

THE SUNSCREEN LABEL DECODER

The one list on the bottle that tells you what you are really putting on your family — and how to read it in ten seconds.

START HERE: THE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS LIST

Flip any sunscreen over and find the **Active Ingredients** list on the back. That list, not the front-of-bottle marketing, tells you which kind of sunscreen you are holding. There are really just two families to know.

LOOK FOR: MINERAL FILTER

Non-nano zinc oxide

Zinc oxide sits on top of the skin, starts working the moment you apply, and is not absorbed into the bloodstream. It covers the broadest range of UVA and UVB rays, which is why it is the only filter we reach for. "Non-nano" means the particles stay on the surface instead of penetrating the skin.

SKIP THESE: HARMFUL CHEMICAL FILTERS

Oxybenzone • Avobenzone • Octinoxate • Octocrylene • Homosalate • Octisalate

These filters work by absorbing UV rays, and studies show they also absorb through the skin into the body — several are linked to hormone disruption. If you see any of them on the back, put it down.

THE QUICK DECODER

INGREDIENT	TYPE	WHAT TO KNOW
Non-nano zinc oxide	MINERAL	The only one we use. Sits on skin, works immediately, broadest UVA and UVB coverage, and stays on the surface rather than absorbing in.
Avobenzone	CHEMICAL	Common UVA filter that absorbs into the skin.
Oxybenzone	CHEMICAL	Widely studied for skin absorption. Also a common coral-reef concern.
Octinoxate	CHEMICAL	UVB filter that absorbs into the skin. Restricted in some reef-protection laws.
Octocrylene, homosalate, octisalate	CHEMICAL	Common secondary filters that also absorb into the body.

BEYOND THE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS

- ✓ **Non-nano zinc oxide** as the single active. Skip anything that blends in chemical filters.
- ✓ **Reapply every 2 hours** and after swimming, sweating, or toweling off.
- ✓ **A short ingredient list** you can actually read, with no fragrance or synthetic preservatives.

OUR GO-TO SUNSCREEN

[When in doubt, reach for a simple mineral formula built on zinc oxide. Here is the exact one we use on our whole family.](#)

SHOP OUR GO-TO →