

Winter in Minnesota can really mess with a person's skin. In this weather, it's hard to stay ahead of the inevitable dryness. My success in staying moisturized has been better this year thanks to a few things I've changed in my routine.

I was previously using a ridiculous amount of lotion to try and combat the dryness. The problem? Every single lotion I was using listed water as the first ingredient. Because of this, the lotion was actually making things worse for me. The water was just evaporating after I applied the lotion, taking my skin's moisture along with it. It was a never-ending cycle. In the last year or so I've stopped using lotion regularly, mainly because many lotions on the market contain harsh chemicals. I've started using straight-up carrier oil instead, and this has made a huge difference.

Some of my favorite carrier oils are jojoba, apricot kernel, and grapeseed. Prices on these range between \$5 and \$10 for a 4 oz. bottle at Whole Foods or a local co-op. Argan oil is my all-time fave, but it's more expensive (about \$16 for 4 oz. through [Mountain Rose Herbs](#) or [Butters-N-Bars](#)) so I usually just use that on my face. A bottle of carrier oil will last a long time; a little bit goes a long way. The oils are not scented, but they can easily be spruced up with a few drops of essential oil.

Another new thing I've started doing in the last few months is making my own body scrub. Exfoliation is an absolute necessity for me, especially during these winter months. Below are two recipes I've been using.



[Lemonade Scrub](#) (found [here](#) via [Luminous Vegans](#))

4 Tbsp organic coarse sugar\*

10-15 drops carrier oil

1 Tbsp lemon juice (about half a lemon, or you can use bottled lemon juice)

Mix in a 2 oz. container (This is a great way to reuse empty [Soapwalla deodorant](#) containers!)

[Honey Scrub](#)

6 Tbsp organic coarse sugar\*

3 Tbsp carrier oil

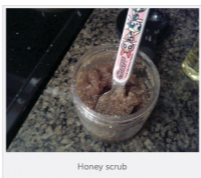
2 Tbsp honey (I use squeezable honey for this recipe)

Mix in a 6-8 oz. container

\* I use turbinado sugar, but any coarse sugar will do

The measurements on these don't need to be exact. If you want a more gritty scrub, go heavier on the sugar. If you want more juice, go heavier on the liquids. It's all very customizable.

Both recipes will settle, so before each use be sure to mix it up with your fingers or a spoon.



Honey scrub

Though I love them both, the honey scrub has been my go-to lately. I mainly use it on my face, armpits (see [older post about deodorant](#)), elbows, and knees every other day. On the rest of my body I use a [Shoba Exfoliating Cloth](#). In fact, sometimes when I'm running late I skip the scrub and just use the cloth. About once a week I use the scrub all over my body. It leaves my skin feeling nice and soft, and after the shower I use my standard carrier oil all over. I haven't had any major problems with dryness all winter, which is a nice change.

These scrubs make great gifts, too! I made some for my mom and BFF for Christmas this past year. Just be aware that the shelf life on these scrubs is significantly shorter than a store-bought scrub because they don't contain preservatives. It's best to use them up within a few weeks.

Happy exfoliating!