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Bright eyes

Clowning around without looking like a clown

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A colourful Quo Spring Goddess Palette that includes four eyeshadows, one blush and one lipgloss in shades of violet, teal, blue, pink (depending on palette purchased) can let you experiment to your heart's content. Available at Shoppers Drug Mart and Pharmaprix for \$25.

This spring, bright coloured makeup is coming to town. So here's how to use a circus of colours without looking like a clown.

The "natural" look is often anything but, and when you're putting all that effort into your makeup, you may as well do something different. Have fun. Having fun is more natural anyway, isn't it?

You don't have to buy expensive products for it either. Drugstore makeup is fine - especially for experimenting. If the look strikes your fancy, there's also a ton of high quality products in which to indulge. And don't forget, if you want to clown around with different looks, take pictures (without the flash) to judge what looks best.

Lips

Bright lips are the new black. From fearless fuchsia to fluorescent orange to pucker-up purple to the perfect red and everything in between, find what works for you. There is no such thing as going too far, but there is such a thing as applying them wrong.

Matte finishes may easily take you from day to night, but they can also easily feather and show dry skin on the lips. Be sure to exfoliate (gently brushing lips with a wet toothbrush works well) and lightly moisturize with petroleum jelly.

Before application, line lips with a clear or neutral liner. Not only will this define them, but it will also prevent the dreaded ring-around-the-lips when your lipstick wears off.

Do take note, bold lipsticks highlight thin lips. So, if your lips are barely there, line slightly outside your natural shape and you can use a product that helps to plump.

Timid tip: Start sheer. Bright glosses or stains will add that pop of colour without bursting your confidence bubble. Or, dab on a little bright lipstick, add some clear gloss over top, and now you've saved money on new gloss! (Which you can put towards more makeup - or shoes.)

Eyes

Coloured mascara and eyeliners are big this spring. Use pink, aqua, lime, or violet eyeliners instead of basic black or brown. No need to buy all these colours in liner and shadow. Just dip an eyeliner brush in water, wet a small section of your favourite bright eyeshadow, and apply as liner.

More daring is full-on eye shadow. Start sheer. To do this, tap the tip of your applicator to remove excess shadow. Add more to reach your desired intensity. Brightly pigmented shadows should only be used on the lid - not the crease or brow line - for extra oomph, beneath the bottom lash line too. Pop it with black liner and mascara.

Take it a step further with a smoky eye, but instead of the usual grey tones, use pinks, blues, greens, or purples. Just don't use the same colour as your eyes; it will only compete, not complement. And don't forget to blend, blend, and blend - the key to making these colours work.

Timid tip: Blend more neutral shades with a brighter liner or eye shadow to tone it down a bit.

Now, if you go bold on the eyes, mute the mouth. Maintain one focus. This works great for breakouts too. For instance, if the bottom of your face is acting like you're 15 again, brighten up your eyes, and use a subtle gloss on your lips. To complete the look, always keep cheeks looking healthy and flushed in pinks, peaches or corals.

Above all, for the most beautiful, illuminated skin, eat well, wash, exfoliate, and moisturize your face. And NEVER go to bed with makeup on.

Finally, remember, the most important way to pull off a bold look without looking like a clown is to have the confidence of a queen.