

ASK A GROOVY GAL

TFG DEPUTY EDITOR AND BEAUTY DIRECTOR CHELSEA KAPLAN GIVES YOU THE GOODS ON GETTING GORGEOUS



I want to fake a little color before I head to a friend's wedding in the Bahamas. Should I get a spray tan? I'm afraid to use self-tanner because the last time I did, I ended up with orange palms, elbows knees and feet.—*Lauren, Summit, NJ*

If applied correctly, a faux tan can leave you looking naturally bronzed and glowing. If done incorrectly, you may be mistaken for Q-Bert's younger sister. As you've had a scary run-in with self tanner in the past, I'd avoid another go-round. To get beautifully bronzed in a snap, I recommend locating a tanning salon near you that offers a Mystic Tan machine, which will spray your entire body with a fine mist of natural-looking, quick-drying self-tanner. A single session will probably run you about \$20 and will take only a few minutes. A tip: before stepping into the booth, use a Repelle Skin Shield Wand, a lipstick-sized tube of invisible skin protectant, to coat your palms, heels, elbows and knees (\$4.99, www.walgreens.com). This step is a true must, as it will keep the tanner from staining those pigment-grabbing areas. If you have a little more time and want absolutely perfect results, head to a spa that offers a self-tanner application service. My favorite is the Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spa's St. Tropez body bronzer treatment, where a pro slathers you in self-tanner, not missing a spot, then allows you to relax while you dry (\$140, go to www.reddoorspas.com for locations). If you'd prefer a chemical and funky smell-free option and are in the New York City area, stop by Manhattan's Smooth Synergy for an Organic Spray Tan (\$67, www.smoothsynergy.com). This all-natural and completely odor-free treatment uses mineral salt bronzers and organic cosmetic tanning agent DHA 20 to produce a truly natural-looking tan that will last around five to seven days. The application process takes around ten minutes, and immediately afterwards you'll notice the results that will continue to develop over the next five to 12 hours. No matter which bronzing option you choose, don't even *think* about hitting a tanning bed (that is, of course, unless you're into the idea of skin cancer).