream makeup over tattoo cover (again with a patting motion). Press Ben Nye Translucent Powder using a powder puff into final makeup design. Mist Ben Nye Final Seal over area to seal and protect final makeup application.

Photos left to right:

1. Applied coconut oil as primer
2. Applied Mehron crème with finger and powder set
3. Applied Ben Nye Crème in Ultra Beige then powder set and applied Ben Nye Final Seal
4. Coverage after held under running water for 5 minutes

Pros & Cons of Mehron Cover Ring Application

Pros:

- Waterproof coverage when set properly
- Cost Efficient: \$5.00-\$18.00 (\$5.00 - will buy a single container of your color-the one used was TC-1 Light; \$12-\$18 for the entire ring)
- Did not take much product to achieve full coverage
- Application can take less than 2 minutes with very little dry time
- Does not rub off easily on clothes
- Holds up very well to water and abrasion

Cons:

- Product does not do well with sponges; application with your finger works much better
- If not set properly it will rub off slightly on clothing
- Very sticky during first layer of application

Dermablend Application

STEP 1

Apply directly over tattoo or area of concern; pat with fingertips and blend out or “feather” edges to avoid any demarcation lines.

STEP 2

Allow foundation to dry completely before applying additional layers if more coverage is desired.

STEP 3

Pat on a generous amount of Setting Powder over covered areas, allow to set for 2 minutes, then lightly brush off excess powder with a brush.

*Note: takes between 5 and 10 minutes to completely dry for each layer, larger tattoos can take up to an hour (add another 10 minutes dry time after setting powder is applied).

Product blends better using your fingers due to the heat of your body and your skin should be moisturized before starting application



Pros & Cons of Dermablend Application

Pros:

- Waterproof coverage when set properly
- Does not rub off easily on clothes
- Holds up very well to water and abrasion
- There is quite a bit of makeup in the container which means it could last for a considerable length of time
- Contains sunscreen and other ingredients beneficial to skin health

Cons:

- Product does not do well with sponges, application with your finger works much better
- If not set properly it will rub off slightly on clothing
- Very sticky during first layer of application
- Drying time causes the process to take up to an hour, minimum 30 minutes
- Has to be purchased at a makeup store or online
- Product is generally expensive: \$27.00-\$35.00 and it is recommended to use their setting powder which is also \$27.00

Ben Nye Powder Set Us. Dermablend Setting Powder

- Neutral Set Powder: Talc; Aluminum Hydroxide; Methylparaben; Propylparaben; Butylparaben; Sorbic Acid; Parfum Free.
- Dermablend Setting Powder: Talc, Methylparaben, Hydrogenated Lecithin. May Contain CI 77491, CI 77499, CI 77492, Iron Oxides, CI 77891/Titanium Dioxide

*Note: products are similar enough to be used interchangeably. Ben Nye powder costs \$7-\$22 while Dermablend costs \$27.00

Bare Minerals Coverage Application



Bare Minerals Concealer in Light 1 applied using sponge applicator



Bare Minerals Original Foundation Powder in Fairly Light applied with Bare Minerals Maximum Coverage Concealer Brush

Drugstore Makeup Coverage- Eyeshadow+Setting Spray



Step 1.) Applied lavender eye shadow (Left)

Step 2.) Applied yellow eye shadow; Applied orange eye shadow(bottom left)

Step3.) Applied Wet n' Wild Photo Finish Setting Spray (top right)



*Note:

setting spray caused the eye shadow to become translucent; before and after setting spray It rubbed off very easily



Drugstore Makeup Coverage-Crème Concealer + Setting Spray

Step 1.) Applied orange crème from concealer palette and powder set with Maybelline Better Skin (top left)

Step 2.) Applied highlight crème from concealer palette mixed with yellow crème and lavender crème followed by final set with Maybelline Better Skin and Wet n' Wild Photo Finish Setting Spray (bottom left)

*Note:

sponge and finger application caused layers to come off; before and after setting spray it rubbed off very easily



Pros & Cons of Drugstore/Bare Minerals Applications

Pros:

- Products are easy to find and priced from \$4-\$30; Bare Minerals being on the highest side of that range)
- There is quite a bit of makeup in the container which means it could last for a considerable length of time
- Contains sunscreen and other ingredients beneficial to skin health

Cons:

- Bare Minerals requires specific brushes for application
- Even when set all products rubbed off easily
- Layering is very difficult due to makeup coming off every time you touch it
- It is very difficult to achieve full coverage and can be very time consuming

General Tips

- No matter whether you are using a sponge or your hands to apply the productions it is better to use a dabbing motion instead of a sweeping motion
- Setting with powder between layers is crucial to durable coverage
- Ben Nye Final Seal Setting Spray was created for thespians and therefore appears to be the most durable (it does have an intense fragrance while wet)
 - Always test your chosen method prior to show week
- Do your research on which method is right for you, there are various products on the market for this purpose
- Be mindful of placement of tattoos if you are choosing to pursue a career in performance
 - Dermablend is the most popular recommendation for professional performers

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